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Globalization, Sovereignty and Complex-Interdependence of Nation States in the Post-Pandemic World

MD Imtiyaz, PhD Candidate
Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi

Abstract

Pandemics are not unprecedented, and the world has overcome and reformed itself after various pandemics like the Spanish Flu, Asian flu, and many others. Nevertheless, since the advent of globalization in the 20th century world has witnessed something like COVID19 for the first time, which exposed the fragility of globalization and complex interdependence. Since the nascent globalization and sovereignty of nation-states remain contested, whether globalization diluted or undermined the sovereignty of Nation-States or Nation-States sovereignty remains the key player in a globalized world. This Paper will seek to envision and address the mounting problems for globalization due to COVID19 by juxtaposing global health governance system and globalization, how it will impact the sovereignty of Nation-States, and the possible changes that COVID19 can bring for complex interdependence and global health governance mechanisms.

Keywords - Globalization, Sovereignty, Complex Interdependence, Pandemic, Covid19.

Introduction

Covid19 has hampered and imposed several challenges to the globalized and hyper-interconnected world. The challenges of pandemics have stretched to damaging the economy and dismantling the nations' political and social fabric. At the public policy level, Covid19 has impacted nations in several ways. The policies concerning globalization and territorial sovereignty could be considered the most concerned ones as the costly lockdowns have altered nature and exposed the fragility of globalization. In contrast, border tightening has revived the idea of the Westphalian state[1], which has got blurred with the advent of hyper-globalization during the 1990s[2] (Subramanian & Kessler, 2013). However, to understand the problems posed to globalization and complex interdependence with the outbreak of covid19, I ascertained that the phenomenon was

1 - Westphalian sovereignty advocates the principle that each state has exclusive sovereignty over its territory. For details see https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803121924198

2 - For details see, The hyperglobalization of trade and its future by Arvind Subramanian and Martin Kessler https://www.piie.com/publications/wp/wp13-6.pdf

already in a retreat due to the great-power rivalry between the U.S.A and China. The contestation between both nations has shaped the trajectory of the crisis posed by Covid19[3] .

The first part of the paper analyses both nations' initial public policy management vis-à-vis to control the pandemic and its impact later. In contrast, the second part emphasizes the global health governance issues exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and solutions to these complex problems. The section examines the role of International Health Regulations (IHR) vis-à-vis the Global Health Security Agenda. Being a part of WHO International Health Regulations (IHR) tried to display the shift towards a post-Westphalian state system. It portrayed itself as a dominant actor to regulate the global health governance policies, especially after the SARS epidemic in 2002-2003, albeit the policies adopted by IHR were more Westphalian in nature. The fragility of the policy adopted by IHR has been windswept with the outbreak of covid19. Global health governance mechanisms have declined to more press conferences and fewer actions for needed nations. In the wake of the Covid19 outbreak, the unregulated global health governance mechanisms have exposed the fragility of the post-Westphalian state that how it produced the global inequalities and dependency for developing and emerging nations, the collapse of multilateralism, securitization, and tightening of borders by nations have reversed the world's institutional mechanisms to the Westphalian sovereignty.

The Initial Discourse on Globalization and Sovereignty of Nation States

The ubiquitous nature of globalization makes it indispensable for any nation-state. As Thomas Friedman points out in his book "the world is flat," globalization is entrenched at every level, either individual, community, or government, and this entrenchment is completely inescapable; thus, there is not any possibility of reverse engineering for Nation- States (Friedman, 2007). The academic debate on Globalization and Nation-states sovereignty has already been contested between scholars, who pointed out whether the Westphalian notion of sovereignty exists or not, or Nation-States has loosed their grip on their territory. Kenichi Ohmae and Michael Mann are two influential proponents who have written tirelessly on this issue; the former is the advocate of "End of Nation-States" (Ohmae, 1995) as Ohmae equate the Nation-State with a "Nostalgic Fiction" whereas the Later sees the Nation-States as indispensable as there might be some threats to it due to globalization but all the transactions happening among either MNCs, TNCs, or any governmental organization they are taking place in the name of Sovereign States (Mann, 1997). However, it must not be either of the cases of assertiveness that globalization has ended the relevance or altered the jurisdictions of nation-states. Instead, it could be argued that globalization has devised the

3 - The 2008 financial crisis hits the world's economies hard, and the severity of the crisis was centered around the American economy. Markets witnessed several disruptions and shrinkage in supply chains, the globalization as a process started to slow down. However, with the changing patterns in the world's economic structure, globalization has allowed western countries to find a cost-effective production space like China. American factories moved their production houses, leading to a rise in nationalist sentiments and a demand to shift those factories back to employ native American citizens. The spat between U.S and China has intensified drastically in the last few years. When Donald Trump was appointed president, he increased the tariffs on Chinese products by six-folds, and China responded by doubling those tariffs on U.S products.

flexibility for nation-states to rearrange the purpose, boundaries, and sovereign authority by keeping the time and place in mind[4] (Cohen, 2001). The operationalization of rearrangement of state sovereign authority could also be taken as alternate public policy management. As the pandemics are not unprecedented and have been recurring throughout human history has altered not just the conventional lifestyle of humans; but also the political and economic system. Undoubtedly, these pandemics have produced a psyche of fear for humans and staggering impacts for state institutions. These impacts have been highly vulnerable for humans and the nation-states. However, society has witnessed gradual normalization changes after the world's pandemics. Meanwhile, COVID19 is the first of its kind after the advent of globalization in the 20th century; amid all the continuing academic debates and intensifying process of globalization, the arrival of Pandemic like COVID19 has complexified the idea of globalization and its future. The paper's analysis has been done by juxtaposing globalization, state institutions, and public health management in the wake of the COVID19 outbreak. The paper also seeks to address the intensifying issues for the nation-states and how they could be resolved rapidly, and the interactions between states could be normalized in near times.

Literature Review

The paper attempts to explore the possible future trajectory for globalization, nation-states sovereignty, and complex interdependence by juxtaposing the past trajectory and present circumstances after the outbreak of covid19. It investigates and hypothesizes damages and alterations to globalization and complex interdependence. However, as globalization is already entrenched at every level of nation-states and market, it will not disappear (Friedman, 2007). The debate on the relevance of nation-states sovereignty was contested during the late 1990s when hyper-globalization was at its peak and altered and superseded territorial borders. Nation-states at that time were equated with Nostalgic Fiction and outdated (Ohmae, 1995). However, the nation-states were the primary actor providing markets to the proponents of globalization; it would not have accelerated against the willingness of nation-states (Mann, 1997).

Further, to understand the global health governance mechanism after the outbreak of covid19, the paper juxtaposes literature on globalization and complex interdependence and health management policies for any nation-state (Fidler, 2003). With this juxtaposition, it is ascertained that Covid19 has exposed the vulnerabilities and fragility of global health governance. It produced inequalities, securitization of borders, and collapse of multilateralism. As an international agency to look upon issues concerning health emergencies, WHO has tried to act as a post-Westphalian institution but soon crumbled with the outbreak of Covid19 (Ingram, 2009). The paper is an attempt to add to the literature of the post-pandemic world vis-à-vis globalization, complex Interdependence for nation-states.

4 - See, Globalization and boundaries of the state by Edward Cohen, which attempts to provide a balanced explanation of impacts posed to nation-state by globalization.

Research Design

The research aims to understand the changing nature of nation-states and their sovereignty with the advent of globalization. The primary part of this research conceptualizes the impacts posed by COVID19 to Globalization, Sovereignty, and nation-states. The qualitative research method has been applied to understand and unfold the complexities posed by these phenomena. It involved studying literature to identify the broad themes and the relevance of the site chosen for the study to formulate and address the research questions. Secondary data accumulated in the paper has been cited with proper attribution.

Globalization, Complex Interdependence and COVID19

Globalization and Complex Interdependence are inextricably linked with each other. The appearance of coronavirus exposed the fragility of both globalization and complex interdependence, as the importance of complex interdependence in the Neo-Liberal era pointed out by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye as "it comes closer to reality than realism[5]" (Keohane & Nye, 2011) but within a few days of the outbreak of Covid19 the two major power of world i.e: U.S.A and China initially seemed to indulged in the blame game, propaganda and alike of Cold War approach debates. As initially, soon after the outbreak of COVID19, Joseph Nye pointed out in his article for the foreign policy that Initial responses to the pandemic Covid19 outbreak revealed and portrayed the crisis major powers has posed to the world, which went down in the wrong direction. The initial response from both significant major powers, i.e., China and the United States, has shown the unwillingness to immediately needful action to contain the pandemic outbreak (Szendy, 2020). The initial verbal spat and blame game between Chinese President Xi Jinping and then U.S. President Donald Trump started the discussion at the management of the pandemic by blaming each other for failure to deal with their public policies; the exchanged arguments were primarily the misinformation and the several denials about the pandemic crisis. The vilification and disagreements between the U.S and China have intensified the impacts of COVID19 as it limited the scope of communication and cooperation to deal with the nature and vulnerability of the coronavirus. The absence of initial cooperation has led to the wastage of significant time to contain and control the virus proliferation, and the opportunities which would have lesser down the impact and spread of COVID19 have been squandered (Nye, 2020). Nonetheless, even after costly lockdown imposition, the frivolity and hush of the world's two largest economies have showcased the imprudent conception not just for the other countries but also for their citizens. However, the initiation of dialogue was less constructive vis-à-vis resolving the pandemic outbreak and more of a propaganda battle. The Chinese government has held the U.S. military responsible for the presence of the virus in Wuhan, and Trump has blamed and described the coronavirus as the "Chinese virus." In an economy with the size of the United States of America, the European Union is vacillated in a

5 - See Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye for details on "Realism and Complex Interdependence" from Power and Interdependence 224-256, 2011 (4th edition)

state of dissatisfaction. However, a virus does not care about any securitization, police patrolling, and construction of fences at the borders. Similarly, it cares less about the nationality of its sufferer and borders (Nye, 2020).

Meanwhile, the intensity of the impact of COVID19 on globalization is going to be excessive. The world with unfettered global trade and markets will indeed face economic diminishment, disruption, and consequences in upcoming years. Achieving the earlier normalization could be a difficult task initially after the end of the pandemic; we're likely to see a messier world. There could be a rise in phenomenon that will lead to either regionalization, nationalization, or localization, some form of de-globalization. Although, there is no end to globalization as globalization transcended the boundaries of political, economic, and sanctions, for example, ecological globalization. Globalization or interdependence across the territories results from various modes of transportation and advancement in communication technology changes. These are not likely to fade away but might get halted sometimes, so there could be damage to "good globalization[6]" as the trade, business, and economy will be damaged by the recession that accompanies the pandemic, and there has been or will be a diminishment of economic globalisation[7]. Whereas there will not be any changes in "bad types of globalization[8]" such as Climate Change/Ecological Globalization as they obey the laws of physics/Science and not the laws of politics, tariffs, or borders.

Kismet of Nation State's Sovereignty after COVID19: Return to Westphalian sovereignty?

Already, the globalization trends have cast doubt on the continuing relevance of the principle of state sovereignty and, arguably, the nature and role of the state itself have changed after the advent of globalization. Amid all the dilemmas of sovereignty for Nation-States, this pandemic further poses arduous challenges for Nation-States vis-à-vis sovereignty. David P. Fidler has done an outstanding analysis in his Post-SARS article on "Political Pathology and Post-Westphalian Pathogen," and Alan Ingram has further elaborated it in his well-defined work on "Geopolitics of Disease." David Fiedler offers an innovative and prolonged analysis of the effects of the pandemic on globalization and sovereignty (Ingram, 2005). The central argument offered by Fidler co-relates the inextricable linkage between state and globalization as globalization has entrenched at every level of state it has also entrenched at the level of health infrastructure; which precisely means the domain of public health has crossed the threshold of the post-Westphalian doorway .

6 -"Good globalization" denotes the positive side of globalization, which does not have only adverse effects. for details see, https://www.forbes.com/sites/panosmourdoukoutas/2011/09/10/the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly-side-of-globalization/?sh=251788c9483f

7 - see Joseph S. Nye Jr. "No, coronavirus will not change the global order" foreignpolicy.com 20th April. 2020

8 - "Bad globalization" denotes the negatives of globalization which has adverse impacts, for details see, http://speri.dept.shef.ac.uk/2020/01/27/why-climate-change-is-globalizations-biggest-challenge-yet/

9 - "See David P. Fidler, "SARS: Political Pathology of the first post-Westphalian pathogen," Journal of law medicine and ethics, p.485, 2003

Epidemics like the SARS that broke out in 2002–2003 and the HIV/AIDS pandemic have influenced this change. The epidemic like SARS that broke out in 2002-2003 and the HIV/AIDS pandemic has significantly influenced in driving this shift. Fiedler argues that Westphalian rule came into existence during the nineteenth century to reduce and wipe off the friction of cholera, plague, and yellow fever, designed for travel and trade (Ingram, 2005).

The mechanism developed under WHO's International Health Regulations (IHR) is primarily Westphalian in nature. It promotes the states to disclose and publicize health emergencies like COVID19 concerning other parts of the world under their moral obligation and humanitarianism rather than binding on them. However, IHR advocates that the state should pass and amplify the notification of outbreaks of any communicable diseases at the organizational level. Meanwhile, the IHR respects the idea of territorial sovereignty and the Westphalian notion of the state as it claims to respect the 'principle of non-intervention' and gives the state a free hand to decide vis-à-vis the disclosure of a health emergency if it is not a communicable disease. The International Health Regulations (IHR) do not dictate the states' internal public health management even they do not interfere in any matter concerning public health governance of any state. Meanwhile, the IHR's minimal role in dictating states to look upon the prevention and control of communicable diseases like COVID19 shows the importance of territorial sovereignty and decline in the trends of post-Westphalian notion and again the shift of prominence towards the Westphalian notion of sovereignty[10] . The state is the predominant governance actor in the Westphalian public health system. By the late 1970s, the emphasis on how the spread of disease affected international relations with public health in poor or developing countries led to the downfall of Westphalian public health. The official failures and incapacity of several states to tackle HIV/AIDS humanely have been emphasized and intensified to develop a global health governance system by the rise of human rights discourse, and the development of global health governance has made the role of the state more relative. Even after devising the mechanism of global health governance, the SARS epidemic exposed the Westphalian traits of territorial sovereignty exerted by a state like China.

The SARS has also become seminal to understanding the geopolitics of disease, that is, how a state works during a health crisis or emergency. In Fidler's words, it could be argued that 'China behaved Westphalian in the post-Westphalian world order (Fidler, 2003[11]). At first, Chinese officials tried to suppress news of the outbreak, but the Internet, e-mail, and mobile phone communications circumvented the suppression of Chinese authorities and amplified it rapidly to the public. The authorities then acknowledged the outbreak but downplayed its magnitude and the level of seriousness with which it should be treated; for this reason, China drew unprecedented direct criticism of the WHO, only for cases spreading internationally. Meanwhile, it is significant to note that China has also followed the sequence revealed during the 2002 SARS outbreak in the context of

10 - Ibid.489

11- Alan Ingram, The new geopolitics of disease: between global health and global security, Journal of Geopolitics, P.522-545, 2005

the COVID19 outbreak. In the end, China acknowledged the scale of the SARS epidemic, responded entirely domestically, increased cooperation, implemented global health management ideas with the WHO[12], and even extended its cooperation to Taiwan. However, the delayed acceptance, implementation, and cooperation were not enough for a rising great power to compensate for the losses suffered by many other countries due to the Chinese state's frivolous approach to the SARS outbreak.

However, the delayed acceptance, implementation, and cooperation were not enough for a rising great power to overshadow the damages done to several other countries because of the frivolity attitude to deal with the SARS outbreak of the Chinese state. Nonetheless, it also portrays that the WHO intervention amid the SARS outbreak crisis in China's political decision-making as a shift to the post-Westphalian state system was not enough to 'humiliate the sovereignty of the rising great power and put an end to international scrutiny and criticism[13] (Ingram, 2005).

The SARS outbreak pronounced the WHO's emergence as a more significant actor within global governance by asserting its new powers and dynamic mechanism to deal with a health emergency at the global level. However, soon after the outbreak of COVID19 and the increase in vulnerability of states to deal with the pandemic has not just revealed the incapacity of states to deal with their public health policy but also exposed WHO's leadership to deal with the pandemic outbreak. Within a few days of the COVID19 outbreak, traveling, transportation, and every communication medium were banned[14] . States have started to display the portrayal of their sovereign powers and characteristic, the needful resources to contain the virus has not been shared by the developed states with the poor and developing nations. Which clearly shows a shift to Westphalian sovereignty. Both the shifts, the first after the SARS outbreak and the second after the covid19 outbreak, reveal the complexity of world politics, which primarily follows the idea of realism theory to safeguard their people and territory. However, the economy provides a platform of cooperation between states; it could also be considered as a complex interdependence, and in the post-covid times, it will strengthen and enhance the 'good globalization' once again (Prepscius, 2020)

Way Forward: Need for an Inclusive approach

Propaganda, accusation, and blame games are not going to resolve the problems of this pandemic; instead, they will intensify it in the absence of an inclusive approach. It is high time when the states should act inclusively. Instead of executing the principles of geopolitics, states should look forward to executing the Foucauldian notion of bio-politics and governability. It concerns the maximization of the population's welfare and appears in areas such as urban planning, population science, reproduction & fertility ratio, and public health and insurance (Ingram, 2009).

12- Alan Ingram, The new geopolitics of disease: between global health and global security, Journal of Geopolitics, P.522-545, 2005

13- Ibid. 531-532

14 - See, Coronavirus: The world in lockdown in maps and charts, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-52103747

World Health Organisation (WHO) in the post-Westphalian state can act as a key player in addressing the need of nations to fight against COVID19. However, the restriction, fund cuts, and accusations from the developed world and countries like the U.S prevent it from delivering its duty. Unlike, during SARS International Health Regulations (IHR), of WHO does not address that how a state should fight in its territory, but unlike last time WHO can address the issue from every state's perspective and can find ways to cope up with the problems and as Darwin taught us "the people who win are not strongest, the people who win are not smartest, the people who win are the most adaptive" so, Adaptation is one of the crucial need of the hour and WHO can somehow address the global challenge of Adaptation with their presence in every corner of world simultaneously there is need of "COVID Adaptation Fund" by developed countries for the poor and developing countries which can help to sustain the crumbling economies and human lives of these developing countries.

The COVID19 has also demonstrated the urgency and challenge of “Resilience” to the world community. There is an urgent need to be resilient in terms of healthcare, businesses, supply chains, and other areas affected by COVID19. Resilience is one of the most important ways the post-covid19 impacts on globalization, business, and healthcare, and so on, can be tackled in every possible manner. The last and foremost important aspect of reducing the impact of COVID19 is that the world has to leave the propaganda and accusation war, especially the U.S and China, so inclusively the world can find a way to get rid of this pandemic impacted arenas, primarily economic and healthcare.

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