

## Introduction

In 2019, PAP moves into the second year to have online publication and global dissemination on the Emerald Insight platform in open access. There is no charge for authors and readers of this journal. We welcome academics, students, practitioners and managers in non-profit and business organizations to contribute papers relating to public administration and management in the forms of research papers, case studies, commentaries, and viewpoints to the journal. We plan to publish some special issues in the coming two years. A special issue on Corruption Scandals in Asian Countries has been scheduled for publishing in early 2020.

There are two viewpoints and four research papers in this issue. It begins with two viewpoints, first, China's Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA): a new development opportunity for Hong Kong by Siu-kai Lau, and second, The global rise of "fake news" and the threat to democratic elections in the USA by Terry Lee. It is then followed by four research papers. The first research paper is A scale for measuring perceived bureaucratic readiness for smart cities in Indonesia by Arif Budy Pratama and Satria Aji Imawan. The second one is Empowerment through participation in local governance: evidence from Union Parishad in Bangladesh by Nasir Uddin. The third one is How to improve parenting by training: the 6As Positive Parenting Program in Hong Kong by Fiona W.L. Yip, Diane Zelman and Adrian Low. The last research paper is Complaints on abortuses handling: policy recommendations for Hong Kong by Celine S.M. Cheng and Amanda P.Y. Lau.

## China's Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

Before going to the summary of the papers, it might be useful to provide an overview of China's development for its GBA.

Back on 1 July 2017 at the twentieth anniversary of establishment Hong Kong Special Administrative Region under China, witnessed by President Xi Jinping, the National Development and Reform Commission and the governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao signed the Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation in the Development of the GBA in Hong Kong. The Framework Agreement sets out the goals and principles of cooperation and establishes the key cooperation areas in the development of the GBA. Since then, the relevant Central Government departments and the three governments have strived for policy breakthroughs with an innovative and open mind in taking forward the development of the GBA jointly.

The GBA comprises the two Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macao, and the nine municipalities of Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Jiangmen and Zhaoqing in the Pearl River Delta in Guangdong Province in South China. The total land area is 56,000 km<sup>2</sup> and the total population is around 70m in early 2018.

The development of the GBA is a key strategic plan in the China's national development blueprint with great significance in the implementation of innovation-driven development and commitment to reform and opening-up. The objectives are to further deepen cooperation amongst Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, fully leverage the composite advantages of the



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three places, facilitate in-depth integration within the region, and promote coordinated regional economic development, with a view to developing an international first-class bay area ideal for living, working and travelling. It is envisioned as a match for other bay areas of San Francisco, New York and Tokyo with good potential to become not only the Silicon Valley of the East but also Silicon Valley and Wall Street combined within the same megalopolis.

Most recently, the promulgation of the 50-page Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA on 18 February 2019 by China's State Council, signified a new milestone in the development of the GBA. The Plan covers the period from now to 2022 in the immediate term and extends to 2035 in the long term.

Being the most open and international city in the GBA, Hong Kong is known for its status as international financial, transportation, trade centres and aviation hub as well as its renowned professional services. It plays an important role in the GBA Development. The Outline Development Plan supports consolidating and enhancing Hong Kong's status as an international financial centre, as well as strengthening its status as the global offshore renminbi business hub and its role as an international asset management and risk management centre. It also supports the establishment of a platform for investment and financing to serve the Belt and Road Initiative and help mainland enterprises set up capital operations and corporate treasury centres in Hong Kong. Professor Siu-kai Lau will further elaborate on the development opportunities for Hong Kong in the next viewpoint.

### Summary of articles

The following is a brief highlight of all the papers in this issue:

- (1) The first viewpoint is Siu-kai Lau's China's Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA: a new development opportunity for Hong Kong. The "Belt and Road Initiative" has been China's important development strategy in recent years. The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA plan is a key component of the strategy. The strategic goal is to develop the GBA into the most open, market-oriented and innovative centre of economic growth in China. As an integral part of the GBA, Hong Kong is expected and supported by the Chinese Central Government to develop into a hub of the GBA, and, leveraging on Hong Kong's status as an international metropolis, to connect it as a whole with the world. The GBA plan provides Hong Kong with a unique opportunity to move into a new and higher level of economic development. In order to take advantage of the Project, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government needs to play a more proactive role in its socioeconomic development and to strengthen its capacity to mobilize societal participation in the GBA development.
- (2) The second viewpoint is Terry Lee's The global rise of "fake news" and the threat to democratic elections in the USA. To define "fake news" and where it fits among the larger schema of media hoaxing and deception, popular culture and academic studies converged following the 2016 US presidential election. Perhaps the most influential among these descriptions was the impact of social media. The rise of new media outlets as hubs for news consumption are deteriorating the boundaries between news, "fake news" and advertisements, with damaging effects to democracy. In light of the recent elections in the USA, many fear "fake news" has gradually become a powerful and sinister force, both in the news media environment and in fair and free elections. Such fears stem from the idea that as news consumption increasingly occurs via social media sites, audiences are finding themselves more likely to be drawn in by sensational headlines and therefore to sources lacking accuracy and legitimacy. Such a scenario draws into a question of how the general public interacts with such outlets and to what extent and in which ways individual responsibility should govern the interactions with news outlets in social media. Essentially, "fake news" is changing

and distorting how political campaigns are run, ultimately calling into question of legitimacy of elections, elected officials and governments. Social media has increasingly been confirmed as an enabler of fake news, and continues to project its potentially negative impact on democracy.

- (3) The third paper is Arif Budy Pratama and Satria Aji Imawan's research paper on A scale for measuring perceived bureaucratic readiness for smart cities in Indonesia. This paper aims to develop and validate a scale for measuring perceived bureaucratic readiness for smart city initiatives in Indonesia. The study employs a mixed method approach to achieve its research objectives. An exploratory study, consisting of literature review and qualitative interviews with key informants, was conducted to develop an initial instrument for measuring bureaucratic readiness. An online survey of 40 civil servants involved in smart city programmes in the Yogyakarta City government was then administered to test the instrument's validity and reliability. It finds that the perceived bureaucratic readiness can be measured through four dimensions: commitment of the upper echelons; legal support; information technology resources; and governance. The proposed scale provides an alternative instrument for measuring perceived bureaucratic readiness for smart city initiatives. However, there are limitations on this research. As data were only derived from one city government, they were relatively small in scope. This study not only provides a better understanding of bureaucratic readiness for smart city initiatives, but also proposes an assessment tool as a practical means of assessing bureaucratic readiness. The quantification of readiness is beneficial for putting smart city programmes into practice, as it allows smart city managers to assess the internal bureaucracy's level of readiness. It also allows managers to mitigate and further policy agendas and thereby improve the bureaucracy's support for smart city programmes. This article contributes to smart city research by reaching beyond the technological perspective and focussing on local government bureaucracy. It proposes a systematic way to develop a means of measuring perceived bureaucratic readiness for smart city programmes.
- (4) The fourth paper by Nasir Uddin is Empowerment through participation in local governance: evidence from Union Parishad in Bangladesh. The traditional concept of people's participation through their representatives is gradually changing to the mechanism of direct participation of community people in the local governing process. In coupling with these, the constitution of Bangladesh and the local government acts guarantee to foster the direct participation of people in the formation of local bodies and development programmes. This paper explores the avenues of people's participation in local government, particularly the Union Parishad in Bangladesh and evaluates the empowerment of local community through those avenues. Adopting a broad descriptive and analytical approach, this paper assesses the relationship between participation and empowerment of local community. The study finds that local government institutions, particularly Union Parishad has many mechanisms through which people participate in decision-making process. It is believed that participation of community people in local government institutions not only is an opportunity for them but also an apparatus of empowerment. Hence, the process of empowerment is entrenched in the notion of participation. It is evident that the people at grassroots level have been participating in Union Parishad in diverse arrangements, but the effectiveness of these participations in terms of empowerment is still meager and even lacking. Very few researches were undertaken to assess the people's participation in local government. More significantly, no single initiative was undertaken to assess how empowerment of marginalized people happened through these initiatives as empowering community people is the key objective of it.

- (5) The fifth paper is How to improve parenting by training: the 6As Positive Parenting Program in Hong Kong by Fiona W.L. Yip, Diane Zelman and Adrian Low. Research suggests that children in Hong Kong are at elevated risk for emotional problems. Authoritarian parenting, a common parenting style in Hong Kong, is a critical factor associated with childhood mental health problems. This study evaluated the effectiveness of the 6As Positive Parenting Program (6As) in modifying parenting attitudes, reduction of parenting stress and increasing self-efficacy in positive parenting, among a sample of 82 Hong Kong parents. 6As focusses on prevention by instilling positive parenting beliefs and principles, thereby reducing reliance on authoritarian and related parenting styles. The programme was evaluated by using a controlled pre-post treatment design. Outcome measures were the Chinese Child-rearing Beliefs Questionnaire, Parental Stress Scale, Parenting Self-efficacy Scale, and participant feedback. ANOVA and correlation were utilized to detect treatment effects and relationships between degree of change among measures and subscales. As a result, relative to the control group, the 6As Positive Parenting program significantly changed parents' parenting attitudes, reduced parenting stress, and increased self-efficacy in positive parenting. In total, 97.6 per cent of the participants agreed that the program is a good fit for Hong Kong culture. Findings suggest that positive parenting can enhance the parent-child relationship and reduce parental stress. The results support governmental, non-governmental organizational and community focus on positive practices for parenting training in Hong Kong.
- (6) The last research paper is Complaints on abortuses handling: policy recommendations for Hong Kong by Celine S.M. Cheng and Amanda P.Y. Lau. This paper reviews cases about complaints of abortuses handling in Hong Kong, and proposes policy recommendations to help comfort parents with respect and dignity towards abortuses. The study uses a systematic review of articles/newspapers related to the practice and regulation of abortuses handling in Hong Kong and overseas countries. Also, point of views among stakeholders are selected from: newspapers, patients' groups, Hong Kong SAR Government's websites, radio programmes' interviews, related organizations' websites, blogs from legislative councilors and lawyers. Since parents suffered from miscarriage before 24 weeks' pregnancy are increasingly willing to share their experiences and struggled for arranging a legal funeral for their children, Hong Kong SAR Government is able to understand these parents' needs and hence set up more "Angel Garden" in both the public and the private cemeteries. Yet, the provision of funeral and cremation services are still not comprehensive. Existing measures from Mainland China and overseas countries in handling abortuses and providing support for parents are analyzed. More critically, ethical concern on handling abortuses as one of the clinical wastes is further included in the discussion. Although all less than 24 weeks' fetuses cannot be given any Certificate of Stillbirth, respect and dignity can still be presented towards their parents by flexible regulation. After discussing the related measures on handling abortuses from other countries, some of their humane regulations are deemed feasible and are recommended for Hong Kong.

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**About the Editor-in-Chief**

Professor Peter K.W. Fong, PhD (New York University), is the President of Hong Kong Public Administration Association and Editor-in-Chief of *Public Administration and Policy: An Asia-Pacific Journal*; Managing Director of Peter Fong & Associates Ltd. and Principal Consultant of Investport Ltd. He teaches the DBA Programme and supervises doctoral students of the School of Business, University of Wales Trinity Saint David. He also holds advisory and visiting Professorships in several Mainland China universities, namely Tsinghua, Renmin, Tongji, and Tianjin Universities. He is a member of Hong Kong Institute of Planners, Planning Institute Australia, and Chartered Institute of Logistic and Transport. He was formerly a Fellow of Judge Business School, University of Cambridge; Director of EMBA programme at HKU Business School; Associate Professor, Department of Urban Planning and Urban Design, HKU; Executive Vice President and Professor, City University of Macau (formerly AIOU); Honorary Professor, China Training Centre for Senior Civil Servants, Ministry of Human Resource and Social Security, PRC; Studies Director, Civil Service Training and Development Institute of the HKSAR Government; Visiting Scholar at MIT; and Consultant of the World Bank and Delta Asia Bank in Macao. Peter K.W. Fong can be contacted at: [fongpeter@netvigator.com](mailto:fongpeter@netvigator.com)