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An Assessment of Policy Implementation of China, Italy and India regarding Coronavirus.

Abstract

A policy is a set of ideas or a plan of what to do in a particular situation that has been agreed to officially by a group of people, a business organisation, a government or a political party. Amid Coronavirus which had initially started off as an epidemic and was finally declared pandemic has forced nations across the world to come up with new policies to protect their citizens from this virus. China, Italy and India have been taken as a case study for the present research as the researchers believe these are the countries which have been the most affected at different stages of COVID 19 and have followed a narrative approach using secondary data that has been gathered from various news articles. The researchers have identified the policies used by each country separately and then conducted a comparative study on the policies of these three countries. The aim of the research paper is to understand the policies taken up by the countries to fight the pandemic COVID 19 and understand which was the best policy among these three countries policies and finally highlight policy recommendations which other nations have inculcated.

Keywords: COVID 19, public policies, China, India, Italy

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Introduction

The first case of COVID-19 was deduced in Wuhan, China in the month December 2019 which then eventually spread to the rest of the world. It was declared as ‘pandemic’ by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11,2020 which forced governments to take drastic policy measures. The intermediate source of origin and transition to humans is not known but the rapid human transmission to humans has been widely established. No clinically approved antiviral drug or vaccine for use against COVID-19 is available. However, in clinical trials, few broad-spectrum antiviral drugs were assessed against COVID-19 which resulted in clinical recovery.

The first source of transmission of this crisis is the impact that the downturn in economic activity in many of the main trading partners in the world would have on the exports of products from countries. For example, China is an important destination for exports from many Latin American economies and Chile, Peru and Brazil are top trading partners. ECLAC estimates that the region's export value to that destination could decline by as much as 10.7%.

The second path comes from reduced demand for tourism services, which will impact the Caribbean countries most. Tourism activity in the Caribbean, for example, will decline by 8 percent, 17 percent, or 25 percent, respectively, in 2020, if a travel ban caused by the virus were to continue for one, two, or three months. The third medium would entail fragmentation of multinational supply chains. This will mainly impact Mexico and Brazil, countries that import parts and intermediate goods for their manufacturing sectors from China (especially in the case of automobile parts, household appliances, electronic devices and pharmaceutical products).

Governments are now taking global, fiscal and monetary steps including rising social investment, reducing interest rates, interfering in foreign exchange markets, suspending bank loan fees, offering credit lines for payment of company payrolls, freezing the reconnection charge for households unable to pay their water bills, and actions to prevent dwindling stocks of basic goods.

The countries that the researchers have chosen to examine in terms of their policies to handle the coronavirus outbreak in this paper are China, Italy and India. China is officially known as the people’s republic of China and is a country that is located in East Asia and is the second most populous country in the world while being the third largest country by area. It has a GDP

growth rate of 6 percent as of the fourth quarter of 2019 according to the National Bureau Statistics and has a median age of 37 years where 73.6 percent of its population belong to the age distribution of 15 to 64 years. It follows a Unitary Marxist Leninist One Party socialist republic.

Italy is a European country which has a long Mediterranean and has left a powerful mark on the western culture and cuisine. It follows a unitary parliamentary republic and has a GDP growth rate of 0.3% as on the fourth quarter of 2019 according to the world bank and has a median age of 45.4 years where 64 percent of its population belongs to the age distribution of 15 to 64 while 22.8 percent of its population belongs to the above 65 years old age distribution.

India is officially known as the Republic of India and is a country located in South Asia. It is the 7th largest country in terms of area while it is the most populous country. The GDP growth rate of India is 4.7% as per quarter three of 2019 as per statista and has a median age of 29 years where 65% of the population belong to the age group of below 35 years old. India follows a Parliamentary System.

Analysis

China

Within seven days of recognizing the obscure infection, China effectively sequenced it and passed the genetic data on to the World Health Organization (WHO). The distinguishing proof of an infection's genetic succession is basic to build up an immunization and remedial medications. The quick recognizable identification of COVID-19 permitted researchers around the globe to promptly begin creating test packs, treatment alternatives and antibodies.

China's exceptional efficient and proactive risk management, in view of cooperation between government authorities and health specialists, has demonstrated to be powerful in containing and controlling COVID-19. The timely release of sickness related clinical information to the general population and WHO helped numerous around the globe plan for the spread.

The higher death rate in Wuhan was credited to some extent to the absence of medical assets accessible at the period of quick scarcity. Wuhan's absence of a disaster control board lead to poor illness regulation, across the board cross-contamination in patients and medicinal services laborers in emergency clinics and long stretches of disorder. The deficiency of defensive

clinical supplies and absence of information about COVID-19 were the fundamental components making the enormous number of human services laborers contract the infection in the early long stretches of the flare-up in Wuhan.

The effective execution of counteraction and control gauges in Hangzhou, a city of 10 million individuals, is a model for different pieces of the world to follow. Once more, the way to progress is to make everybody capable, get each unit included and consider authorities responsible. We likewise need to change how we have been living and be receptive to new difficulties. Cautious arranging and clear direction are useful. Hangzhou has permitted representatives to return to work in a few stages. Numerous organizations, associations, schools and colleges are effectively executing web-based applications, getting the hang of utilizing innovation like Zoom gatherings, which could be models for future advancement.

China has given constant, clear correspondence to their people in general. In Hangzhou, for instance, the significant news outlet gives everyday reports on the quantity of COVID-19 cases and clinical treatment results, plans to be actualized and rules and systems to follow.

China is restarting its economy, reviving schools and coming back to commonality. As a report from the WHO-China Joint Mission finished up, a science-based, staged methodology is being taken, with the need to quickly respond to any new COVID-19 cases or groups while components of the regulation technique are lifted.

Italy

Very quickly (from February 21 to March 22), Italy went from finding the official Covid-19 case to a government order that basically restricted all developments of individuals inside the entire area, and the shutdown of all unimportant economic activity. Inside this time period, the nation has been hit by completely a torrent of remarkable power, punctuated by an unending stream of deaths`. It is obviously Italy's greatest emergency since World War II.

It merits accentuating that these impediments developed considerably after Covid-19 had as of now completely affected in China and some elective models for the control of the infection (in China and somewhere else) had just been effectively executed. What this proposes is an efficient inability to retain and follow up on existing data quickly and adequately instead of a total absence of understanding on how to handle the situation.

The Italian government managed the Covid-19 pandemic by giving a progression of pronouncements that continuously expanded limitations inside lockdown regions ("red zones"), which were then extended until they at last applied to the whole nation.

In typical occasions, this methodology would presumably be viewed as reasonable and maybe even shrewd. Right now, it failed for two reasons. To begin with, it was conflicting with the fast exponential spread of the infection. The "realities on the ground" anytime were basically not predictive of what the circumstance would be only a couple of days after the fact. Thus, Italy followed the spread of the infection as opposed to prevent it. Second, the particular methodology may have accidentally encouraged the spread of the infection. Think about the choice to at first lock down certain areas however not others. At the point when the degree declaring the end of northern Italy got open, it ignited a huge mass migration to southern Italy, without a doubt spreading the infection to districts where it had not been available.

The trouble in diffusing recently gained information is a notable occurrence in both private- and the open segment associations. In any case, in our view, quickening the dissemination of information that is rising up out of various arrangement decisions (in Italy and somewhere else) ought to be viewed as a top need when "each nation is rehashing an already solved problem," as a few researchers let us know.

Italy appears to have experienced two information related issues. In the beginning stage of the pandemic, the issue was information scarcity. All the more explicitly, it has been recommended that the across the board and unnoticed dissemination of the infection in the early long periods of 2020 may have been encouraged by the absence of epidemiological abilities and the powerlessness to deliberately record odd contamination tops in certain emergency clinics.

All the more as of late, the issue seems, by all accounts, to be one of information exactness. Specifically, despite the surprising exertion that the Italian government has appeared in consistently refreshing measurements comparative with the pandemic on a freely accessible site, a few pundits have propelled the theory that the striking error in death rates among Italy and different nations and inside Italian districts may (at any rate to some extent) be driven by various testing draws near. These errors confuse the administration of the pandemic in critical manners, in light of the fact that without comparable data (inside and across nations) it is more earnestly to allocate assets and understand its workings.

India

The first confirmed case in India was accounted for on January 30. A college student studying in Wuhan, China, had made a trip back home to Kerala, a state on India's southern tip. Throughout the following four days, two additional individuals in Kerala tested positive for this disease.

Michael Kugelman, an expert master at the Wilson Centre research organization in Washington, revealed that he saw the nation was at that point carrying Indian nationals out of Wuhan during his excursion to New Delhi toward the beginning of February.

Government authorities are trying individuals who have travelled internationally or who had come into contact with somebody who tested positive. In light of that centre, India had one of the most minimal testing rates on the planet as of March 13. Second, the approach for testing has changed. While the local government despite everything starts to lead the pack on tests — asserting it can do 60,000 of them in seven days — private labs would now be able to control the tests, as well. The issue is private testing is anything but a wide-scale activity yet.

States control their own public healthcare systems in India — and greatest states will in general have the most noticeably terrible ones. That could present serious issues for many patients who may need to look for care should they be contaminated with the coronavirus.

It was also observed that 75 percent of social insurance in India is given at private medical clinics, which specialists state for the most part are better-run and better-prepared. While that might be uplifting news for the individuals who can bear the cost of such treatment, that sort of help will be distant for a great many poor in the nation. Private emergency clinics are as of now dismissing some planned patients who accept they may have the ailment.

After looking at each of the policies adopted by China, Italy and India we will now take a look at the similarities of the policies incorporated in each of the countries. The first being the quarantining done by each country although the levels of quarantining and the approach adopted while communicating the lockdown in each country was different as the characteristics of the individuals present in each of these countries is distinct so the same approach of communication couldn't be used. Each country had quarantined its citizens as soon as they realised that the COVID 19 was a new pathogen that was highly contagious and can spread

quickly while leaving behind an enormous health, economic and societal impact in any setting (joint mission).

These countries had taken efforts to do thermal screenings at the airports and monitor the individuals that seemed to be possible suspects of COVID 19 although the calibre to which it was done in each nation was different, China being the first nation to be infected was too busy controlling it within the nation to focus on individuals travelling from abroad into the nation , while Italy had realised a bit too late as the consequences of this had not struck them to be very severe in the very beginning. However India had taken it much more seriously after watching how it had unfolded in China, as precautionary measures they started thermal screening and checking the past medical histories of the individuals and quarantining individuals for 14 days if they had travelled from the affected countries and only using the tests if the individual had shown the symptoms during the period that he/she was quarantined for. One of the extreme steps they had taken was to cancel all visas to other countries to avoid individuals from bringing COVID 19 along with them and contaminating more people. They had also taken the initiative to create awareness among the citizens by adding voice messages in the mobile stating the symptoms of COVID 19 and what are the possible precautions that can be taken.

China had quarantined the movement of 10 million people while banning the use of private cars and forbidding residents to leave the apartments without permission from the police officers. The residents were required to disclose their temperatures while purchasing medicine and the community officials had taken up the responsibility of delivering groceries and medications to the residents to reduce the amount of individuals moving outside their apartments and to keep a track of this phone apps such as Alipay and WeChat which had played a major role in converting china into cashless economy monitor the individuals and make sure that they are not leaving their residence. Although most of the other countries do not agree with this social control and intrusive surveillance the citizens of china are considered to be incredibly naïve or wilfully blind to the measures taken by their government. It is believed that this behaviour from the citizens has allowed the government to have coercive control leading to the failure of maintaining its human rights although it is being praised as the deep commitment of the Chinese people to collectively action in the face of this common threat. The communication from the government's side lacked transparency due to political imperatives and economic concerns; this further led to questions arising in terms of its growing influence in key global governance institutions.

While the Chinese are naïve or wilfully blind the Italians believe that everything will turn out for the best and that the tragedies will not affect them personally and with the right amount of time and ignorance the problem will no longer exist. The ideology by the Europeans where no real threat has ever made them feel threatened is what is making it difficult to change their lifestyle and habits during the emergency and the crisis of legitimacy facing democratic institutions and the broader public has become harder. This led to the government communicating in an alarming tone and then a premature tone to help the citizens feel like there is no serious harm although the underlying meaning behind this is the economic difficulties each sector was facing which further forced the government to take extremely light actions as a means of calming down the disoriented public. India being a democratic nation had to first experiment if the lock down would work by using a mechanism called the Janata Curfew which is also known as the voluntary self-isolation period, it has helped the government identify which states required strict actions while which states were more aware and stayed inside on their own. Based on this they then launched a lock down for three weeks.

The quarantining has commonly closed down the schools, sports events, theatres, social gathering and cinemas throughout all three nations. However, India seems to have shut down all of its manufacturing businesses for the safety of the citizens while it's still operational in Italy and China. Italy has allowed its citizens to step out of the house as long as it is for work or for any emergency even in that case it needs to get the signature from the police on a self-certifying form stating that the person is travelling from one place to another for work or an emergency . The industries only remain open as long as they are willing to follow the strict measures placed by the government and essential services such as banks also remain open and to get to these places the transportation system in the country is still running. India has taken stricter action where certain states have issued shooting orders to the police where if they spot anyone outside when the lockdown has been enforced, they will be shot and taken to jail. They have also taken it upon themselves to shut down all businesses and keep the streets completely to ensure there is no interaction between individuals and with the help of law they have also issued article 144 which stops people from gathering together , it is a punishable offence if more than 5 people gather in one location. They have only left 21 essential types of stores open such as supermarkets which all the other countries have done as well. Italy has kept its citizens in mind and has allowed the bars to remain open till 6pm every day and the supermarkets to be open on all days except weekends.

Both Italy and China have made changes to their monetary and fiscal policies as such where China has stated that the central bank will relax the reserve requirements ratio and the loan prime rate. It will also reduce the tax and rent and defer the payments relating to social security and target funding. The Italy government and the country's central bank have decided to reduce the state guarantee schemes to see if the scheme will relax repayment of the schemes related to the households and companies.

In terms of resources, all of them had a lack of resources to treat COVID 19, however the countries had taken it upon themselves to build the resources to treat their patients. China started building hospitals which were ready to occupy within one week and India had taken the effort to coordinate with private labs where they started off with only 15 labs that could test for COVID 19 to 50 labs that could treat it in a week. The country which took the biggest hit would be Italy as their health care system was already weak and once COVID 19 took place it was no longer able to sustain itself and the system finally went down.

Findings

As India is a democratic country and is home to a diverse set of people, India cannot implement policies without the support of its people. There has been some insight on the community reaction to policies imposed by governments. Italian's as a community are considered to be a 'happy go lucky' bunch. Hence when coronavirus sprung up in Italy, it was not taken seriously. Bars, shopping malls and pubs remained open. This is one of the reasons why Italy is said to have been the most impacted by this pandemic.

China has been known to follow a very stringent political system. The general public have no other option but to follow rules and regulations without questioning them. Hence, policies imposed by the centre were followed and the pandemic could be contained faster than it was in Italy.

India as a nation houses a plethora of people from different cultural and economic backgrounds. On one hand there are states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Goa which are compared to economies of the developed world while on the other hand, there exist states like Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand which lay on the lower rung on the economic development ladder. An individual's adherence to government policies is highly dependent on their level of education. While a part of the public strictly followed the statutes proclaimed by their state governments,

the other half chose to believe in baseless WhatsApp forwards and other misinformation and hoaxes about the coronavirus.

To monitor the reaction of the citizens and to give them enough time to prepare for the temporary lockdown, the Prime Minister first implored that all the citizens should observe a self-imposed curfew from 7am to 9pm on Sunday, March 22nd 2020. This allowed the prime minister and the government to understand which states will comply with a lockdown and which states need more iteration in terms of stricter rules such as shoot at site and more security to make sure people remain quarantined during a longer lockdown period.

The Indian government had decided to move the nation into a lockdown period, where they had come out with a comprehensive list of essential services that will remain open during the nationwide lockdown. This list had been put in place by the Ministry of Home Affairs soon after PM Narendra Modi had called for a 21 day nationwide lock down so that the people do not begin to panic about the availability of the essential commodities and medicines as the various state governments were to work together to ensure this. The offices of the Government of India along with the Offices of the State /Union territory shall remain closed and the only exemptions under these offices are the defence, central armed police forces, treasury, public utilities (including petroleum, CNG, LPG, PNG), disaster management and prisons, power generation and transmission units , post offices ,National Informatics centre, Early Warning Agencies. All hospitals and all related medical establishments including their manufacturing and distribution units are to remain open while the transportation for all medical personnel, nurses, Para medical staff and other hospital support services are to be permitted. All commercial , Industrial and Private establishments are to be closed down unless these shops are dealing with food, groceries, fruits and vegetables, dairy and milk booths, meat and fish, animal fodder or if they are manufacturing units of essential commodities or if there is a continuous process that has received the permission from the state governments. However, district authorities are encouraging and facilitating home delivery to minimize the movement of individuals outside their homes. Transportation services have been suspended unless it is the transportation of essential goods or for Fire, Law and order and emergency services. All educational institutions, places of worship and social, political, sports, entertainment gatherings have been barred and the only form of gathering is that of a funeral and not more than 20 people will be permitted.

Containment measures have been taken by the country where individuals who have arrived in the nation post 15th February 2020 are to be directed by a health care personnel to remain under strict home/ institutional quarantine for a period as decided by the local health authorities ,failing which they will be liable to legal actions under Sec. 188 of the IPC. If there are exceptions to the containment measures the individuals are required to take the necessary precautions as well as social distancing as advised by the health department from time to time.

The government has taken the initiative to distribute five kgs of wheat or rice and one kg of preferred pulse free of cost for the next 3 months to the 80 crore poor people across the country so that they can deal with the economic impact of the lock down amid coronavirus. This is being distributed in the households under the Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana which is covered by the National Food Security Act. This is permitting the government to provide food grains per person at a subsidised rate. The beneficiaries will get free ration above their monthly quota of 5 kg food grains per month which has now been increased to 7 kilograms a month for the next three months.

While India has taken as much precaution as possible to protect its citizens it has also lent a helping hand to the Chinese when they were in need due to the challenges of the epidemic which caused a shortage in medical supplies. India had taken it upon itself to send a consignment of medical supplies to China keeping all close cooperation that are enjoyed in various areas between the nations.

Policy Recommendations

The first suggestion is for the formation of a contact tracing team. Anyone who has been tested as positive for the virus is kept in the hospital and away from friends and family. All those who have been in contact with those who tested positive are monitored by a contact tracing team who identify the contacts of the infected person and ring them up to see if they show any symptoms, if they do, they are picked up from their location and tested. However, if they show no symptoms are kept in a strict home quarantine and they get an SMS several times a day and they have to click on the link so that the team can track where one's phone is, to make sure that one is quarantined. There are harsh penalties if the individuals are found to be cheating the contact tracing team.

Our next policy recommendation is one that borrows ideologies from behavioural economics. Decision makers can reward those who give out information about those who conceal

information from the authorities. This acts as positive reinforcement and aids in finding those and containing the pandemic.

There is a dire need for expansion of our telehealth services. Medical infrastructure should be expanded and physicians in specialties other than contagious disease should be brought in. Diagnostic and telehealth services must be easily accessible to the public. Restrictions on state border travel should be lifted to meet demands created in outbreak areas.

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