

Editorial

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This Summer/Fall issue of the *Business and Public Administration Studies Journal* contains articles on several Latin American countries: Venezuela, Brazil, Northern Triangle Countries (NTC - that comprise El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala). Other papers deal with Haiti and Turkey. The article on insurance policy employs Servqual model to address the complexity of the insurance field.

Bruna Reisdoerfer and Marc Castillo open the current issue with an overview article on Venezuela's entry into Mercosur. Known as the Common Market of the South it represented an opportunity for a nexus between the Amazon Basin, the River Plate Basin. Also, between the different cooperation projects that exist among them. That platform could serve as a model and an impetus for regional development through economic, political, energy and security integration. The study aims to identify the main economic and political impacts of this suspension for Brazil. The authors employ a casual hypothesis testing methodology through primary data collection and literature review to answer a key question of "what are the economic and political impacts, for Brazil, of Venezuela's suspension from Mercosur?"

Their hypothesis serves to test whether Venezuela's suspension from Mercosur has facilitated or deteriorated bilateral trade with Brazil. Also, it questions the possibility of economic integration between the northern and southern regions of the continent, and consequently, stability and regional development. The authors infer from their research that their hypothesis has only been partially proven. The negative effects mentioned were detected during the period under review. However, the Andean country had not carried out its economic and political integration when it was suspended from the bloc. Thus, its suspension was not the cause of these problems, but only an aggravating element of these economic and political impacts. These, in effect, mostly arise from its internal socio-cultural, political, technological and economic crises. Moreover, they stem from the posture of Brazilian alignment with other countries, to the detriment of autonomous regional development.

Next article, by Rene Pinilla addresses issues of Central American continent, also known as Mesoamerica. These the so called, the Northern Triangle countries (NTC) comprise El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. All three were once part of the greater Federal Republic of Central America (consisting of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua among others). Historically, the region also comprises Costa Rica, Belize and central to southern Mexico.

These historical details are important in terms of a shared sense of unity. The three NTC nations celebrate their independence from Spain in the month of September.

These countries are currently the biggest sources of undocumented migrants to the United States. Mr. Pinilla's paper discusses the Northern Triangle as a region, its

important economic and political role, and shows why it is vital for the United States.

A lot can be said in regards to these regions, the author condenses his arguments to make broad subject narrower. His key argument lies in the idea that both the US should invest money in the Northern Triangle and work together in ways they can cooperate for a shared future. In terms of sheer number of people living in the region, there are approximately 30 million inhabitants in the NTC (i.e., less than 10% percent of the USA's population). Also, almost half of the population is living below the poverty line.

Sharon M. Alvarez Huitron writes about "The case of Haiti: lessons learned for the future of democracy and international development". The author asks whether we might consider that for democracy to be effective in Haiti we may need to apply different policy instruments. Other - and different - than the ones implemented in industrialized parts of the world. Political events in Haiti can provide ample source of knowledge to improve democracy for the rest of the world. In her analysis she tackles two different approaches, a top-bottom approach and a bottom-up approach. This helps us better understand a more functional democratic model approach in Haiti. Democracy has been largely understood in terms of institutions and elections. In this context, democracy aims for a country to have strong institutions with mechanisms of checks and balances as well as citizens that have the right to vote for their representatives via a transparent process.

Democracy better serves us all through its effective provision of public services for the majority. This results in an overall improvement of human development indicators that grow organically in a sustainable and inclusive political apparatus. Democracy in this sense can be understood as an organizational power structure designed to improve our daily lives. Sharon assesses Haitian democracy in the context of a "bottom-up" understanding, with two main indicators of success: a) an effective provision of services and b) sufficient tax collection for a sustainable governance in the long run.

Sergio Martinez in his article titled: "The role of climate finance in strengthening resilience-building efforts in SIDS". The SIDS stands for Small Island Developing States, which is set of countries with smaller territorial size and higher remoteness than other countries in the world. The sets of countries face unique economic vulnerabilities that arise from their small domestic markets, limited number of skilled workforce, and narrow natural resource base. He cites to the Economic Vulnerability Index (EVI), to explain that the SIDS are the most economically vulnerable among developing countries, particularly to exogenous and environmental shocks.

SIDS are increasingly facing a combination of risks driven by climate change and commodity price volatility. On

one hand, having most of territorial surface only 3-4 meters above mean sea level makes small islands vulnerable to suffer a cascade of impacts from global sea level rise expected to occur between 43 cm to 84 cm by 2100. On the other hand, SIDS rely heavily on food and fuel imports, which expose them to price spikes and supply shortages of essential commodities.

Climate finance can enable SIDS to strengthen resilience building efforts and achieve structural transformation required to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. While climate finance instruments target adaptation and mitigation actions in response to environmental risks, it also offers a pathway for SIDS to enhance their productive capacities needed for developing resilience-proof infrastructures, economic systems and institutions. Climate finance can offer an avenue for domestic and international actors to amplify resource mobilizations into sectors with productive capacity gaps to become climate resilient. While

some SIDS have been able to utilize climate finance instruments to a degree, most of them do not have proper access to these instruments. Increasing climate financing opportunities for SIDS should, therefore, be at the forefront of current and future resilience building initiatives in SIDS.

Jarosław Wenancjusz Przybytniowski posits in his essay titled: "On service provision using the example of motor insurance". Negative factors which have recently appeared in the financial market, as well as in the insurance market (Russia's war in The Ukraine, growing inflation, and continuing financial crisis) threatened the consumer market, undermining the trust of customers to the legal system and financial institutions. The author analyzes the main directions of changes in the process of providing motor insurance services in insurance institutions, with a particular focus on damage liquidation, using the Servqual Research Method. This work is an analysis to prove the thesis that the level and the appropriate system of managing service quality of motor insurance is becoming increasingly important in the position of an insurance institution, and the financial crisis created a need for the growth of insurance awareness of customers of insurance companies.

In competing for a potential customer, it is the level and the quality of provided services which is becoming increasingly important. It should be connected with constant recognition and meeting the customers; changing needs and expectations.

Insurance business has its multi-aspect activity concerns. These are often critical problems of compensation payment, and its nature is not shown until after the insurance risk becomes a reality. One of the tasks of an insurance institution is to create a confidence in professionalism and competence in its relations with customers. It is not easy due to the complicated, from the legal point of view, conditions of insurance business. There are numerous regulations determining compensation payment, and knowledge of which the customer is often unaware. It is the role of the institution to point to these conditions and make the customer aware of their existence. The most difficult part of the job is the damage control process which may be the principal determinant of evaluating the quality of provided services. The concept of quality in insurance services is becoming community-oriented and the customer, the receiver of the service, is its verifier.

Kathleen Harrington in: "Revising the U.S.'s trade policy approach to Turkey" argues that the current economic policy of the United States towards Turkey needs to be reassessed and subsequently amended. It needs to focus on developing a stronger trade relationship with Turkey. The effect of United States' implementation of trade tariffs on Turkey during the previous (Trump) administration has been detrimental to the success of foreign policy goals in the region. Thus, making it necessary to revise not only political, but also economic policy. A reassessment reveals that tariffs are a threat to an overall stable relationship. Especially now, as the U.S recognizes the challenges while showing its strong leadership qualities in a new increasingly multipolar, complex economic and political environment.

Turkey being a free market economy faces several challenges such as mounting foreign debt, investment vulnerabilities, rising unemployment and inflation. Shifts in the economy since 2000 have revealed some of these current economic issues. Since early 2001 Turkey experienced an average of 6% growth until 2008. This stability allowed for Turkey to move towards more privatization. After 2008, and even more so after 2019 pandemic, they experienced relative declines with the rest of the world because of the global economic crisis. The IMF reforms helped assure a swifter recovery because they had established a well-regulated financial market and a banking system.

Government policies in Turkey are putting more emphasis on populist spending measures, credit breaks and slowing economic reforms. These government policies are also reversing the previous shift towards privatization and the government is taking a heavy hand in certain sectors and using regulators and institutions to target political opponents, subsequently undercutting confidence in the private sector and in judicial systems. These changing political economic goals are stymying the trends towards growth reflected over the past decades.