



China's President's Power And His Response To Covid-19 Outbreak

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused many problems, ranging from health, economy, and politics. Many large countries, including the United States, are considered to have failed to deal with the pandemic. However, China is coping relatively well. The number of victims can be reduced, the economy continues to grow positively, and political conditions remain stable. It cannot be separated from the role of President Xi Jinping. Xi's great power under China's government system makes it easy for him to take various actions to save his citizens, including mobilizing aid, preventing the movement of citizens through locking down some places. China is also sending aid and offering cooperation to other countries to deal with the pandemic. Therefore, this research will study China's political system, China's President's power, and the power used to handle the Covid-19 outbreak. This study will provide a concise explanation of China's political system through a qualitative descriptive approach. Additionally, it will detail China's President's authority and the authority exercised in dealing with the Covid-19 outbreaks. My study showed that the centralized government, the President's strong position, supported with good governance capital help the country successfully handle the pandemic.

Keywords: China, President, Xi Jinping, Covid-19, Constitutional Law, Politics, Good Governance

1. Introduction

Right now, all countries are facing the Covid-19 outbreaks. As of March 24, 2021, the pandemic infected 124,942,809 people worldwide and caused 2,748,818 people deaths, and 100,938,153 recovered (Worldometers, 2021). Covid-19 has turned into the most critical public health crisis since World War II (Xinhua, 2020, May 18). On March 10, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Covid-19 pandemic. Some analysts, including President Trump, say that China might be involved in the current coronavirus outbreak. He went out of his way to avoid using the word "coronavirus," but "Chinese virus." However, he has previously praised China's efforts to contain the coronavirus, stating that their actions were much appreciated. He tweeted that the United States thanks China's efforts (CNBC, March 19, 2020).

The pandemic makes most of the countries fell into recession. However, it is not happening in China. The magnitude of China's economic growth during the COVID-19 outbreak was astonishing. Only China emerged from the other economies that went into recession with a positive growth rate in 2020. China's GDP grew by 2.3% per year in 2020. The full-year GDP reached \$15.45 trillion for the first time (CGTN, 2021, February 28). The World Bank predicted that China's economy would grow by 6.9% by 2021 (World Bank, 2020). In the case of a Covid-19 outbreak, China's government has turned into a shining example for other countries (Ning, Ren, & Nkengurutse, 2020). China's schools are reopened, domestic travel is brought back to pre-pandemic levels, and rewards are distributed to those who participated in the fight (Global Times, 2020, September 7). With 1.4 billion people, China's ability to manage Covid-19 risk is impressive.

Even though China became the first country to be hit by the Covid-19 outbreak, it reduced the infection rate, so the number of new cases is minimal. As of March 24, 2021, China ranks 88th based on the number of virus infection cases, as many as 90,125 people, with an additional 10 cases. As an illustration, the United States as a developed country ranks first with 30,639,264 infected patients with an additional 2,730 cases (Worldometers, 2021).

With China having to contain the Covid-19 and registering the first increase in world economic growth in the year prior, it has served as the lead in the fight against the disease's spread (CGTN, 2021, February 16). China has provided WHO and other interested parties with timely information. It made the genome sequence available for release and shared treatment with other countries. (Xinhua, 2020, May 18). Since the end of May 2020, when China's President Xi Jinping stated that China considered its Covid vaccines to be a global good, China has been offering its products to the rest of the world. This action is a continuation of the mask donation so that China can reverse the image, which was initially accused of being the source of the problem, now to become a helper god. (Karásková, Ivana and Blablová, 2021).

The handling of the Covid-19 pandemic cannot be separated from Xi Jinping's role as President of the PRC. To fight global Covid-19, in 2020, Xi attended 87 virtual meetings and participated in 22 face-to-face conversations with foreign leaders and organizations, promoting international unity to handle the crisis (CGTN, 2021, February 16). Unfortunately, however, many countries have not succeeded in overcoming the pandemic. It is evidenced by the increasing number of infections, the large number of victims who died, and the slow pace of vaccination. For this reason, it needs to be examined how China's political system is? What is China's President's power? And how's the power used to handle the Covid-19 outbreaks?

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to give a brief explanation of China's political system. It will also detail China's President's power and the power used to handle the Covid-19 outbreaks. This primary study data from regulations, especially China constitution, and secondary data from various books, journals, research, and the internet. It will give an alternative view for the political system other than a democratic system based on western-style. It will also help people or government officials on a fast response to a disaster, with the example of the Covid-19 outbreak.

3. Discussion

1.1 China's Political System

PRC is a vast country that establishes a unitary government with no power division. Therefore, all the country's governing bodies are under the control of the Central Government's authority. However, decentralization and experimentation are not only permitted but also actively encouraged, as long as it is focused on getting solutions to political issues and policy problems (He, Shi & Liu, 2020).

China uses the People Congress System theory adapted from Marx, Engels' and Lenin's theory. The idea is that the representative organ should consist of representatives popularly elected by voters, and all political authorities should be concentrated in the hands of the people's representative organ (Lin, 2000).

China is also a country with a communist system that every state organ on the democratic centralism principle-based (Lovely Professional University [LPU], 2012). The Communist Party governs the formal institutions of the country. In a communist system, the government and the Party are separate; for example, a prime minister leads the government and the general secretary who leads the Communist Party. It is the Party that rules the country and makes policy, while the state enforces the policy. One example of this is that the prime minister and the nation's chief executives must be members of the Communist Party (Joseph, 2014).

A unified code of conduct is expected in the Communist Party of China (CPC) system. An individual is subordinate to the whole organization, a minority is subordinate to a majority, and a lower-level party member is subordinate to a higher party body. However, members are allowed to criticize the Party and make proposals to its leading members at all levels. Suppose a member or official has different views on party decisions or directions. In that case, they are allowed to bypass the immediate leadership and report to all the Party's governing bodies, including to the Central Committee (LPU, 2012).

Since the PRC's creation in 1949, the CPC has been the only governing Party in China. However, the CPC is a progressive and dynamic party, as well. It has undergone numerous transformations in its leadership selection of party elites, structural alterations, and profound alterations in ideology. Today's CPC leadership is by no means a homogeneous group that shares the same beliefs, ideologies, and policies (Joseph, 2014). At the moment, a few reforms are occurring in the CPC; the domination of a single charismatic leader is being supplanted by institutionalized Party rules and procedures, while the relationship between the central and local governments is in a balance (Joseph, 2014).

In the CPC history, Mao Zedong is the first generation leader, followed by Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin as the third and fourth leaders. Hu Jintao then continued the fourth-generation leader's role, and now Xi Jinping in the fifth. The Constitution of the PRC clarifies that all power is with the people. The instruments by which the people exercise their political power are the National People's Congress (NPC) and local people's Congresses. At every level of government administration, the People's Congresses carry out the national legislature's functions. However, like other state organizations, the Congresses are monitored and given to them by the CPC. In political and administrative matters, the party administration's level head—the general secretary—is genuinely in charge (LPU, 2012).

1.2 China Presidents Power

After proclaimed their independence, the PRC used the Common Program and chaired by a Chairman who is equal as President. The China People's Congress elected him. The first Chairman is Mao Zedong. Based on the Common Program, the Chairman presided over the Central People's Government Council's meetings and directed their work. In performing his duties, the Chairman was assisted by the six of Vice-Chairmen and one Secretary-General of the Central People's Government. The Chairman should hold a session once every two months.

The Central People's Government Council should have a Secretariat and set up other subordinate working bodies when necessary. In carrying out their work, the Central People's Government Authority should enact their administrative regulations.

The Chairman had no responsibility for administration because the Government Administration Council carried it out. Such council consisted of a Premier, some Vice Premiers, a Secretary-General, and some Council Members, all of whom were elected by the Central People's Governing Council.

The Government Administration Council should be responsible and accountable to the Central People's Governments Council. Furthermore, when the Central People's Government Council adjourns, the Government Administration Council should be accountable and liable to the Central People's Government's Chairman.

In 1954, PRC enacted its first constitution. According to Chairman Mao, the constitution is the general charter to administrators of the state and is the legalization of a democratic system. (Lin, 2000). The first Chairman under the constitution still was Mao Zedong (September 27, 1954 - April 27, 1959), then continued by Liu Shaoqi (April 27, 1959 - October 31, 1968), Dong Biwu as Acting Chairman (February 24, 1972 - January 17, 1975), and Song Qingling as Honorary Chairwoman (16-28 May 1981).

Based on the 1954 Constitution, the Chairman had several authorities, most of which were the same as the 1949 Common Program. Furthermore, the President was also the head of the Supreme State Conference. Such a conference consisted of the Vice President of the PRC, the Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee (NPCSC), the Premier of the State Council, and other concerned persons who would take part.

After the Great Leap Forward program's failure, which caused the people to starve to death, Mao Zedong resigned from the President. However, his influence is still strong. Liu Shaoqi then took his place as President. Unfortunately, the President's power could not be effectively carried out in Liu Shaoqi's administration because Mao's regime is more powerful. Even Liu Shaoqi was arrested until he died during the Cultural Revolution. The Presidential Position was then vacated, and on Chairman Mao Zedong's advice, the President's position was removed in the 1975 Constitution. The power attached to the President was then transferred to the CPC (Lin, 2000).

The 1978 Constitution later replaced the 1975 Constitution. However, the President's office still emptied, and his power was transferred to the Chairman of the NPSC. Following the political change dramatically, the 1978 Constitution was replaced by the 1982 Constitution. Furthermore, five amendments were made to the constitution in 1988, 1993, 1999, 2004, and 2018. The President's position reappeared in the 1982 Constitution, and the position was established in 1983 (Wang Zhengxu 141). The first President was Li Xiannian (June 18, 1983 - April 8, 1988), then continued with Yang Shangkun (April 8, 1988 - March 27, 1993), Jiang Zemin (March 27, 1993 - March 15, 2003), Hu Jintao (March 15, 2003 - March 14, 2013), and Xi Jinping (March 14, 2013 - present).

In the 1982 Constitution, the President lost his power as the army commander, convene the highest state conference, and propose bills to either the NPC or its Standing Committee (Lin, 2000). Under the 1982

Constitution, the President is more a symbol of the state and is ceremonial (Lawrence, 2013). The most influential leader in the PRC held the position as the Chairman of the Party's Central Military Commission (CMC), even he was not a president. This condition happened when Deng Xiaoping came as the paramount leader. He had never been the President of the PRC nor the general secretary of the Party. Still, he could control many things when he assumed power as Chairman of the CMC. Some of his actions were changed the economic system from communist to socialist and removed and appointed some politicians from their positions. From Jiang Zemin to Xi Jinping today, the President's position has been more vital. This condition happens because the presidential post has been filled by the General Secretary of the Communist Party, who is the first person in the Party and occupying the CMC position. However, it is not stated in the constitution. If good governance occurs, such concurrent positions will not be an issue. Even that concurrent position also appears in many democratic countries. Of course, it is expected to create effective governance. Especially for China, as the most populous country, it is essential to create effective governance to stabilize the country.

Many countries have adopted the presidential system to create stable and effective governments. In a presidential system, the head of state and head of government positions are combined, creating a single executive type. Head of government (chief of the executive) and head of state (head of state) functions are combined into a single (single executive), namely the President as the sole executive power holder. The cabinet reports to the President in his or her capacity as the holder of state government authority or as the highest administrator. The President, in his capacity as chief executive, appoints his ministers to lead their respective departments, and they are solely accountable to the President. Parliament cannot dismiss ministers because the formation of a cabinet is independent and does not require Parliament's approval (Roziqin, 2020).

To avoid power concentration in a single individual, some countries employ a semi-presidential system. The semi-presidential system has several characteristics, including the following: (1) there are two executive branches: a President and a Prime Minister who share executive authority; (2) a President has the authority of a head of state; (3) a President is directly elected by popular vote and serves for a fixed term; and (4) the Prime Minister and government are appointed by and accountable to the legislature. The semi-presidential system exists as a middle ground between the presidential and parliamentary systems. A semi-presidential system can help to mitigate the possibility of a presidential dictatorship (Roziqin, 2020).

However, the presidential system is inherently unstable. It is due to the absence of incentives for cross-branch cooperation. It is more complicated in minority governments, resulting in conflict and impasses between the executive and legislative branches. This impasse would incentivize actors to seek out extra-constitutional means of resolving their disagreements. On the other hand, in parliamentary systems, the government also tends unstable because it can be changed many times (via a vote of no confidence) (Cheibub, 2007).

Meanwhile, China's government is run from within the Political Bureau and the Politburo Standing Committee, where the real power lies in China (PRC) (Guthrie, 2006). Even though there is a concentration of power within the President, the President cannot be arbitrary. He remains under the control of the NPC, and his decision must be discussed with the Politburo. The presidency is primarily a ceremonial head of state. Still, it has many conventional authorities, such as appointing all State Council of State (the functional equivalent of a cabinet).

In China, the State Council is headed by the Premier, not by the President. Premier is the top executive body and supervising the work of the ministries. Therefore, President must work with a Premier, who is in effect the *de jure* head of the government, is always a senior member of the Party, and is also voted by the NPC delegates is crucial (Hague, Harrop, & McCormick, 2016).

President must perform based on the constitution. Since the reformed era under Deng Xiaoping, China has used the constitution to reference any conduct. Since 1989, citizens have an equal position with the government due to their ability to sue the government after China passed the Administrative Litigation Law (Quanxi, Wei, Feilong, 2015).

In carrying out his duties, the President is assisted by the Vice President. The Vice President of the People's Republic of China may exercise part of the President's functions and powers as entrusted by the President. The Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates are proposed by the CPC and then elected by the NPC. The Politburo of the CPC holds the selection of candidates based on the cader's track record. Even though it is different from the Western-style, the government formed from the selection is always trusted by Chinese people. Even among other countries worldwide, China's government is the most trusted by its people (Edelman Trust Barometer, 2019).

Although elected by the NPC, the President has no obligation to report his work to the NPC. The responsibility is with the State Council. If the office of the President of the People's Republic of China falls vacant, the Vice President succeeds to the office of the President. If the Vice President of the People's Republic of China falls vacant, NPC should elect a new Vice President to fill the vacancy. If both President and the Vice President of the People's Republic of China fall vacant, the NPC had to elect a new President and a new Vice President. Before such an election, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the NPC temporarily acted as the PRC's President.

In November 2012, the new Xi Jinping administration was elected in China. Later in 2013, Li Keqiang was made the nation's new Premier. There is no leadership dualism even though China has a President, a Vice President, and a Premier. The new administration realized that growth must be shared more widely with the population and dealt with economic imbalances. Xi then becomes the chief monetary policy architect— usually the Premier's responsibility (Mühlhahn, 2019). The policy made China the second-largest economy globally in 2019, but on the first, if we consider Purchasing Power Parity in GDP (World Bank, 2020).

Since Xi Jinping was elected as China's President, he has worked to advance the "China Dream" and "One Belt, One Road" (OBOR) or now changed to "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI). The project is a clear example of how assertive China is today. As of the end of January 2021, 140 countries have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China on the BRI (Green BRI, 2021). China's government believes that many countries and continents will be linked because it is predicted to be the most significant endeavor of the 21st century. It seems China's position as the number one globally is faster than Jacques's prediction in 2009 that it will happen in 2050 (Jacques, 2009). President Xi's authority is derived from his long technocratic experience. Xi Jinping also made an explicit pledge to maintain the CPC's legitimacy. Xi undertook a wide-an anti-corruption campaign that removed the most influential figures (tigers) and many less influential officials (the flies). Of those indicted, Hu Jintao's chief of staff, Ling Jihua, was one of them and the Politburo member that controlled the internal forces, Zhou Yongkang. Xi Jinping emerged with more power and influence than his predecessors due to such causes as the anti-corruption campaign and the "China Dream" movement (Mühlhahn, 2019).

1.3 President Power Used in Handling Covid-19 Outbreak

On December 27, 2019, the Hubei Provincial Hospital of Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine reported some unknown pneumonia cases. Through a clinical diagnosis and the Wuhan arranged for experts to investigate these cases, they had viral pneumonia. On December 30, the Wuhan City Health Commission (WCHC) issued an Urgent Notice regarding pneumonia with no known cause. Then, the National Health Commission (NHC) took swift and decisive action to research the disease. As a result, a total of 44 cases were reported. From that day forward, China began informing WHO, relevant countries, territories, Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan on the disease's progression (The State Council Information Office of the PRC, 2020).

On January 7, 2020, Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, chaired a meeting of the Central Committee Political Bureau's Standing Committee and issued a warning about the possible outbreak of an unknown disease in Wuhan. Xi appointed Premier Li Keqiang as head of the Central Leading Group for Novel Coronavirus Prevention and Control. Li convened many State Council meetings and unveiled the requirements for the handling of epidemic prevention and control. Li also made a speech to ASEAN nations leaders, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, about the novel coronavirus. He coordinated their efforts to combat the virus with their economic and social growth. He proposed strengthening cooperation on the virus, reviving the economy, and resume international development coordination (The State Council Information Office of the PRC, 2020).

People's movements and flow of exit and entry were strictly restricted on January 22th, 2020, under Xi Jinping's command, in Hubei and Wuhan. Premier Li then went to Wuhan on behalf of Xi Jinping on January 27, offering advice on dealing with the virus and commending their work. Meanwhile, Xi Jinping met with WHO Director-General on January 28, 2020. Xi issued a formalized that China is prepared to collaborate with the WHO and other global organizations to protect public health (The State Council Information Office of the PRC, 2020). Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang chaired many meetings and did many inspections to control the Covid-19 outbreak. To appreciate China's people fighting Covid-19, on September 8, Xi honors people fighting COVID-19 with national medals (CGTN, 2020, September 7).

As of June 2020, Li has chaired more than 30 meetings of the leading group to discuss critical issues concerning Covid-19 control and economic and social development. He visited Wuhan and inspected China CDC, the Institute of Pathogen Biology CAMS & PUMC, Beijing West Railway Station and Beijing Capital International

Airport, and many more. Besides, Li ensured local authorities and other stakeholders had implemented each of the central authorities' decisions, plans, and prohibitions. Keeping all its outbound routes closed, Wuhan carried out two rounds of mass community screening of approximately 4.2 million households. The government ensured that nobody was left unchecked and found all possible infection methods (The State Council Information Office of the PRC, 2020).

Hubei and Hanyang were severely affected by the Covid-19 outbreak. Nearly 90,000 cases were confirmed on China's mainland, and about 4,600 lives were lost during the weeks and months that it was under travel restrictions during the Spring Festival (Chinese New Year); GDP fell 6.8% in the first quarter of 2020 (CGTN, February 16, 2021).

China's government stepped up its nucleic acid testing, provided test kits and many approved laboratories. Thus, testing was done faster and more carefully, so those who needed to be tested could do so without delay. The community-based screening of vulnerable people was done in all regions of the country. All patients were asked to keep their health information current daily. The community outreach workers went house to house to gather and verify the information. In all places, the process of checking temperatures was done according to the procedure. Alert authorities were instructed to work on fever clinics to ensure that all results were conveyed online within two hours. Off-site investigation of persons who tested positive took place within twelve hours to determine whether asymptomatic and carrier cases were identified. Besides, epidemiological tracking and analysis were carried out to precisely detect and cut off the virus' (The State Council Information Office of the PRC, 2020).

Under Xi's direction, China has utilized authentic speed, intensity, and coverage in its response bringing together the country's medical resources and constructing the Huoshen Hospital in only ten days became possible. In addition, China extended the Lunar New Year holiday, delaying the opening of businesses and locking down cities in Hubei, set strict quarantine regulations for the areas affected by the Covid-19 (CGTN, February 23, 2020).

According to Xi, it is essential to coordinate national measures to combat the outbreak, which is advantageous to China's socialist system. Following the leadership of the CPC Central Committee, the Party rushed into action. More than 90 million CPC members and 4.6 million party organization members participated in the struggle. Employees who are members of the Party also participated in such activities in the early moves in areas related to epidemic control, like building hospitals and mask manufacturing. Heeding Xi's instructions, the military dispatched its first medics to Wuhan on New Year's Eve. A total of 3 groups consisting of approximately 4,000 personnel were sent, and supplies were airlifted to Wuhan (Xinhua, 2020, September 7).

China pulled out all the stops to help with the virus outbreak, with the government's entire expenses. Due to the vast amounts of casualties, sixteen exhibition halls and sports venues in Wuhan became makeshift hospitals. Hundreds of hospitals were either closed or converted into assisted-living facilities. Over 600 facilities were used as quarantine locations. A total of 3,000 more beds were added each day, helping relieve the city's hospitals' burden. At the height of the outbreak, Hubei Province had more than a quarter of the country's Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) devices, or Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (EC) life support systems. Xi emphasized the importance of science and technology for "succeeding in overcoming the outbreak." He mandated a fast track for crucial issues while meeting all required safety standards (Xinhua, 2020, September 7).

The medical research community across the country is working with universities and institutes to develop vaccines, medications, and treatments. On April 12, 2020, a vaccine developed by China's researchers was licensed for phase-two clinical trials. Clinical trials using Covid-19 vaccines had begun by July 23, 2020, in China. Also, the use of Covid-19 vaccines has started in the event of an emergency (Xinhua, 2020, September 7).

There were 1.4 billion citizens of this country, so the Party and government advised, who stayed at home for weeks and followed, distancing themselves from their immediate surroundings. More than 4 million community workers were mobilized to decontaminate public spaces, search persons with high temperatures, and take them to quarantine if necessary (Xinhua, 2020, September 7). Such mobilization is not a big issue because Xi Jinping is also a general secretary of CPC and CMC Chairman. Moreover, China is a communist party that its people trust, so there is not much debate in mobilization efforts. Likewise, there is no leadership competition between President, Vice President, and Premier in handling Covid-19.

Xi emphasized placing the people's needs above everything else and keeping everyone safe and healthy. His plan of action relied heavily on his people to win the war depended on their support. Even though sporadic cases of the virus infection have emerged during the winter, China has focused on clearing the transmission channels, affecting as many people's health and well-being as possible. He also mentioned that the Central Committee's prevention and control measures emphasized saving people's lives. Activities such as detection and neighborhood patrols were started in many cities to identify and isolate possible cases to stop the spread of infection before it got worse. Several volunteers turned up to help (Xinhua, 2020, September 7).

President Xi noted that during the Covid-19 outbreak, China's economic and social goals would not be jeopardized due to the pandemic (Magnus, 2020). The country's rapid growth of 2.3% over 2020 resulted from successful epidemic control (CGTN, February 16, 2021). More than 99% of industrial firms reopened by the middle of April 2020. They incorporated foreign business and domestic vendors like Apple, Tesla, and Volkswagen. China's impressive economic development has generated significant support for the government. That also effective all over the world. All states pursue an effective economic performance on their list of priorities, and "governing the economy" is part of their list of priorities in every instance. Policymaking always consists of strategies states' initiatives to advance economic performance, cope with economic downturns, and compete globally (Kesselman, Krieger, & Joseph, 2016).

During the outbreak, China assisted countries like the United States and Japan in saving their citizens in Wuhan. As the pandemic spread, China donated 50 million USD and dispatched 33 medical teams to 31 countries from February to the end of August 2020 (Xinhua, 2020, September 7). China's government has aided the distribution of over 150 countries and making it easier for other countries to procure medical supplies in China. In addition to non-profit organizations and businesses, others assisted (Xinhua, 2020, September 7). More than ten thousand doses of China's vaccines have been donated to other countries. The provision of free samples frequently resulted in the buying several million doses of the vaccine: those vaccines namely Sinopharm, CoronaVac, and Conviaxia.

China also provided technical treatment guidelines and control measures to over 180 countries and regions and ten international and regional entities. In addition, foreign experts began meeting with China's officials in March 2020 for almost daily video conferences. Just as China has benefited from its use of makeshift hospitals worldwide, so have other countries, such as New York's iconic Central Park (Xinhua, 2020, September 7). To relieve developing countries of their debt burden, China has fully adopted the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), with a total of \$1.3 billion being allocated. Starting on April 1, the G20 leaders announced the DSSI, which allowed the debt payments from the poorest countries to be deferred from May 1, 2020, to be suspended until the lenders agreed to another solution. Six months later, the debt forgiveness was further extended until June 30, 2021 (CGTN, 2021, February 16).

The Covid-19 has the potential to ruin Xi Jinping's reputation completely, but he turned the outbreak into a blessing and showed his ability to manage the country and make China more respected in the world (Verma, 2020). Covid-19's centralized and efficient command system provided a firm assurance of victory for the country during the people's war. Nationwide resources have been put into action to good use to deal with the pandemic, and all cases were tested, quarantined, or treated. With these measures in place, the country could quickly prevent the outbreak (Businesswire, 2020).

Even more so than expected, China has demonstrated impressive mobilizational capacity in disaster and post-disaster reconstruction. It comes from two critical factors, undergirding its capabilities: a dedication to using human and material resources and a large state-owned sector (He, Shi & Liu, 2020).

A study indeed shows no correlation between effectiveness in handling Covid-19 and regime type. In comparison, some countries presumed as autocracies have performed well, like Singapore, while others have done very poorly, like Iran. Similarly, some democracies are not successful, like India, Italy, and the United States, while others have done well, like South Korea and Taiwan. (Kleinfeld, 2020).

However, we have to consider China's style in handling the pandemic. Xi Jinping's skill in handling pandemics is likely the product of decades of his life at the top of China's politics. Previously, he served in local, division, department, provincial, and national leadership positions. He then being elected to the Politburo Standing Committee before moving up to a leading role in the Politburo. The system is known as a "meritocracy." It is different from the democratic model; with campaigns and extensive capital support, anyone can become President even though they have never led a small county. (Bell, 2015)

A democracy requires only that the people choose their leaders; it is up to the voters to assess the candidates' qualifications. If voters are rational and do a good job selecting leaders, there is no need to agonize over what the characteristics of good leaders should be or which mechanisms should be used to select them. Of course, Chinese-style meritocracy is not without flaws. However, few would dispute that the system has performed admirably compared to democratic regimes of comparable size and economic development, let alone family-run dictatorships in the Middle East and elsewhere. And the world is watching China's meritocracy experiment. China, unlike Singapore, can "shake the world." Nobody predicted in the early 1990s that China's economy would grow at such a rapid clip to become the world's second-largest. Perhaps many years from now, we will be debating Chinese-style political meritocracy as a counter-model — and a threat — to Western-style democracy (Bell, 2015).

Dealing with Covid-19 in the most populous country is certainly not easy. The lockdown was carried out full of risks, such as what happened to India, resulting in chaos. However, Xi Jinping has done well. In dealing with a pandemic, people's rights to act and give opinions may be limited. But, several restrictions imposed should be acceptable if done for society's good in a critical time. The same is done in many democratic countries, which causes their democracy scores to drop. A study showed that democracy and human rights have steadily declined in 80 countries worldwide since the coronavirus outbreak began. (Repucci and Slipowitz, 2020).

Learned from the pandemic, again, we have to consider that the sources of legitimacy in the world have changed from welfare, democracy, and good government to "good governance." Good governance refers to deliver service for general public interests. There are some things that governments and governance have in common, but there are also distinct differences between the two. The main body of government comprises power organs, while the governance could be either public or private or quasi-public organizations or joint ventures of both. Good governance is more substantive as a legitimacy source, rather than agreement derived from democracy, as a procedural legitimacy. (Yu Keping, 2011).

It must be emphasized that the ultimate sources of human civilization and prosperity are not democracy, but private property, production, and voluntary exchange. Contrary to popular belief, it is critical to emphasize that the absence of democracy had little to do with the failure of Russian-style socialism. If socialism has a problem, it is not with the selection principle for politicians that formed. It was, in fact, politics and political decision-making (Hoppe, 2007).

When democratic rule reaches the point of no return, the problem will be significantly more challenging to solve than when kings lost their legitimacy. If democratic governments' monopoly on law and order is dissolved, there appears to be no other authority to which one can turn for justice, and chaos seems to be inevitable (Hoppe, 2007).

Those democratic problems can be seen in some countries in handling Covid-19 outbreaks, especially when the government lost the legitimacy of its people, so the people did not obey the rules in handling the pandemic. Managing a pandemic requires speed and not too much debate and miscoordination, increasing the number of victims.

Based on Yu Keping's criteria for good governance, there should be the rule of law, participation, fairness, transparency, accountability, efficiency, stability, integrity. Based on China's progress in handling the Covid-19 pandemic, I assumed that China had met good governance standards. Not only in China but also globally. Now, China has become a leading country with global governance. Following Xi's leadership, China's people have united to combat the COVID crisis (Xinhua, 2020, September 7). Xi's effective leadership follows his promise in 2013 that the government will be approachable and efficient (Heilmann, 2017).

4. Conclusion

PRC is a unitary government with no power division. It uses the People Congress System theory adapted from Marx, Engels' and Lenin's theory. It implements a communist system that every state organ is based on the democratic centralism principle which the Communist Party governs the country's formal institutions. Xi Jinping now heads the Party as the General Secretary and the President of the state. He also holds a position as the Chairman of the CMC. From Jiang Zemin to Xi Jinping today, the President's role has been more vital because they hold those three positions simultaneously. It is expected to create effective governance. Especially for China, as the most populous country, it is essential to create stability.

Realizing that he has a strong position, Xi works with Premier to encourage all China resources to handle the Covid-19 outbreak. They emphasized placing the people's needs above everything else and keeping everyone safe and healthy. China pulled out all the stops to help with the virus outbreak, with the government's entire

expenses. They also work together with WHO and many countries to face the pandemics. China helped many countries save their citizens in Wuhan, provide technical treatment guidelines and control measures, make the vaccine a public good, and many more. The Covid-19 could ruin Xi Jinping's reputation completely, but he turned the outbreak into a blessing and showed his ability to manage the country and make China more respected in the world. The effective management and good governance capital in handling the pandemic resulted country's rapid growth of 2.3% over 2020. Xi Jinping's skill in handling pandemics is likely the product of decades of his experiences at the top of China's politics, known as a "meritocracy." Dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, China seems to have met good governance standards. Not only in China but also globally.

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