

Editorial: Pandemics and its aftermath in Southeast Asia

It would be an understatement to describe 2020 as the challenging year. Coronavirus swept the globe and over 2.16 million people have died from the disease till-date. Even in Southeast Asia, which has fared moderately well in minimalizing deaths, economies of these countries have either ground to the halt or profoundly slender due to the region's dependance on tourism and export. In this wake, many research institutions have been working to analyze the impact, aftereffects, and ways to limit the spread of Covid-19. But what have South-east Asia learnt from nearly a one year of responses to COVID-19? A key question, not yet answered, is how to find the elusive balance between economic curbs, public health concerns and attain the right balance between open borders and rigorous safety measures.

Thus, this special issue seeks to address this gap by bringing together specialists from a range of disciplines, practices and sectors to discuss COVID 19, its pandemic impact, trajectory, and sustainability over the years in Southeast Asian countries. It looks at the latest research and critical thinking in the aspects of pandemic effect on economy, labor, working-class, and development groups of Southeast Asia. Apart from innovative research, the issue includes also critical reflections about the sustainable development in wake of Covid-19. However, not all the research articles are directly related to the impact of COVID-19 in Southeast Asian countries. Instead, few articles are indirectly related to COVID-19 and its aftermaths. High diversity and number of submissions we obtained to this special edition is a sign of mounting importance of this topic. It is also a recognition that this special issue fills a gap by bringing to the fore considerations and factors that affect South East Asia in the pandemic.

Overall, we favored articles that framed the cases studied in a broader context, so as to enable practitioners and researchers in the field to draw comparable or wider lessons. The first paper, Baharuddin *et al.*, (2020) has successfully presented the conditions of Indonesia because of the COVID 19. The study has addressed the problems of distrust among the government and public that triggered the high spread rate in Indonesia. Largely based on the secondary sources, Baharuddin *et al.*, (2020) has tried to develop a conclusive result about the failure of the government policies to suppress the spread of COVID 19 in Indonesia. The Large-Scale Social Restriction (PSBB) is implemented within Indonesia to restrict the general public from social connections. However, the data analysis within the study has determined the lack of public trust in governmental policies. The second paper, Jatmika *et al.*, (2020) have developed a content-based qualitative analysis study that is not focused on the impact of COVID but instead has tried to highlight the governmental problems and issues with the employed policies. The study has strongly analyzed the governmental policies during the pandemic attack of COVID 19 and found these policies “un-visionary, un-smart, un-objective and un-systematic”. The study can benefit the Indonesian government to understand the problems in their policies that are not synchronized with the healthcare department and resulted in ore complication in handling the pandemic attack within the country.

Unlike, Baharuddin et al., (2020); Jatmika et al., (2020) is focused on the governmental policies and their synchronization with the healthcare department that is working at high alert. The third paper, Kartikasari & Erlyta (2020) has further research on the issues in Indonesia that resulted in the high spread rate within the country. The study has highlighted that migration can be a major cause of the widespread of COVID in the border province of Indonesia. The study has only considered the months of the COVID attack in Indonesia from April to June 2020. Only fewer months can benefit from a thorough analysis of the condition and can help in developing a strong argument about the disease spread in West Kalimantan Province of Indonesia. It is limited to a smaller region of Indonesia and the study can't be generalized for other regions.

The fourth paper (Anam et al., 2020) has developed a study by analyzing the female migrants of Indonesia that are working domestically in Malaysia and Taiwan. Anam et al., (2020) has captured the poor working class and the economic impact of COVID 19 on them. Due to poverty in Indonesia (Primambudi & Wiranatakusuma, 2020), few individuals migrate to other nearer countries for better job opportunities. Primambudi & Wiranatakusuma (2020) have suggested that poverty is a major problem in most countries. Governments are unable to support the large population which results in poverty. Poverty results in reduced resources, unemployment, and low social protection. Secondary data is analyzed from 2013 to 2019 to analyze the poverty level in Indonesia. COVID 19 has further increased poverty and unemployment.

Anam et al., (2020) has highlighted the decrease in job opportunities and living facilities for female Indonesian workers in Malaysia and Taiwan because of pandemic attack. Based on the secondary sources, the study has analyzed available data related to the female migrant workers of Indonesia. Anam et al., (2020) has indicated the labor insecurities, high vulnerability, and economic problem in pandemic conditions. The study can benefit from analyzing the problems faced by working migrants in Southeast Asia.

The next research paper on COVID 19 by Yanuar (2020) has analyzed the impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry of Indonesia. Constitutional legislations and press releases are analyzed that has depicted the Indonesia tourism industry and the impact of COVID 19. For the safe economic growth of the country, Indonesia has to continuously expand and focus on tourism. However, COVID 19 has resulted in international traveling restrictions and limited or no tourist activities. The study can benefit to design future policies that are more contra-productive to support tourism activities in Indonesia.

Further, Purwaningsih & Widodo (2020) has researched the local elections of Indonesia. The article is not directly related to the COVID 19. However, it can benefit to conduct further research on the impact of COVID 19 on the politics and local elections in Indonesia. The study conducted by García and Badruzaman (2020) illustrates how the peace and conflict concepts have evolved through the last century and are more extensively focused on the local issues. Their analysis concludes that incorporating 'the local' dimension of peacebuilding processes has a

tremendous impact on the contemporary global concept of peace and conflict, allowing us a broader and more complex understanding of what peace and conflict mean.

Along with COVID 19, the research related to the other catastrophic conditions can lead to understanding the impact and related human behaviors in panic conditions. Therefore, the study by Herningtyas et al., (2020) has analyzed the deterritorialization impact of the Tsunami Aceh 2004. Along with the apparent destruction, the catastrophic conditions also have a strong impact on the social and economic conditions. The tsunami had resulted in labor problems, large economic loss, and increased reconstructions. The study has highlighted that the catastrophic conditions result in dynamic changes and also have an impact on sovereignty. The study can benefit to compare the conditions with the impact of COVID 19. It allows extending the study for pandemic attacks to compare the economic and social losses in various panic conditions.

Furthermore, Riyanto, Nizar & Ratih Herningtyas (2020) has analyzed the Muslim' philanthropy based on payment transactions. The study is not related to the COVID 19 or any pandemic attack. However, it is related to the southeast Asian countries and the online payment methods based on Muslim Philanthropy. The study can benefit to understand the payment methods in the Southeast Muslim countries during COVID 19 that are also complying with the Muslim Philanthropy. Azizah & Dwiyaniti (2020) has worked on the South Korean policies to highlight their diplomatic approach for promoting soft masculinity and branding its unique texture for its cosmetic industry. The country has aimed to capture the international market through its branding. The study can benefit to analyze the international relation of South Korea and their diplomatic approach. Moreover, it can be extended to analyze the impact of pandemic attacks such as COVID 19 on the brand imaging and media industry of South Korea.

Gunawan & Arumbinang (2020) has depicted the human right perspective related to the forced Indonesian labor in Chinese Vessels. The study has highlighted the unfair treatment and human behavior towards Indonesian labor. The study is not related to the COVID 19 or any pandemic attack, however, it can benefit to understand the labor conditions in Indonesia. The study by Gunawan & Arumbinang (2020) has evaluated the poor labor conditions of Indonesia that can be regulated by the Indonesian government and the International Labor Organization. The study (Gunawan & Arumbinang, 2020) can be extended to analyze the conditions of such forced labor under the impact of pandemic attacks.

Overall, the special issue is focused on the pandemic attack and its impact on the sustainability of the Southeast Asian countries. The variety of articles has highlighted the sustainability conditions in Southeast Asian countries by highlighting poverty, forced labor, and migrant labor conditions. Along with this, the research related to the COVID 19 has highlighted the problems faced by the poor labor and related governmental policies of the region. Overall, the healthcare policies and governmental attitude are also discussed with suggested changes required to cope with the pandemic attack such as COVID 19 in Southeast Asia.

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