

ASIA-PACIFIC SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW

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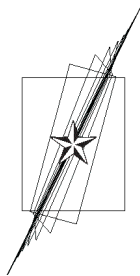
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From the Editor

Transformations and the Role of the Social Sciences in the Post-Pandemic Era

When the WHO declared a global pandemic in early 2020 in the aftermath of a virus outbreak in Wuhan, China, a few months earlier, very few of us imagined the havoc it will wreak and the sweeping changes that would follow. By some conservative estimates, the virus has infected more than 600 million people and taken more than 6.5 million lives worldwide. It led to the greatest modern health crisis since the 1918 flu pandemic and the worst economic recession since World War II. The pandemic has paralyzed and changed many aspects of our lives. It pushed the limits of science and medicine and tested government's ability to deal with the "wicked problem" that is the pandemic: a seemingly unsolvable and extremely difficult puzzle that is constantly changing and with many unknowns.

The record-breaking development and global deployment of COVID-19 vaccines, the product of modern science and international cooperation, has allowed those with access to vaccines substantial protection and a semblance of normalcy. While the virus continues to infect and take lives, the severity of infections and the overall mortality rate has decreased significantly to the point that the health systems of most countries can now cope. Three years on, most of the world is free from the cycles of lockdowns, restrictions, and uncertainty that characterized the early stages of the pandemic. Most of the world is already in recovery, even as we learn to live with the still-present SARS COV2 virus.

Many uncertainties remain. The continued evolution of the SARS COV2 virus and the emergence of new variants of concern coupled with the spread of viruses, like monkeypox, that poses a threat serious enough to be declared a public health emergency of international concern tells us that we can never be complacent. The pandemic reshaped many facets of the economy, governance, and society, allowing us to adapt, and creating new opportunities, while also bringing our attention to enduring issues as well as new challenges. We return to a changed world that is different from the one before COVID-19.

The pandemic has accelerated the fourth industrial revolution, as entire sectors were transformed by the mass integration of digital technologies and the fusion of technologies that blur the lines between the physical, digital, and even biological. The shift of many activities online has made the internet an even more integral part of our lives. Entire industries and sectors have embraced telecommuting and remote work. E-commerce and digital banking have grown in leaps and bounds. Distance, modular, hybrid, and online teaching and learning have become mainstream and will likely retain a significant presence, even as many students return to classrooms. Many scholars learned to embrace online and technology-enabled methodologies such as online surveys and ethnography, meta-analysis, data mining, and data analytics enabled by artificial intelligence and machine learning, among others.

The benefits of the shift are significant but have been unevenly distributed in the face of enduring socio-economic inequalities and the digital divide that characterizes many societies. Advancements in modern science and international cooperation have resulted in new developments and medical technology, but access and distribution to the products of these collaborations, such as new vaccines and medicines, remain unequal between developed and developing countries. E-commerce has boomed, but significant segments of major sectors, such as agriculture and fisheries, have been left behind. The gig economy has boomed, but many gig workers languish under unfair

terms and poor working conditions. The expansion of the internet and social media, which facilitate global communication, has also facilitated the spread of misinformation, polarized societies, undermined democratic institutions, and fostered distrust.

Social science has an important role to play in facing these challenges. As social scientists, we are tasked to help society understand and navigate better the world we live in, including the one we find ourselves in post-pandemic. Our work is invaluable in ensuring that we recover from and learn as much as possible from this pandemic. Our contributions can help strengthen our individual and collective capacity to respond, adapt, and thrive in this environment with its old and new challenges and opportunities. It can also help us better manage other crises that we are facing, such as climate change, and help us prepare for the next pandemic. In this spirit, we see the APSSR as an important platform for social science researchers and important issues and topics concerning the Asia-Pacific region.

This issue of the APSSR includes ten manuscripts on various topics, both classical and contemporary. Nakamura investigates COVID-19 signages in Tokyo and Kanagawa, Japan, and how they cater to non-Japanese residents. Park examines the impact of South Korea's compulsory military service on subsequent civilian wages of veterans in the youth labor market. Howe explores how modern South Korea, as a middle power, can learn from the lessons and fall of the historic nation of Gaya. Xin et al. study the effects of human resource artificial intelligence implementation on organizational performance in select organizations in Malaysia. Loke explores how family financial socialization activities and other factors influence the financial autonomy Malaysian parents grant their children over gift and pocket money. Arifin investigates how the lack of formal diplomatic relations between Taiwan and Indonesia negatively impacts Indonesian migrant workers in the Taiwanese fishing industry.

Pattanawit and Charoensukmongkol, on the other hand, investigate the effect of spiritual intelligence on person-organization fit, organizational commitment, and customer-oriented organizational citizenship behavior among real estate agents in Thailand. Meemon et al., on the other hand, explored the various aspects of income inequality in Thailand using the OECD's relative poverty indicators. Simpao and Yabut model the moderating role of attitudes on the impact of environmental knowledge on conservation behavior among students in Metro Manila, Philippines. Solaiman-Balt et al. show how the COVID-19 pandemic is particularly burdensome for strife-torn countries like Palestine and a double disaster for vulnerable groups with poor access to healthcare and facing economic instability.

This is a transition year for the APSSR. In this issue and the next three issues, the APSSR will include a limited number of book reviews and selected contributions from the humanities in recognition of their inextricable link and invaluable contributions to the social sciences. In the upcoming volumes, the APSSR will further increase its focus on the Asia-Pacific, strengthen the diversity of contributors and contributions, and explore new themes and directions. The number of manuscripts will be adjusted to 10 per regular quarterly issue to facilitate curation and further strengthen the focus of the journal. We will also launch special issues for emerging topics and themes of interest to our readers.

As I start my term, I will build on the work of my predecessors and further strengthen the APSSR as a robust multidisciplinary platform for social sciences research that will help us better understand, face, and prepare for the many challenges facing the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. I want to express my sincerest gratitude to my immediate predecessor as Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Joseph Ching Velasco, for very ably steering the APSSR during a difficult time amid the COVID-19 pandemic, for easing me into the position, and for agreeing to continue serving as Managing Editor of the journal. I am also very grateful to our Academic Editors, Dr. Mark Stephan Felix, Dr. Yan Liu, Dr. Bing Baltazar Brillo, and Dr. Jeremy de Chavez, for staying and continuing to serve the APSSR. Finally, I would like to recognize the invaluable role of our contributors, reviewers, staff, and readers in the continued success of this journal.

Ador Revelar Torneo
Editor-in-Chief
Asia-Pacific Social Science Review
De La Salle University

Guidelines for Authors

1. The APSSR welcomes original and unpublished manuscripts discussing any topic in the social sciences situated in or with significant implications for the Asia-Pacific region.[1] As a multidisciplinary journal, the APSSR encourages diversity and inclusiveness and welcomes submissions from the various social science disciplines and authors in all regions and countries of the Asia-Pacific. The APSSR is also hospitable to Humanities research and will consider submissions in Literary, Translation, and/or Cultural Studies, particularly if they engage with issues pertaining to the Asia-Pacific region.
2. The APSSR encourages and welcomes submissions from different social science disciplines, regions, countries, and epistemological, ontological, and methodological traditions. The journal may decline a second or third consecutive submission from authors whose works have been recently published or accepted in APSSR to maintain the diversity of contributors and provide publication opportunities for other scholars.
3. The APSSR categorizes manuscripts into two—Research Articles and Research Briefs. Research articles are full-length submissions longer than 5,000 words but less than or equal to 8,000 words, including references. Research Briefs are shorter manuscripts less than or equal to 5,000 words in length but are short of a full article. It may present partial results or preliminary findings of ongoing research. Manuscripts submitted as Research Briefs cannot be converted to a Research Article after submission.
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5. Authors may include a maximum of five tables and high-resolution figures in a manuscript. These should be placed in their exact locations within the manuscript rather than at its end or in a separate file. Tables, figures, in-text citations, and references should abide by the rules of the American Psychological Association 7th Edition (APA); click this link to see an example. References in non-Roman scripts and non-English languages must have their English versions. Include the URL and/or DOI of each of the cited sources in the References section. Lastly, author names and affiliations should not appear on the document. The journal will only entertain manuscripts that follow the journal guidelines.
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 - A compelling rationale for the study (i.e., clear research problem, well-articulated research questions or objectives, compelling significance)
 - Soundness and clarity of methodology (i.e., appropriateness of the selected method for the study and sufficiency of information about the research design and specific method of data collection and analysis)
 - Quality of data and analytical rigor (i.e., adequacy of data and how well the analysis support the interpretation and conclusion)

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 - Potential contribution to scholarship and/or practice (i.e., the value of the contributions of the manuscript justify publication)
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