



Global Health Diplomacy during Pandemic Time of Covid-19

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Abstract

Public health became much on the attention since decades ago, especially in the effort to overcome the spread of deadly diseases and viruses such as polio, SARS, etc. Threats from these dangers around the world, became the centers of government attention all over the world, also in developing countries where health facilities are still developed to fulfill the need of their population.

“Actors in the health sector can benefit from political analysis from the fields of security studies and geopolitical strategy, human rights, and environmental politics at this complex intersection of existential threats, strategic interests, and duties of care for the individual and populations”.

From the above reading, one could summarize that the complex issues of health sector relied on 3 factors, i.e: its threats, interests and care industries, which involving in the interconnectivity of the problems. Thus, government has to focus on these 3 issues and trying to make policies to solve the problem raised inside the Global Health Communication.

Keywords: threats from diseases, interests of the populations, Government Care.

1. Introduction

The potential for non-oppositional, multi-actor negotiations of issues of existential importance to communities is highlighted by relevant approaches from these domains, such as the framework of positive and cooperative security;¹⁰ (“Gjorv GH. Security by any other name: negative security, positive security, and a multi-actor security approach. Rev Int Stud. 2012; 38:835–859”)[Google Scholar]

In this writing, I will try to seek information about the Republic Islam Iran and its experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic era, how was the communication form, i.e with the International Organization and its people.

Communicative engagement of Government approaches should be included and focuses on positive and cooperative policy, as Gjory stated above, and the involvement of non-state actors in the operational of the Care of the people would be in the main areas of the policies.

While Mignolo MD stated the need to understand grass-roots level and local knowledge, such as local policies drawn from local norms and values, therefor could be used as a catalyst to innovative thinking and to performed policies address the health challenges. (12. Mignolo WD, Walsh CE. Duke University Press Books; Durham, NC: 2018. On decoloniality: concepts, analytics, praxis. [Google Scholar]

2. Iran Engagement with International Organization (WHO)

Through nationwide training on information concerning pandemic management in crises, this programme is intended to help the capacity-building for disaster preparedness. The “World Health Organisation (WHO)” in the “Islamic Republic of Iran” organised a capacity-building training workshop on knowledge about pandemic management, which was led by a group of WHO experts from WHO headquarters, in order to improve “national capacity in public health emergency preparedness in Iran”. (Monday, April 11, 2022; WHO website)

The 4-day training of trainers, which was held 7–10 March 2022 at the WHO country office in Tehran using a hybrid modality, was the first of its kind anywhere in the world. “It brought together over 90 team leaders and experts from the Ministry of Health and Medical Education and all universities of medical sciences in the nation virtually”.

The WHO Health Informatician and Info-demic Management Team's Mr. Tim Nguyen and Ms. Tina Purnat led the training, and it was facilitated by renowned experts in the field under the direction of Ms. Catherine Bertrand-Ferrandis, a WHO Consultant on the “Info-demic Management Team at the Department of Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness and Prevention”. (Monday, April 11, 2022; WHO website)

Participants were exposed to a wide range of information about pandemic management skills and topics that centred on the abilities required to apply overall management interventions and practise to promote resilience of people and communities regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, including misinformation, and to encourage people's self-efficacy for self-protective health behaviours. The Covid-19 pandemic and health misinformation were themes covered in the training on both a global and regional level. (WHO website Monday 11 April 2022)

*Given WHO's constitutional mandate for the creation of norms and standards, high level of legitimacy conferred by the representation of states, and distinct treaty-making authority, multilateralism is still the legitimate order for global health, despite the fact that previously accepted goals and architecture have been repeatedly contested. The plan to draught a global pandemic treaty is another example of this role being played.¹³ (“Nikogosian H, Kickbusch I. The case for an international pandemic treaty. *BMJ*. 2021;372:n527”. [PubMed] [Google Scholar]*

Global Health diplomacy became a wide spectrum of negotiation, since it is involving many stakeholders and the people representatives. Multi actors and multi-level of diplomatic coordination needed in order to settle down the issue. (such as non-governmental organization, youth organization, private sectors, academicians, and the likes).

“One example is the negotiations on intellectual property that take place in the context of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the Director-General of the WTO, has clearly stated that: the health of populations is the business of the WTO. Trade can contribute to public health and the WTO can lead helping members access vaccines and medical supplies”. (@NOIweala Sep 27, 2020. <https://twitter.com/NOIweala/status/1310194495808512000> and @NOIweala Sep 29, 2020. <https://twitter.com/NOIweala/status/1310986911117443072?s=20>)



https://www.physio-pedia.com/Global_Health_Governance

The three political spaces of Global Health Governance, Global Governance for Health, and Governance for Global Health are how Kickbusch and Szabo outline the transnational and cross-cutting nature of governance in the global health sector. (“Kickbusch I. The need for a European strategy on global health. Scandinavian Journal of Public Health, 2006; 34: 561–565”)

- *“Global Health Governance refers mainly to organisations and processes of global governance which have explicit health mandates, e.g. World Health Organization”*
- *“Global Governance for Health refers mainly to organisations and processes of global governance which have either a direct and/or indirect health impact, e.g. United Nations, and World Trade Organization”*
- *“Governance for Global Health refers to organisations and mechanisms established at National and/or Regional Level that contribute to Global Health Governance and/or to Governance for Global Health e.g. National and/or Regional Global Health Strategies or Initiatives (Kicksbusch, idem)”*

3. Some Analysis is for Global Health Diplomacy

No	Focus of analysis	Some hints
1	“Sovereignty”	“the power of a country to control its own government: (https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/sovereignty)” As other countries, Republic Islam Iran / Iran has its own sovereignty to make a decision for its own vaccination programs.
2	“International society and international regime”	“International regimes” are defined as a “set of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge” (Krasner, 1983). The performance of “institutions, organisations, governments, and international bodies” that adhere to a certain set of principles, regulations, and norms in the conduct of international affairs is what determines a regime's efficacy. In addition to formal treaties and national law, regimes frequently rely on unofficial norms and networks to create and uphold standard behaviour in a field of

		<p>international law. (<i>Kennette Benedict, in International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences (Second Edition), 2015</i>)</p> <p>---One big international organization such as WHO, has a superiority during the pandemic, one country could negotiate, lobbying and exchange its views with WHO, same also goes to Iran.</p>
3	“International organization”	<p>“An organisation that has members from several countries is said to be international”. Large international organisations exist, like corporations. Others are more modest and focused on a single objective, such the preservation of a particular species. https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/international-organization. “The study of international organizational behavior is important”.</p> <p>---sources: idem as above</p>
4	“Soft power⁶¹ and smart power”⁶²	<p>According to Philip Dodd², the definition of soft power is a tendency towards freedom, democracy, and openness, which inevitably has political and economic ramifications. Barack Obama's rhetoric makes this point quite obvious. The concepts of peacebuilding and peacekeeping are implied when the terms "Soft Power" and "Hard Power" are used, giving them a strategic meaning for intervention as opposed to only a philosophical connotation. “A guest professor from the University of the Arts London, Professor Philip Dodd, and a presenter”. “A soft power constellation: China, US and India in the 21st century” at the Conference “Hard Vs. Soft Power: Foreign Policy Strategies in Contemporary International Relations”, “Academy for Cultural Diplomacy (org), Cambridge University, June 2010”).</p> <p>According to Joseph Nye's 2003 concept of "Smart Power," which was later embraced by academics and politicians, it is necessary to implement wise policies that harmonise and frequently subtly combine Hard Power elements with Soft Power behaviours to achieve more effective and fruitful outcomes. (Nye, Joseph 2007. “Smart Power”. In The Huffington Post [online]. [Accessed on 20 July 2010])</p> <p>Soft and smart power would be deliberately followed by the people, since this time of pandemic, not too many way of life of the Iranian were changed, only few religious rituals ceremony has been cancelled due to the waiting process of the vaccination programmes..</p>
5	“Niche diplomacy”⁶³	<p>“In reaction to the shifting international system in the years following the end of the Cold War's bipolar order, this idea draws attention to the distinctive pattern of diplomatic orientation of middle countries in securing niche markets”. According to research on international relations, middle powers focus on the areas where they have a significant amount of financial and reputational standing, emphasising their technical leadership and their function as a catalyst and facilitator in intergovernmental negotiations and</p>

		coalition formation. (Cooper AF. In: <i>Niche diplomacy</i> . Cooper AF, editor. Palgrave Macmillan; London: 1997. <i>Niche diplomacy: a conceptual overview</i> ; pp. 1–24. [Google Scholar]) We don't have any information regarding niche diplomacy for a vaccine in Iran, this is could be done in further studies.
6	"Disaster diplomacy" ⁶⁴	How and why disaster-related actions lead to cooperation or not is a crucial subject in the study of disaster diplomacy. catastrophe-related actions can occasionally catalyse short-term diplomacy where there is a pre-existing basis, but they do not result in new, long-term diplomatic endeavours, according to the literature on catastrophe diplomacy. ("Kelman I. Routledge; New York, NY: 2012. <i>Disaster diplomacy—how disasters affect peace and conflict</i> ". [Google Scholar]) Some informations in Iranian newspaper and outlets suggested that many cooperation was brought by Iranian government with other government, especially for providing the vaccines.

4. Analytical Methodologic

Using the above model, we would like to try to summarize the finding of the inter-relation between Global Health Diplomacy with Iranian government policies in tackling Covid-19 spread during the pandemic era (February 2020 to February 2022) We will make A questionnaire questions for all informants due to the possibility of finding medical and global health policies in the Republic Islam Iran as keen as possible. Informant would be given few questions regarding the approaches of Health Diplomacy in the Republic Islam Iran.

From the questionnaires, answers found so far were:

- i. Some policies regarded the spread of Covid-19 viruses was blur at the first time it hit Iran on February 2020. Then, officials became more aware of the danger of the viruses, after some people became very sick and some of them passed away.
- ii. The long waiting for agreement of using some vaccines made it worst for older populations to wait for certainty in the society. Few months after, after President H.E Ebrahim Raisi came to power, this vaccination programs became his priority. Few months after these programs, then people became so certain and positive about the government policies of vaccines.

5. Summary

Global health diplomacy became a necessity in the global arena, especially after companies and governments found the cure of the viruses of Covid-19. Then vaccination became a compulsory, and people lined up to get injected with the vaccine. In Iran also, the first-round vaccination for people at aged above 60 years was done in October 2020. For Republic Islam Iran, organizations such as WHO and UN bodies have help them a lot, with such arrangement of trainings, distribution of information to the people, by social media and other communication tools, so that Iranian people could receive a suitable vaccination.

Skills as management and topics focused on pandemic-information or what they called it info-demic was taught in the WHO's training for medical practitioners around Central Asia, including Iran. It is also included the skills of management interventions and practice to

promote resilience of individuals and communities to the knowledge of the diseases, to counter hoax about this new disease among the people and to promote self-efficacy of individuals for self-protective health behaviors. The training encompassed both global and region-specific topics of the Covid-19 pandemic and health misinformation.

The impact of media in the global information form, mainstream media and social media, also contributed to the positive awareness among the Iranian people. In other writing, writer already tried to discuss this media social's influence during the Covid-19 pandemic time (February 2020 to February 2023).

For socialization of the effective vaccines, government has use many media as its ways to boost people's awareness. And types of vaccines and other health issues relating to Covid-19 were also promoted in the media, and social media.

6. Questionnaires

Questions and answers: (informants)

- i. Do you see that the Government give a clear communication about the pandemic of Covid-19 to the people? Answer : Yes
- ii. How and what is the general communication usually sent to? Online, via television and radio, by emails, by news in the Newspaper and magazines? Internet/ website of Ministry of Health Iran, Television, Radio. Text message/ SMS
- iii. Do you think that these communication were enough? Yes. And doctors in the area usually tell people what to do and socializing drugs and vitamins to cure the Covid-19 viruses
- iv. Please give us some recommendation to increase the awareness of the people about the viruses of Covid-19.
- v. Sending a text message to the people really give benefits to people , in order to pursue and looking for the cure of the pandemic.

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