

The New Reality of Bangladesh: A Critical Analysis of New Normal Challenges and Opportunities

Umme Sayeda*

Abstract

The post-COVID-19 new normal will arise as a game-changer in the policy-making of the world states. Accordingly, this article highlights the post-pandemic Bangladesh that should integrate biology affirmatively in the policy development procedures to reshape the new normal challenges as opportunities. The grounded theory method is adopted as a quantitative analysis tool relying on the secondary sources of data to portray the significance of biopolitics as political rationality in new norm Bangladesh. The researcher has used the neo-realism approach to develop the 'Biopolitical Rationale Theory', which uncovers how evolving neo-realist security demands the prioritization of biopolitics in every sphere of decision making for governing the post-pandemic new standard of existence. The 2020 corona outbreak proved that human life and the environment are the ultimate means of survival rather than the traditional security arrangements and extreme economic growth which are inhumane (rationality of death and militarization), unhygienic, and destructive to the environment (exploitation of nature is profitable). The article recommends some alternative new normal policies such as non-discriminative health policy, bordering in line with International Health Regulations (IHR), digitalization with better cybersecurity, virtualization of the tourist industry (application of Extended Reality), application of Career Resilience (CR), and Strategic Flexibility Analysis tools in the re-employment and career development, greening the economy, special arrangements for emergency health crisis and undertaking actions considering the environment as a remedy rather than a crisis. The review research concludes that the inclusion of biopolitics in the Bangladesh governance system can redesign the challenges of new normal as new opportunities. But the reshaping of such a new reality will itself prevail as a considerable challenge for Bangladesh.

Keywords: Bangladesh, Post-Pandemic, New Normal, Biopolitics, Biopolitical Rationale Theory

Introduction

Post-pandemic normalization of life will be very challenging for third world countries like Bangladesh. The world people will never go back to the norm rather than a new norm normal in the post-pandemic era. The World Health Organization (WHO) recognized the COVID-19 as a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, and declared it earlier as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on January 30, 2020. The 2019-nCoV acute respiratory disease was first identified in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan in China and has emerged as an ongoing pandemic.

On 8th March, COVID-19 affected patients identified for the first time in Bangladesh which now holds the 17th disastrous corona occupied country in the world (UNB, 2020). The infection

*University of Chittagong, Bangladesh, Email: usayed94@gmail.com

rate is currently 20.30 percent (3,04,583); the recovery rate is 63.52 percent (1,93,458), and the death rate stands at 1.35 percent (4,127), according to the official statement of the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IDCR) till 28th August (Covid-19: 45 dies, 2020). The average dealing of Bangladesh with the pandemic lacked the ‘whole-of-nation’ collaboration, maintained a culture of information secrecy, and corrupted the biopolitical measures. The new normal reconstruction and securitization process will be very challenging for Bangladesh because the global pandemic conditioned the world system to reshape the policy priorities by taking the biopolitics as primary rationality.

Substantial contemporary research works highlight the importance of biology as a political rationality for humankind’s survival from the 20th century. Concurrent pandemic stressed the significance of biopolitics by uncovering the failure of ill-structured political and economic systems of countries. Researchers extended biology to the environment and climate for ensuring the ecological, mental, and physical well-being of humanity (Spash, 2020). The present study develops the Biopolitical Rationale Theory to explore the recommended policy strategy needed for the reconstruction of COVID-19 devastations based on Neorealism. The theory was formulated using the grounded theory methodology. The present analysis applied the hypothesis of Bangladesh’s post-pandemic normalization challenges. The overall aim of the study was to portray the necessity of the incorporation of affirmative biological politics in the decision-making process of Bangladesh to overcome the difficult challenges of the upcoming normal.

Materials and Methods

The qualitative research aimed to illustrate the prioritization of biopolitics as a new norm of the post-pandemic era by using the flexible methodological strategies of grounded theory. The idea is grounded in actual data, and it involves the collection and systematic analysis of data. And the central idea stands as the grounded theory which consists of data collection and analysis, coding of the data into concepts and categories, formulating a thematic framework through interpretative analysis, memoing, and integrating the categories and subcategories. Using the neorealism approach of international relations as a qualitative analytic tool, the researcher tried to look into the Biopolitical Rationale Theory. The view demonstrates the new expected survival of humanity, domestic and international politics, and the economy vested in the biopolitical policy strategy. The study applied the idea to the new normal challenges of Bangladesh.

Grounded theory is a research method used to disclose social processes (social relationships and behaviors of groups). Theoretical sensitivity is a fundamental part of this research instrument, which concerns the researcher's ability to convey meaning to the collected data, understand what the data indicates, and the proficiency to compare which information is convenient and which is not. All of the policies of the post-pandemic age are termed as new normal policies. The 'new normal' concept refers to a condition in which economy, politics, and the entire society following a crisis or pandemic or war and the normal differ from the earlier normality of life. New changes and challenges require innovative policy scheme. So, the researcher used the grounded theory mechanism to disclose a unique and useful theoretical framework of policy implementation after the COVID-19 era. The neorealism approach stands for the standard of the self-interest of the states and practical problems of world politics in a specific period. According to the neorealists, new normal demands a visionary change in the traditional security of the international system. Using the approach, the researcher proposed the theory of the Biopolitical Rationale. The hypothesis recommends biology as the central political rationality in the reshaping mechanism of state policies. Biopolitics represents a significant methodological means for the supportive researchers of the affirmative biology involving in governmental actions and plans. This type of rationality makes human life, and its mechanisms enter into the estimation of the government. The analysis depicts the Bangladesh scenario through the lenses of the Biopolitical Rationale Theory. The study leaned on secondary data collections from the statements of governmental agencies and non-governmental research organizations, newspapers, books, relevant journals, reports of different international and domestic organizations.

Theoretical Framework: Biopolitical Rationale Theory

Glaser and Strauss (1967) first developed the idea of grounded theory in California, USA (Noble & Mitchell, 2016). Grounded theory is a research instrument which requires formal procedures for data review and assists the researchers to search for and conceptualize the hidden social structures and formations (Noble & Mitchell, 2016). New normal is the core category in sampling the Biopolitical Rationale Theory and the primary phenomena around the present theoretical view. The developed idea provides policy redefining in Bangladesh to deal with the upcoming new normal challenges. International relation's neorealism approach is also used to develop the Biopolitical Rationale Theory to uncover new standpoints on the decision-making of Bangladesh.

The New Normal

The normalization of life after a crisis, pandemic or war is defined as 'new normal'. The idea emerges to indicate an unavoidable acceptance of a new situation (Booij, 2020). Nowadays, the situation refers to the worldwide post-pandemic change in normalness which is generated by the new social contact norms (Booij, 2020). The media effect is making the concept immensely popular. But the concept of new normal was used by Sandman and Lanard (2005) as a public attitude manipulation tool. The idea has been adopted following the 2007-2008 economic crisis, post-global depression of 2008-2014, and recently the global epidemic COVID-19.

Since 2008, American new lifestyle and changed behavior during the great recession were known as 'new normal' in America (Etzioni, 2011). The recession-era reframed the meaning of 'good life' for Americans. According to Schor (2011), many Americans reduced their consumption and its environmental consequences at the same time. So, the then 'new normal' showed a positive attitudinal change towards ecology. A survey of Euro RSCG Worldwide (2010) portrayed that 67 percent of American people expressed the economic depression served to remind people of "what matters in life." The survey (2010) also revealed 48 percent of Americans were trying to find out "what makes them happy." 78 percent were attempting to improve "how they live" and to enhance themselves as an individual (Euro RSCG Worldwide, 2010). Adams gave prominence to the idea that materialism is not central to the American Dream. He acknowledged that the American new normal Dream after the great recession of 2008: "We cannot become a great democracy by giving ourselves up as individuals to selfishness, physical comfort, and cheap amusement" (Best, 2011).

In 2014, Chinese President Xi Jinping magnified the theory of new normal by announcing the incorporation of new normal policies in the Chinese economy in the meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in Beijing. According to President Xi's speech, the concept referred to an economic shifting. The new normal is nothing new—the California-based bond fund famous Pacific Investment Management Co. first popularized it to indicate the decline in the average growth after the global crisis. The concept attained ground when in China when President Xi announced the new normal adaptation strategy: "A new normal of China's economy has emerged with several notable features."

The same term was used to define climate transformation and adaptation in 2015. The scientific literature used this terminology to demonstrate the climatological circumstances which focused

on realizing the contemporary extreme climate events (Lewis *et al.*, 2017). During the 2020 coronavirus outbreak, media is using the term to explore a new set of social contact norms, such as social and physical distancing. And all these norms are termed as new normal norms. Booij (2020) remarks that these are new standards indicated for coping with a new reality.

The Neorealism Approach of International Relations

The leading neorealist intellectual Kenneth Waltz aspires to explain how the power transition and newly emerged challenges can alter the international system. His Theory of International Politics (1979) provides scientific explanations and the normative concerns of the global political system (Jackson & Sorensen, 2010).

The ‘anarchy’ and ‘structure’ are the two interlinked ideas of the approach. The structure of the international system is anarchistic. In this anarchic structure, states need a ‘self-help system’ to defend themselves as they struggle all-time against potential attacks from each other (Didek, 2012). States exist in perpetual risk. States are equal to the power of sovereignty. Other major functions of the states are the same. States vary only in their capabilities and strategies to respond to significant challenges and changes in the system. Waltz terms the capabilities as ‘relative capabilities’ and which is posed by every state. Capabilities are the means of survival of the states. Survival refers to obtain relative gains and ensure national interests.

Uncertainties occur when international change occurs. The international transition emerges when the balance of power shifts followed by the rise and fall and the great powers. And global pandemics, crises, wars, or different uncertain situations cause this power transition.

Waltz does not convey any exact policy guidelines to the state leaders to deal with the emerging problems. Waltz clarifies the policies which cover the necessities to provide the best protection of states’ interests and their success (Jackson & Sorensen, 2010). Only the situation or condition in which the governments discover or found themselves is the rationale preference rather than any political interest or economic growth.

Neorealism dictates biopolitical policies as a new normal norm because the rational calculation to survive supports life and its mechanisms in the post-pandemic age. The current pandemic showed the states which can ensure the health security of their population effectively and can manage to survive well. The researcher used the approach to highlight a dramatic shift in capabilities, survival, the balance of power, and policymaking for the reason of biology.

The Biopolitical Rationale Theory

Biology conveys a long history in politics. The center of all political conflicts is rooted in the relationship between politics and biology (Peters & Besley, 2020). Now, biology is extended to 'environment' and 'climate'. As humans are part of the environment, they live in it, from it, and within it. The environment is a major part of the human immunity system. So, the environment is biology.

'Biopolitics' is the concept first explained by Foucault in his publication *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault, 1978). Foucault discussed 'biopower' as a double-edged technology, which consisted of two apparatuses: anatomopolitics and biopolitics (Foucault, 1978). Anatomopolitics displays the format of the human body as a productive instrument (Filipe, 2014). According to Filipe (2014), biopolitics refers to the strategies and actions targeting the human body considering longevity, natality, mortality, morbidity, health, and hygiene, etc. Amagben (1998) summarized biopolitics as "the growing inclusion of man's natural life in the mechanisms and calculations of power." Political and international scholars like Duffield (2007) illustrated the growth of global biopolitics targeting health, demographics, territory, and power with the formation of the international agenda of human development and protection.

The theory of the Biopolitical Rationale is developed based on the Neorealism approach of IR. The theory exhibits the idea of incorporating the life of the population and environment in every aspect of policymaking and implementation will be the perfectly rational preference in the post-COVID-19 age. COVID-19 is a potential threat to international society and individual nations. The danger predominantly posed on global public health and ultimately extended to the worldwide economy and politics. Human life should be included in the political and economic system rather than the violence and exploitation of humanity. Biopolitical discourses and practices will work as a fundamental transformation of human life (Filipe, 2014). The transformation of human life and bio-history is the vital rationale for existence after the global epidemic, according to the present study's formulated theory. According to the hypothesis, if the problems are embedded in biology, we need to find solutions in biology. And the ultimate solution will be biopolitics.

A global emergency like the SARS-COV2 outbreak highlights the importance of affirmative biopolitics for the survival of the international system. So, the remedy and the ultimate rationality revolve around the maintenance of good public health, hygiene, birth rate, death

rate, life expectancy, race, etc. (Peters & Besley, 2020). Bangladesh can undertake a biopolitical policy agenda as the new normal reconstruction and securitization process.

Results and Discussion

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19, a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) earlier in March before it is appearing as a ‘global pandemic’. But almost all the countries of the world in general and Bangladesh, in particular, lacked any pre-preparedness for this emerging health crisis. The potential spread of ‘community transmission’ eventually affected every sector of the country. Every income sector (garments, immigration, the tourist industry, businesses, employment, overconsumption, and exploitation of nature) got collapsed to consider public health security. The over-density and extreme poverty played a double game with the Bangladeshi population’s life. Corruption accelerated the damages of the global pandemic, and it was resulted in lacking all types of collaboration. Many reasonable attempts of the government proved as ineffective and unsuitable to the local societies for lack of cooperation and proper planning. With the incursion of the corona crisis, Bangladesh is struggling as the most climate change affected country.

Bangladesh has been encountering a severe effect of COVID-19 on its political, economic, social, cultural standards, and health sector. Policy reset based on the life of the public and their good health is remarkably needed. The COVID-19 scenario will make the new normal the most challenging time. The outbreak exhibited that as a state is made of its people not only with the land/territory, so the government should work for upgrading the human life standard, not for economic or political ends. Including Bangladesh, every country should take lessons and step forward to reset their policies. Sarasin (2020) terms governments considering “health” as the means of survival as “a biopolitical dream” (Peters & Besley, 2020). For instance, every country guaranteed ‘quarantine’ and ‘stay at home’ initiative to ensure social distancing and containment of the virus as ordinary political rationality. So, Bangladesh has to strengthen its biotechnological investigation and biosafety level to contain the next epidemics and bioterrorism.

Transformation of Discriminative Health Policy

Bangladesh faced tremendous obstacles to ensure health facilities in the primary responsibility of the pandemic. The first step of minimizing the infection rate is the separation of the COVID-19 affected persons from the non-infected. But in the hospital where infections and cross-contamination are appearing as a significant phenomenon, and non-COVID patients are panic

enough about their medication. Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) is very expensive, time-consuming, and high technology-relied. So, Bangladesh is exasperated to do minimum tests per day (Islam *et al.*, 2020). While the rate of testing is 71 by 1000 in the US, the rate is 3 by 1000 in Bangladesh (Islam *et al.*, 2020). The contact tracing facility has developed very recently, but many people have no idea about its use. So, the government should establish its own biotechnologies to contain the infection and to increase the research. Rather than using western health securing terms, Bangladesh must innovate health management policies according to Bangladeshi culture, nature, and mentality. As a result, if the guidelines and rules are understandable to the local people, then the whole of the nation can fight against the virus effectively. In this situation, we should consider the words of Larson (2020) pronounced in his article 'How to Win the War on Coronavirus', "We have struggled with situational awareness. Victory will require a 'whole-of-nation' commitment-federal, state, and local government along with the private sector and every man, woman, and child."

The proposed budget of FY2020-21 raised a considerable scale of criticism as a 'growth-oriented budget' around the whole country. Professor of Health Economics of Dhaka University, Syed Ahmed Hamid, said that bureaucrats of the health ministry rarely understood about the health system while health professionals have ineffective insight about the budget allocation (Maswood, 2020). He also suggested for the systematic health budget allocation that needs more insightful and innovative knowledge and planning (Maswood, 2020). Bangladesh allocated as much as BDT 41,027 crores (\$484 crores) to the public health sector, which is 1.3 percent of the GDP and 7.2 percent of the total budget of FY 2020-21 (Hasan, 2020). The allocation should be more than or equal to 15 percent to reach sustainable development goals. Health professionals and the health ministry have an immediate need to be well-trained to manage the post-pandemic damages.

During the pandemic, reproductive health (Church, 2020) and the health of the aging population have faced shocking discrimination in Bangladesh (Hossain *et al.*, 2020). Heightening uncertainty and unforeseen aspects of the bio-disaster have accelerated psychological suffering and mental sickness (Banna *et al.*, 2020). Social distancing, isolation, lockdown, travel bans, working from home lead to extreme intimate partner violence, expanding the number of unintended pregnancies, abortions, and deaths, rape, and domestic violence (Short *et al.*, 2020). The situation is more alarming for those people with a particular disability who are unable to maintain social distancing, isolation, or any good hygiene policies. The current health policies have made them extremely vulnerable during the pandemic (Goggin

& Ellis, 2020). David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder, two disability scholars, term ‘biopolitics of disability’ which assesses the ‘normative modes of participation’ to transform the deficiency acquainted framework of the health care system (Goggin & Ellis, 2020). Bangladesh needs discrimination-free and exceptional service-oriented framing for the most vulnerable and powerless population. The country should take measures to prevent illnesses psychologically, which is the root of other significant hardships. Health professionals and the health ministry have an immediate need to be well-trained to manage the post-pandemic damages. The new-realism approach stresses practical and scientific solutions of health crises and biopolitics can be taken as rationality to standardize the new normal in Bangladesh.

Promoting the ‘Global Health Security’ in Bordering Issues

The International Health Regulations (IHR) of the World Health Organization (WHO) revised in 2005 and was agreed by all member states (Ferhani & Rushton, 2020). The IHR solidified ‘Global Health Security’ and the concept refers to the security of the individual state counts on the safety of all (Ferhani & Rushton, 2020). According to the paperwork of Ferhani and Rushton (2020), the IHR stands against the travel and trade impediments for four reasons: i) cannot contain the spread of viruses, ii) damage the economy, iii) help the government in maintaining the secrecy, hampering the proper medication and transportation of the medical, and iv) human rights violations in the border zones. Therefore, IHR maintains the biopolitics of border issues.

The state governments, including Bangladesh, confirmed travel and trade restrictions predominantly as a sign of nationalistic view. But the strict border regulations formulated into the politicization of medicine or the medicalization of politics. There are 2200 public and 5500 private hospitals and clinics in the country, but unfortunately, only more than 12 hospitals in the capital district and one hospital in every district are delivering health services dedicatedly. Only 733 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and about 1800 ventilations are available in the country. Many patients who are tested positive cannot access medical care and only 25 percent of health workers are serving in rural which are inadequate compared to 70 percent population living in the rural areas (Ganguly, 2020). Most of the medication facilities are available only in Dhaka and are inaccessible to the general people living around the country. 39 public hospitals in Bangladesh cannot supply sufficient oxygen to the patients, so many people are stocking oxygen cylinders at home to be safe (BRAC, 2020). Five million transport workers are in high health risk (BRAC, 2020). The price of medicines and local health safety equipment is increasing daily because of trade and travel bans within the country. This leads to an artificial

scarcity in the local market as people have started overstocking medicines such as hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin (Huq & Biswas, 2020). Ultimately the initial border ban has proven a hardship for the local population.

The threat is collective, so the containment policy should be developed collectively. The IHR demands ‘globalization of disease control efforts’ as no individual country can keep disease out of its territory in this globalized world (Ferhani & Rushton, 2020). Bangladesh should follow the instructions provided by IHR in the post-COVID-19 new challenges to preserve its public health and economy.

Acceleration of Digitalization with Strict Cybersecurity

The SARS-2 episode exacerbated the worldwide development of the fourth Industrial Revolution. Automation is a reset strategy for all states. The more self-imposed and government regulated social distancing will be developing as the norm, the more digitalization and urbanization will materialize. Currently, spatial development is linked to the digitalization of the technology, which is emerging as e-shopping, e-medicine, e-economy, e-learning, e-government, e-tourism, *etc.* (Kunzmann, 2020). As a result, individual privacy is not considered as a human right after the epidemic. Immense virtualization of human life urges potential cybersecurity to secure the country’s people.

European culture of technocracy will dominate the world as more potent than any domestic government (Heisbourg, 2020). The growth of digitalization generates another significant challenge known as ‘infodemic’. The influential social media-constructed misinformation and fake news battle simulate a considerable threat to global and domestic governance. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus announces, “We are not just fighting an epidemic; we’re fighting an infodemic” (Islam & Whelan, 2020). So, Bangladesh should develop an effective containment measure and clarity of information, which is vital to regulate the spread of the virus (Ruiu, 2020). The digitalization of spaces demands new forms of securities of human society as such cybersecurity and information surveillance. And the protection should be politicized through the lenses of the biopolitical rationale theory.

Modification of the Tourist Industry

COVID-19 established Extended Reality (XR) as the alternative of real-life tourism as a result of worldwide travel and trade bans. Except for the travel prohibitions, people pursue social distancing as a precaution. Consequently, the tourism industry will not get back to the pre-pandemic situation. The XR (*e.g.*, virtual reality, augmented reality, mixed reality, and future

reality) presents the virtual tourists in a human-machine merged reality with integrated cyber and physical surroundings (Kwok & Koh, 2020). 'Creative destruction' and 'creative accumulation' can be converted into an innovative tourism industry scheme, according to Schumpeter's innovation hypothesis (Kwok & Koh, 2020). The application of XR has a diverse potential to recreate the travel adventure, which allows multi-stakeholders to endure the pandemic border impediments. This technological version of tourism and virtualization of human pleasure requires more consumer-centric technologies to ensure their safety and privacy. And the real-life tourist zones like Cox' Bazar can be re-designed according to the health regulations and proper planning; it may be proven more advantageous for Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi profitable pre-pandemic tourist enterprises can enact the strategies with the quantity of strict cybersecurity because the security of life is the prime priority for every person who will desire to enjoy traveling from home. As a tourist industry owner or a consumer, the Bangladesh government and business societies should incorporate the XR version with the prioritization of biopolitics affirmatively.

New Norm Employment and Career Development

The global pandemic reasonably diverted the working environment in organizations and influenced the workers in different industries. \$138 million work orders were canceled initially as the pandemic response in Bangladesh. As a result, the livelihood of 4.1 million working-class people is in uncertainty. One recent report of the Penn State Center for Global Worker's Rights (2020) shows that at least 1 million workers have been fired or furloughed in the garment factories of Bangladesh. The report (2020) also emphasized that 72 percent of the furloughed workers have not been paid, and 98 percent of the owners have refused to pay. The collaboration among the government, civil society, workers, enterprises, non-governmental organizations, foreign investors, and its development partners is also a dominant requirement to gain a better new normal. To secure the workers' livelihoods, the Bangladesh government must ensure strict health regulations and mitigating crisis system. The remittance amount of this fiscal year has declined by 24 percent. Many of the foreign industry owners exploited formal and informal migrants. Those Bangladeshi migrants are not only vulnerable to lack of payment, but also lack of food, shelter, and health security in this crisis. More than 1.4 million migrant workers have lost their jobs (BRAC, 2020).

Bangladesh can take a protectionist stance to be self-sufficient by taking advantage of the next normalization. The vast population can be an investment by undertaking the more effective

policies to produce all types of goods and to develop new industries (incredibly, the tech industry) within the border of Bangladesh. For instance, in the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak, a Bangladeshi non-governmental garment industry started producing Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) rather than importing from outside (Sayeda, 2020). Recently, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and its partners have taken the initiative to produce 500,000 PPE in response to the pandemic effect (Islam & Divadkar, 2020). The returned migrants can also get involved in economic development within the country. This outbreak also gives a significant opportunity to improve Bangladesh's agricultural position employing a massive number of workers.

Changing employment structures pose uncertainty and inconveniencing conditions among worker societies of all class and status. Career Resilience (CR) is a process which helps one to assess the risk factors and positive outcomes in adopting a career. The employee can take the chance to determine the job based on his/her need, and he/she should consider the needs of employers when the employers also prefer the necessities of an employee according to the CR (Hite & McDonald, 2020). Organizations should develop concentrated learning efforts and mental health aids for formulating a more compassionate organizational and more endurable career culture (Hite & McDonald, 2020). Country people of Bangladesh are going through virtualization of territory and space so that CR procedure will be productive for them. Another new management approach can be suitable for them, the Strategic Flexibility Analysis, which involves a four-step pattern. Developing socio-technological transformations of the new normal require 'Meaning of Work,' 'Organizational Leadership,' 'Contactless Commerce & Education', and 'Individual & Corporate Volunteerism' as a strategic tool in the employment sector (Yawson, 2020). The physical and psychological wellbeing of the working people will be the rationale for the policy implications.

The neorealist thinker Waltz discussed how the evolution of the international system continuously changes the means of national interest of the world states. Once the exploitation of workers was beneficial to the countries, now maintenance of their good health and bio-security is the only option to be successful overcoming the challenges of the new normal. Bangladesh's decision-makers should evaluate all the employment and industry policy strategies through the prism of the theory of biopolitical rationale.

Promoting Environment as ‘Solution’, not as ‘Problem’

The last years of the twentieth century are remarked as the points of the consideration in environmental problem. The 2020 global Corona pandemic has indicated that it is the time to acknowledge biology and ecology as the solution rather than as a problem. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) established the International Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988, which is considered as an international guideline to shape climate policies of the UN member states. The IPCC report warned the world leaders that the increase in the average temperature of the earth from 1.5 to 2.5 degrees celcius would stimulate the environmental catastrophe from 75 to 250 times than the present situation (Rehman, 2016). The 1992 Earth Summit and the 1997 Earth Summit are known as the earlier significant measures to protect the world atmosphere. These summits highlighted the concerns over environmental destruction before the world population.

In 1997, the most meaningful Kyoto Protocol was signed in the presence of 160 country representatives to control the rate of global warming. It was decided that industrial countries would decrease carbon emission by 5.2 percent on average, which would minimize their carbon generating rate of 1990. But the rejection of the USA in 2001 left the treaty ineffective. The USA Oil and Gas Giant Companies pressured the government to reject the protocol. The Bush Administration preferred economic benefits rather than the safety of the environment. The USA remits about 15 percent of the global carbon emission and at the same time, China remits 30 percent (Tiseo, 2020). The 1987 Montreal Protocol was also left inadequate to protect the ozone layer omission as the great powers gave less priority to the environment. The Paris Agreement was signed in December 2015 to strengthen the global response to mitigate climate change. The world hopes to establish the pact as an international norm within 2020. But the top environment polluters disagree with the standard of keeping the global warming rate less than 2 degrees celsius. The international society expected a responsible attitude from the dominant economies like China, the US, and India. Instead of accepting the protocols to mitigate the problems, they were separated into groups developing different agendas related to carbon concentration. But their preferences endangered ecology, biology, and ultimately the existence of humankind. The COVID-19 outbreak is the most terrible result of the endangerment.

According to the research of the World Watch Institute (1997), the top eight industrial countries are remarked as E-8 countries, which are responsible for 58 percent of the global carbon emission (Rehman, 2016). The developed countries are still not ready to accept their liability

on the environmental issue. The UNEP report indicated that the developed countries released 83.7 percent carbon dioxide from 1800 to 1988, while less developed or third world countries made only 16.3 percent (Rehman, 2016). As a consequence, Asia experiences a massive loss out of desertification which amounts to \$20.9 million annually. Bangladesh is the most vulnerable island country. According to the World Watch Institute (1992), the height of the global sea level will rise to 217 centimeters while in Bangladesh, it will be from 332 to 447 centimeters within 2100. The report reveals 26 to 34 percent of the land will be submerged, and 27 to 35 percent of the people's lives will be worsened by rising salinity. Sundarbans is in a significant threat of climate change, where the extinction of various species and trees will bring an ecological change and biological transformation. So, the existence of developing countries depends entirely on the attitude of the developed countries.

The First Earth Summit established two remarkable treaties: Framework Convention on Climate Change and Biological Diversity Convention. Bangladesh ratified the treaties. The Framework Convention on Climate Change prioritizes securing Sustainable Development by decreasing the damages of carbon emission. The Biological Diversity Convention prefers the protection of biological diversity through the national policy implementation processes. The world obtained several significant treaties, but none of them have come to the realization yet. Even the most vulnerable countries like Bangladesh give preference to economic growth rather than biology and nature. Bangladesh has established the Rampal Coal Power Plant near Sundarbans and Ruppur Nuclear Power Plant which pose a considerable danger to the atmosphere of the country of natural calamity. The government should take the long-term environment suited policies as the existence of the country depends more on its nature rather than the economy. The innovation of renewable energy-centric technologies like hydropower or solar power to energy production will be well utilized in Bangladesh. These innovations will be a new normal opportunity-driven scheme for the country. According to the neorealists, states should reshape their priorities following the prevailing situations and challenges.

Bangladesh must stand for its vulnerable climate conditions. The government must ensure a strong international representation to highlight its environmental vulnerability and to encourage neighbors and developed countries to stand for global environmental solutions. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina took a praiseworthy step to extend Bangladesh's climate strategy, which counts as significant international importance. She launched the first regional office of the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA) of South Asia in Dhaka on 8th September 2020. It is an extension of the Bangladesh Climate Strategy, Action Plan in 2009, and

Bangladesh Delta Plan-2100 (Akter, 2020). She explained in the virtual launch event: “I hope this regional office will share the best adaptation practices of Bangladesh as well as other countries and exchange practices within the region. It will serve as a Center of Excellence and a solution-broker for adaptation measures in the region” (Akter, 2020).

The GCA is a solution giving the international organization to expedite implementation and support adaptation strategies in uncertainties. The measure is the probability steered one to deal with the new normal challenges. Bangladesh took the Global Adaptation Center Establishment as a step forward to face the upcoming bio-disasters like the Corona outbreak and ensure integration among neighbors to combat environmental calamities.

Establishment of the ‘Green Economy’

The world economy is dealing with a severe effect of COVID-19. According to the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD, 2020), the current GDP growth rate of Bangladesh stands on 2.5 percent from 8.2 percent, while the fallen rate is 1.6 percent, according to the World Bank. Situation Report of BRAC (2020), the average family income has reduced by 70 percent having hit by the pandemic. Around 100.22 million Bangladeshis are at high economic, and health vulnerabilities (BRAC,2020). The report also shows 53.64 million people of Bangladesh are living in extreme poverty and among them, 47.33 million are at increased economic risk, while 36.33 million are at high health risk (BRAC, 2020). Bangladesh should give priority to the extreme sufferings of the people in the governance after the pandemic. The survival of peoples’ life and its mechanism will be the ultimate means of securing the country’s national interest.

Gills (2020) depicts that humankind currently struggles into a ‘triple conjuncture’ of global crisis: climate change and ecological deterioration, an ongoing dilemma of worldwide capitalism and neoliberal economic globalization (Alam & Ayanie, 2020), and the new global COVID-19 outburst. Coronavirus revealed that capitalist economies are operating without progress only depending upon public reserves and governmental interventions (Spash, 2020). The pandemic uncovered an eco-friendly economic revolution by many alternative economists (environmental economists, ecological economists, radical economists, and climate economists) who relied on global cost-benefit calculations against the mainstream economists. Ecological logic demonstrates that if climate actions incorporate economic policy, it will be efficient to save one rich person rather than 14 poor people (Spash, 2020). The Global Commission on the Economic Climate (GCEC) publicized a clear statement that: “In the long term if climate change is not tackled, growth itself will be at risk” (Spash, 2020). Bangladesh

should rethink and re-establish its economy by placing humanity and environmental ethics at the center of the economy. Corruption is the dominant barrier to all developments and growth in the country. A vast number of the population is dying, starving, and suffering every day for corrupted economic and administrative structures in the country, which is a matter of biopolitics.

Consequently, a green financial system must be redesigned to ensure sustainable development, green growth, circular economy, and enduring comprehensive growth (Spash, 2020). Unfortunately, more than BDT 711 crore (\$8.38 crore) is added as the allocation for the Ruppur Nuclear Power Plant in the proposed Budget 2020-21 FY rather Hydropower, and Solar Power Plants should be given emphasis. Further, the pharmaceutical business model in Bangladesh should be diversified. The big pharma companies did not invest in developing SARS-COV and MARS-COV small market as the death toll was low (Boudjelal, Nehdi & Islam, 2020). According to the biopolitical rationale theory, the pharma business model must accommodate affirmative biopolitics not only for the welfare of humanity, but also for their economic interests. For example, if the dominant pharma companies invested in inventing vaccines of the previous small market pandemics, they would get a massive benefit from the 30%-40% recovery of COVID-19 (Boudjelal *et al.*, 2020).

In greening the financial system, Bangladesh needs to include the life of the sufferers of poverty to utilize the environment rather than to exploit them, and needs not to consider death and war as rational rather than human life in economic policymaking. The developed theory exhibits the greening economy which is the logical requirement for the normalization of life in the post-pandemic era. Biology and the environment should be involved justly in the political agenda of Bangladesh to fight against bio-disasters and wars against viruses.

Combined Health and Military Services for Emergency Health Crisis

PM Sheikh Hasina announced that the government is working to modernize and well-train the armed and naval forces to pace with the technologically developed armed forces of the developed and developing countries of the world (The Daily Star, 2020). It is a must to survive and self-defend in this military-prone international society. But it is clear to the world that no one is prepared to win a war on viruses, whether it is caused by natural causes or bioterrorism. Bill Gates in 2015 alerted the world about this type of unpreparedness and more horrible war. Suppose we can create a combined action plan of military forces and the health sector, collaborative network of the Defense and Health Ministry. There will be a possibility of

defeating the global pandemic COVID-19 (Gates, 2020). Bill Gates (2015) also stated that if anyone does the rational calculation, he can measure the rising health budget allocation is significantly cheaper than the potential cost of the impacts of the war. Bangladesh needs a military-health combined structure to contain future pandemics.

The combination of the health and defense sector will help Bangladesh to prepare for the next pandemic. The process of this preparation should be started in the post-pandemic new normal. This is the way by which biology can be included affirmatively in the militarization. This phenomenon indicates the evolution of individual and international securitization processes according to the neorealism approach of IR. The current evolution demands a biopolitical strategy for every country including Bangladesh.

Conclusion

The new normal is the post-corona reconstruction and restarting phase. The era will be remarkably challenging for a developing and densely populated country like Bangladesh. From biotechnological intervention in the regular phenomenon of birth and death to other bioterrorism, deployment of biopolitics now has become unavoidable. So, the research has proposed the Biopolitical Rationale hypothesis to deal with the next normalization challenges. The present study suggests what type of policy strategy should be taken to manage the new normal reconstruction of Bangladesh but does not explore how to employ them.

Bangladesh should prioritize the biopolitical policy strategy to incorporate all settings of the life of the population rather than to negatively politicize their life. The government should hold on the patterns of biopower to set straight the bio-disaster damages in the health sector, economic employment, career development, tourism, pharma business sector, administrative bodies, environmental sector, information and technology sector, social security sector, *etc.* Several beneficial institutions, like the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, have not proven significant enough to make the state leaders understand the importance of the environmental solution yet. The emergence of the COVID-19 epidemic should be reasonable enough to take sufficient measures to highlight the environment as a solution rather than a problem. If biology and politics consolidate appropriately, the new normal reframing of Bangladesh will be a more progressive opportunity. The incorporation of biopolitics in the core governing system will be a crucial challenge to the government.

References

- Adhikary, T. S. (2020). Treating Covid-19 Patients at All Hospitals: Experts Fear Wider Transmission. *The Daily Star*, May 29, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.thedailystar.net/city/news/treating-covid-19-patients-all-hospitals-experts-fear-wider-transmission-1906111>
- Agamben, G. (1998). *Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Akter, H. (2020). PM Sheikh Hasina Launches New Regional Office of Global Center on Adaptation. *The Orient News*, September 10, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.theorientnews.com/index.php/asia/bangladesh/item/1520-pm-sheikh-hasina-launches-new-regional-office-of-global-center-on-adaptation>
- Alam, M., & Ayanie, F. T. (2020). Berlin Wall to Mexico Wall: The Drama of Neoliberalism. *PanAfrican Journal of Governance and Development (PJGD)*, 1(1), 21-48.
- Baniamin, H. M., Rahman, M., & Hasan, M. T. (2020). The COVID-19 Pandemic: Why Are Some Countries Coping More Successfully than Others? *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration*, 42(3), 153-169.
- Banna, M. H. L., Sayeed, A., Kundu, S., Christopher, E., Hasan, M. T., Begum, M. R., Khana, M. S. I. (2020). The impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Mental Health of the Adult Population in Bangladesh: A Nationwide Cross-sectional Study. *International Journal of Environmental Health Research*, DOI: [10.1080/09603123.2020.1802409](https://doi.org/10.1080/09603123.2020.1802409)
- Benjamin, S., Dillette, A., & Alderman, D. H. (2020). “We can’t Return to Normal”: Committing to Tourism Equity in the Post-Pandemic Age. *Tourism Geographies*, 22(3), 476-483.
- Best, J. (2020). What’s New? What’s Normal?. *Sociological Forum*, 26(4), DOI: [10.1111/j.1573-7861.2011.01283.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1573-7861.2011.01283.x)
- Booij, P. (2020). The Problematic Concept of the New Normal. *Futurebased*. Retrieved from <https://futurebased.org/topics/the-problematic-concept-of-the-new-normal/>
- Boudjelal, M., Nehdi, A., & Islam, I. (2020). Why do SARS-COV vaccines not exist? The pharma scientific intelligence and business model must be revisited!. *Expert Opinion on Drug* Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/17460441.2020.17>
- BRAC. (2020). *COVID-19: Situation Report*. Available at: <https://lnkd.in/gH7u3Mm>
- Carneiro, M. M. (2020). Women’s Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic: New Roles and Views in Health Care. *Women & Health*, 60(8), 849-850.
- Centre for Policy Dialogue. (2020). *Unrealistic fiscal framework demands an early budget revision: CPD*. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/posts/centre-for-policy-dialague-cpd-unrealistic-fiscal-framework-demands-an-early-activity-6677836035055079425-MXcBhttps://cpd.org.bd/unrealistic-fiscal-framework-demands-an-early-budget-revision-cpd/>

- Church, K., Gassner, J., & Elliott, M. (2020). Reproductive Health under COVID-19 – Challenges of Responding in a Global Crisis. *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters*, 28(1), DOI: [10.1080/26410397.2020.1773163](https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2020.1773163)
- Clean Clothes Campaign. (2020). Live-blog: *How the Coronavirus Affects Garment Workers in Supply Chains*. Retrieved from <https://cleanclothes.org/news/2020/live-blog-on-how-the-coronavirus-influences-workers-in-supply-chains>
- Didek, E. (2012). What are the basic concepts of neorealism? *ResearchGate*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_are_the_basic_concepts_of_neorealism
- Duffield, M. (2007). *Development, Security and Unending War*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Etzioni, A. (2011). The New Normal. *Sociological Forum*, 26(4), DOI: Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1573-7861.2011.01282.x>
- Euro RSCG Worldwide. (2010). *Prosumer Report: The Emergence of the New Consumer*.
- Ferhani, A., & Rushton, S. (2020). The International Health Regulations, COVID-19, and Bordering Practices: Who Gets in, What Gets out, and Who Gets Rescued? *Contemporary Security Policy*, 41(3), 458-477.
- Filipe, A. M. (2014). *Biopolitics*, DOI: [10.1002/9781118410868.wbehibs255](https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118410868.wbehibs255)
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (Volume 1). New York: Vintage Books.
- Ganguly, M. (2020). Bangladesh should listen to its health workers. *The Daily Star*, June 21, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.thedailystar.net/country/news/govt-working-make-armed-forces-more-modern-well-trained-pm-1840675>
- Gates, B. (2015). The Next Outbreak? We're Not Ready. https://youtu.be/6Af6b_wyiwI
- Gills, B. (2020). Deep Restoration: From the great implosion to the great awakening. *Globalizations*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2020.1748364>
- Globaltimes. (2020). Xi's 'New Normal' Theory (2020). *Globaltimes*, Available at: <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/890962.shtml>
- Goggin, G., & Ellis, K. (2020). Disability, Communication, and Life Itself in the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Health Sociology Review*, 29(2), 168-176.
- Habas, K., Nganwuchu, C., Shahzad, F., Gopalan, R., Haque, M., Rahman, S., Nasim, T. (2020). Resolution of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). *Expert Review of Anti-infective Therapy*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14787210.2020.1797487>
- Heisbourg, F. (2020). From Wuhan to the World: How the Pandemic Will Reshape Geopolitics. *Survival*, 62(3), 7-24.
- Hite, L. M., & McDonald, K. S. (2020). Careers after COVID-19: Challenges and Changes. *Human Resource Development International*, DOI: [10.1080/13678868.2020](https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2020)
- Hossain, M. M., Mazumder, H., Tasnim, S., Nuzhath, T., & Sultana, A. (2020). Geriatric Health in Bangladesh during COVID-19: Challenges and Recommendations.

Journal of Gerontological Social Work, DOI:
[10.1080/01634372.2020.1772932](https://doi.org/10.1080/01634372.2020.1772932)

- Huq, S. & Biswas, R. K. (2020). COVID-19 in Bangladesh: Data deficiency to delayed decision. *Australia*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7182300/>
- Islam, M. J., Sania, A., Haider, N., Homaira, D. N., & Urmi, T. (2020). বাংলাদেশে কোভিড-১৯ মোকাবিলায় র্‌যাপিড অ্যান্টিজেন টেস্টের ভূমিকা (The role of the Rapid Antigen test in the COVID-19 response of Bangladesh). *The Daily Star*, June 19, 2020.
- Islam, S. T. & Divadkar, Y. N. (2020). How Bangladesh's Leaders Should Respond to the Economic Threats of COVID-19. *World Economic Forum*, April 13, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/covid-19-coronavirus-bangladesh/>
- Jackson, R. & Sorensen, G. (2010). *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* (5th Ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kunzmann, K. R. (2020). Smart Cities After Covid-19: Ten Narratives. *Disp - The Planning Review*, 56(2), 20-31.
- Kwok, A. D. J. & Koh, S. G. M. (2020). COVID-19 and Extended Reality (XR). *Current Issues in Tourism*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2020.1798896>
- Laato, S., Islam, A. K. M. N., Islam, M. N., & Whelan, E. (2020). What Drives Unverified Information Sharing and Cyberchondria During the COVID-19 Pandemic? *European Journal of Information Systems*, 29(3), 288-305.
- Larsen, R. (2020). How to Win the War on Coronavirus. *National Review*. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalreview.com/2020/03/coronavirus-pandemic-how-to-win-the-war/>
- Lewis, S. C., King, A. D. & Kirkpatrick, S. E. P. (2017). Defining a New Normal for Extremes in a New Normal. *American Meteorological Society*, DOI: [10.1175/BAMS-D-16-0183.1](https://doi.org/10.1175/BAMS-D-16-0183.1)
- Mary, S., Bitzer, J., & Rowlands, S. (Eds). (2020). Testing Times. *The European Journal of Contraception & Reproductive Health Care*, 25(3), 167-168.
- Maswood, M. H. (2020). Health System Needs to be Redesigned. *NEWAGE*, June 03, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.newagebd.net/article/107522/health-system-needs-to-be-redesigned>
- Mazumder, H., Hossain, M. M., & Das, A. (2020). Geriatric Care during Public Health Emergencies: Lessons Learned from Novel Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, DOI: [10.1080/01634372.2020.1746723](https://doi.org/10.1080/01634372.2020.1746723)
- Noble, H. & Mitchell, G. (2016). What is Grounded Theory? *CrossMark*, DOI: [10.1136/eb-2016-102306](https://doi.org/10.1136/eb-2016-102306)
- Pathan, A. S. K. (2020). Access to Information vs. Blocking of Information During COVID-19 Pandemic: A Governance Dilemma in the Era of Crowdsourcing Based on ICT. *International Journal of Computers and Applications*, 42(6), 531-532.

- Pentini, A. A., & Lorenz, W. (2020). The Corona Crisis and the Erosion of ‘the Social’ - Giving a Strong Voice to the Social Professions. *European Journal of Social Work*, 23(4), 543-553.
- Peters, M. A., & Besley, T. (2020). Biopolitics, Conspiracy, and the Immuno-state: An Evolving Global Politico-genetic Complex. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, DOI: [10.1080/00131857.2020.1772026](https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2020.1772026)
- Rehman, T. S. (2020). *Bisso Rajnitir Aksho Bochor*. Dhaka: Shova Prokash.
- Ruiu, M. L. (2020). Mismanagement of Covid-19: Lessons Learned from Italy. *Journal of Risk Research*, DOI: [10.1080/13669877.2020.1758755](https://doi.org/10.1080/13669877.2020.1758755)
- Santhosh, S. B., Tharik, A. M. S., Manjari, M. S., Balakrishnan, R., Muruganandam, N., & Chandrasekar, M. J. N. (2020). Coronavirus disease - COVID-19: new perspectives towards epidemic to pandemic. *Journal of Drug Targeting*, DOI: [10.1080/1061186X.2020.1803885](https://doi.org/10.1080/1061186X.2020.1803885)
- Sayed. U. (2020). Bangladesh Corona Crisis and Governmental Crisis Management Initiatives. *Diplomatist*. Retrieved from <https://diplomatist.com/2020/03/31/bangladesh-corona-crisis-and-governmental-crisis-management-initiatives/>
- Schor, J. (2010). *Plenitude: The New Economics of True Wealth*. New York: Penguin Press.
- Sobhan, F. (2020). Bangladesh’s Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. *The Round Table*, DOI: [10.1080/00358533.2020.1790775](https://doi.org/10.1080/00358533.2020.1790775)
- Spash, C. L. (2020). ‘The Economy’ as If People Mattered: Revisiting Critiques of Economic Growth in Time of Crisis. *Globalizations*, DOI: [10.1080/14747731.2020.1761612](https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2020.1761612)
- The Business Standard. (2020). Health Sector Gets Priority in the Budget of 2020-21. *The Business Standard*, June 11, 2020. Available at: <https://tbsnews.net/economy/budget/health-sector-gets-priority-budget-2020-21-91807>
- The Daily Star (2020) Government Working to Make Armed Forces More Modern, Well-Trained: PM. (2020). Available at: <https://www.thedailystar.net/country/news/govt-working-make-armed-forces-more-modern-well-trained-pm-1840675>
- Tiseo, I. (2020). Largest Global Emitters of Carbon Dioxide by Country 2018. *Statista*, 24 August, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/271748/the-largest-emitters-of-co2-in-the-world/b>
- UNB. (2020). Bangladesh now ‘17th worst’ corona-hit country. UNB, June 18, 2020. Available at: <https://unb.com.bd/category/Bangladesh/bangladesh-now-17th-worst-corona-hit-country/53260>
- Yawson, R. (2020). Strategic Flexibility Analysis of HRD Research and Practice Post-COVID-19 pandemic. *Human Resource Development International*, 23(4), 406-417.