

BORDERING PROCESSES: THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL BORDERS IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC

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Abstract

The global pandemic outbreak, due to its nature of being transmitted through physical proximity, has created an immediate need for physical distancing and reinforcement of private and personal spaces of individuals. This need has caused a gigantic 'kinopolitical' event that has resulted in a drastic change in social, spatial and virtual borders. However, due to the sudden nature of this re-bordering of space, there has been a movement to virtual spaces to meet the social, emotional, cognitive and economical needs that were left unfulfilled. This has forced a greater permeability to virtual spaces of interaction - a kind of de-bordering.

In this paper, we propose to examine the emerging consequences of changing social order in India and Bahrain from the lens of border theory. In the contexts of both countries, border theory has been used to offer insights into the following questions:

- How can we analyze pandemic response strategies employed so far and identify the causes for their lack of success?*
- Who are the re-bordering and de-bordering processes serving and who are they excluding?*
- What needs to change with individual strategies that can make pandemic planning more inclusive?*

A qualitative approach has been used to analyze the newspaper coverage and the official announcements during the ongoing pandemic in India and Bahrain dating from March 2020 to September 2020. We shall conclude with the implications that analysis of pandemic response strategies through the lens of border theory, can have on restructuring our planning processes and developing frameworks in both countries

Keywords: *Social Borders, Virtual Borders, Physical Distancing, Inequalities*

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Introduction

“Billions of people are in lockdown, unable to visit one another, unable to go to work, unable to attend school, unable to meet one another in public places. People around the world are in desperate straits, struggling at home, in care homes and intensive care units, dying of the same cause, separated from their loved ones in their hours of need. At times of existential danger, we instinctively desire to be close to our family and friends, hold their hands and embrace them – but now we are forbidden to do so, for every act of physical contact – every expression of physical loving-kindness and compassion – could bring illness and death”.

(Snower, 2020)

The COVID-19 pandemic due to its highly communicable nature, brought with it the need for physical distancing in order to prevent disease spread. This has transformed the way societies operate today. Individuals, societies and nations have changed the conditions of entry into their physical spaces. They have become more introverted and very minimally inclusive of those who don't hold certain privileges of belonging in these spaces (citizenship, residency etc). This restriction has been facilitated by the changing of the border conditions in these physical spaces. For example, in India and in Bahrain many residential apartment complexes have restricted the entry of delivery people to the gates and prevented visitors of the residents from entering the apartment gates.

This shift to more introverted spaces has both created new physical borders that didn't exist before and strengthened existing physical borders. Cities are political spaces that are formed due to the authoritarian and top-down models of government (Nawratek, 2014). In the pandemic, these authoritarian decisions have hugely impacted the spatial borders that we live with. This process of re-defining and changing existing border conditions by making them more exclusive/restricted and of creating new borders within previously border-less physical spaces is what we shall henceforth refer to in this paper as Physical Re-Bordering.

Due to these physical re-bordering processes and restricted physical movement, we have seen an unprecedented kino-political shift to online/virtual modes of interaction and socio-economic exchange. The social and economic processes that occurred in society in the physical space have now moved online. Applications, programs and websites that were previously used as a matter of convenience began being used for necessity. Many of these websites and applications have also sprouted new uses and functionalities to satisfy demand and customer expectations. Some applications that were sparsely used by society before such as Zoom found exponential increase in their usage (Iqbal, 2020). However, this process did come with many disadvantages such as data privacy issues, exclusion of many who couldn't afford or have access to the internet and devices to access the internet.

This process of the global kino-political shift towards virtual modes of interaction and the increase in the permeability of virtual borders is what shall be referred to as virtual de-bordering in this paper.

Methodology

“Explanation of natural behavior began to be rooted in rational constructions rather than in mythical ones”

(Groat & Wang, 2001)

Thomas Nail’s Theory of The Border (Nail, 2016) is used as a lens or a rational construction, in the contexts of India and Bahrain to “seek to develop a description, explanations, and predictions that hold true in all cases of a behavior under study” (Groat & Wang, 2001).

In later sections, this paper will perform correlational research that will tie the two contexts of Bahrain and India, through clarification of bordering patterns found in both contexts as two different variables in a causal comparative study (Groat & Wang, 2001). In a causal comparative study, the physical environments and the kino-political shifts to virtual modes of operation between March 2020 and August 2020, in both India and Bahrain will be compared through collected data that are relevant for each of these contexts. These variables (bordering patterns) will be generated as the discourses that will be the base of this causal comparative study. The intention of this study is not merely or primarily the comparison itself, although the name implies so. This study aims to examine the physical, social and virtual changes in the environment that were a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, through the lens of border theory.

The methods used in this study are based on comprehensive analysis of the newspaper coverage and the official announcements during the ongoing pandemic in India and Bahrain dating from March 2020 to September 2020. The initial observation was done through observing a number of articles that showed within its titles a state of change in the borders, whether it was rebordering or debordering in order to contain and prevent the spread of the virus. The number of articles that were varied in each country. In India, the number of articles relied on initially started with (n=53) and from the news section of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (n=20). Where in Bahrain the sources came from two main streams, newspaper articles (n=34) and the website of the Ministry of Health, news section (n=150). The search algorithm “covid-19 OR pandemic Or new corona virus” was applied **Fig.1**.

Using qualitative methods and interpretation is mostly subjected to limitations. The articles sourced from newspapers were limited to what was found using the search algorithm. There might be many articles that might be lifted out as it was not published within the time frame set at the beginning. Relying on the official newspaper and Ministry of Health in Bahrain, and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in India may have set the tone of voice of what has been represented in this research.

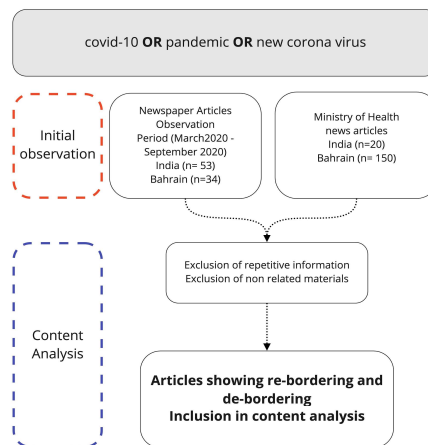


Figure 1: The diagram shows the search algorithm used and the initial observation sources, and how the exclusion done to the articles to use their content is the analysis.

Another tactic employed in this paper and is commonly used in correlational research is the observation in practice. The fields of observation for this study are on the borders between public physical spaces (Schools), private intimate physical spaces (Homes) and virtual spaces (Platforms). The observations of the researchers happen on these three different fields according to the discourses of the study generated from the data collected from the official newspapers.

The discourse as an approach for analysis is mostly related to linguistics. The language is the most known way for communication and making meanings (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Yet, language is not the only way to do that, visuals can communicate meanings more profoundly. Visuals are expressive and make communication easier in context where large amounts of data is being processed and presented. The research contained in this paper is dependent on both the literature obtained from newspaper research and on how the data was observed by the researchers. The method of observation chosen by the researchers in this paper are in the form of visuals and maps **Fig.2**.

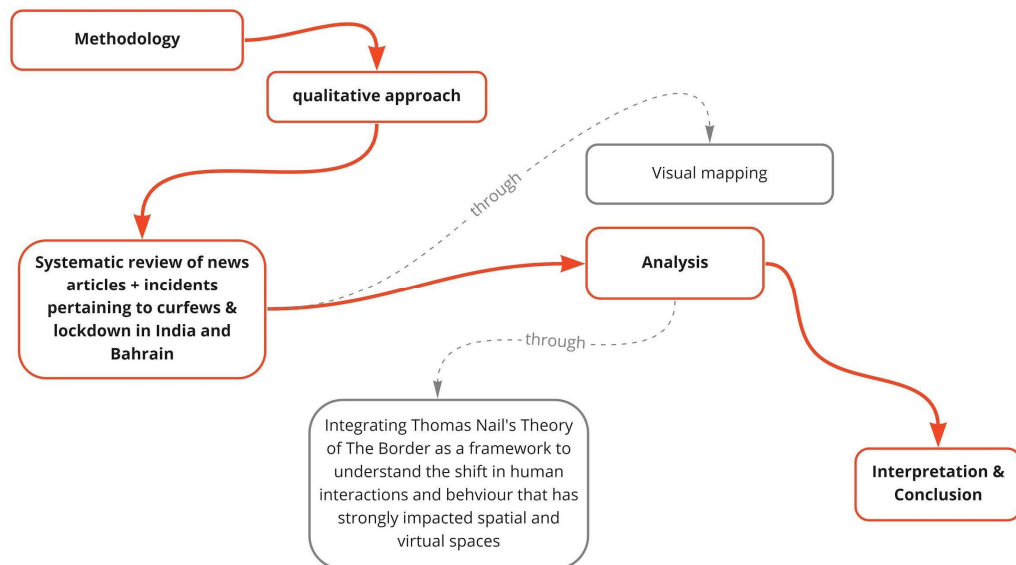


Figure 2: Image depicting the attempt at virtual de-bordering : transferring functionalities of physical spaces to virtual modes, in India and Bahrain

Visual Mapping

The visual mapping is commonly used in qualitative research to map the large amount of data collected visually for the best understanding and clearly mapping the data. Hence, in order to communicate the virtual debordering that happened in India and Bahrain, **Fig. 3** is created to map the virtual applications that people found as an alternative to the physical spaces or services. These alternatives were not created as a status quo of the pandemic, most of these applications were used initially but not as wide and consistent when compared with before the pandemic.

The debordering happened in India and Bahrain when the lockdown happened for shops, restaurants, schools and education facilities, recreational spaces and partial shutdown of unnecessary departments in healthcare facilities. For example, people found social alternatives

platforms for social gathering when restaurants and recreational spaces shut down by utilising the apps such as Zoom meetings, Whatsapp and Google Hangouts. There are more specialized apps that have been used for online dating especially in India such as “Hinge”. On another level, Zoom was used as well to provide a virtual alternative to more formal gatherings like study and research groups.

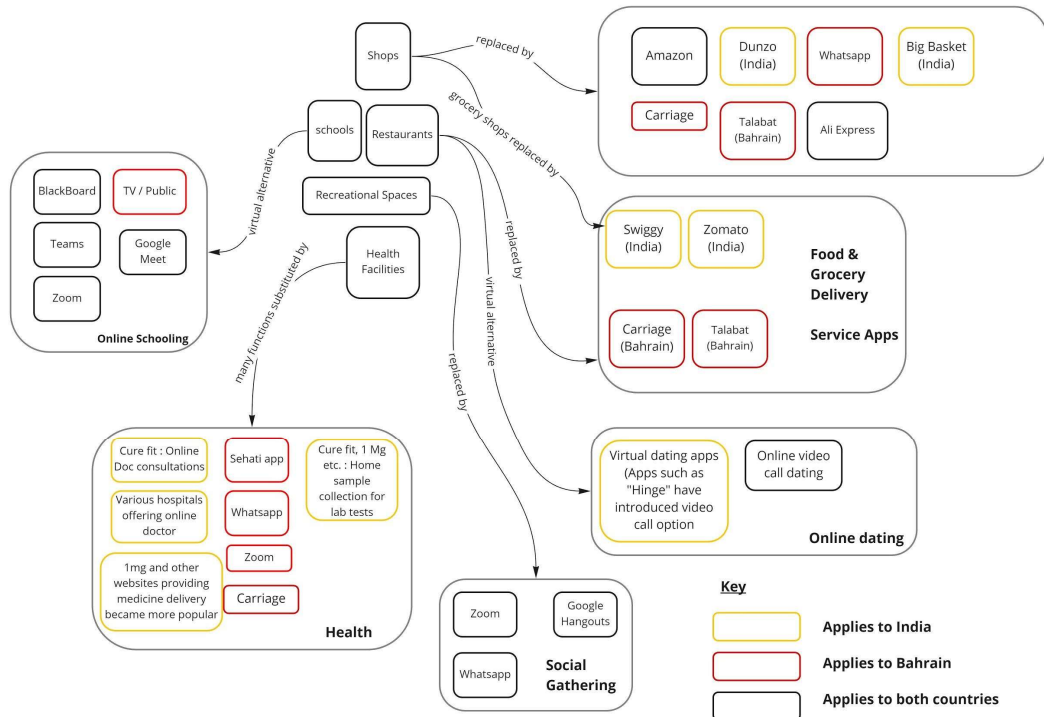


Figure 3: Image depicting the attempt at virtual de-bordering : transferring functionalities of physical spaces to virtual modes, in India and Bahrain

Literature Review : Border Theory as Framework for Discourse

The borders discussed in this paper are not merely static physical borders, they are fluid, changing and permeable (Nail 2016). In “Theory of The Border”, Nail outlines three core concepts of social motion/kinopolitics - flow, junctions and circulation. While “flow” refers to the movement of people, the junction is the point of decision where the determination of whether a flow can be expelled or recirculated within the border occurs. It is the resultant circulation that defines or re-emphasizes the border. (Nail 2016, pp. 19-35)

Further to Thomas Nail’s explanation of junctions, through this analysis, we propose two core aspects of these junctions :

1. **Border Conditions :** The parameters/conditions that dictate circulation i.e. how the junctions expel and redirect flows. The border conditions also determine who passes through the border and who is sent back in. Therefore, they dictate the permeability of the border.

2. **Border Mechanisms** : The technologies and practices used in/by the junctions to execute the border conditions i.e. to maintain and reinforce borders. Border mechanisms determine the extent to which the border conditions are enforced.

In order to understand junctions and their bordering processes, it becomes crucial to examine the persons or organisations responsible for allocating either or both the border conditions and mechanisms to various junctions. As Nail explains, “The techniques of border circulation only have the strength that society gives them”(Nail, 2016, p. 8). As borders are primarily designed as mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, another crucial aspect of examination is the identification of those excluded by the border in discussion and the nature of this exclusion. As Michaelsen & Johnson elucidate in their text -

“We begin with an understanding that for all of border studies' attempts to produce a cultural politics of diversity and inclusion, this work literally can be produced only by means of— can be founded only upon — exclusions.”
 (Michaelsen & Johnson, 1997)

Therefore, through this analysis, we aim to shine light on persons, organisations who are reinforcing these conditions and the persons/organisations who are most vulnerable to both the border conditions and the methods & technologies of their reinforcement **Fig. 4**.

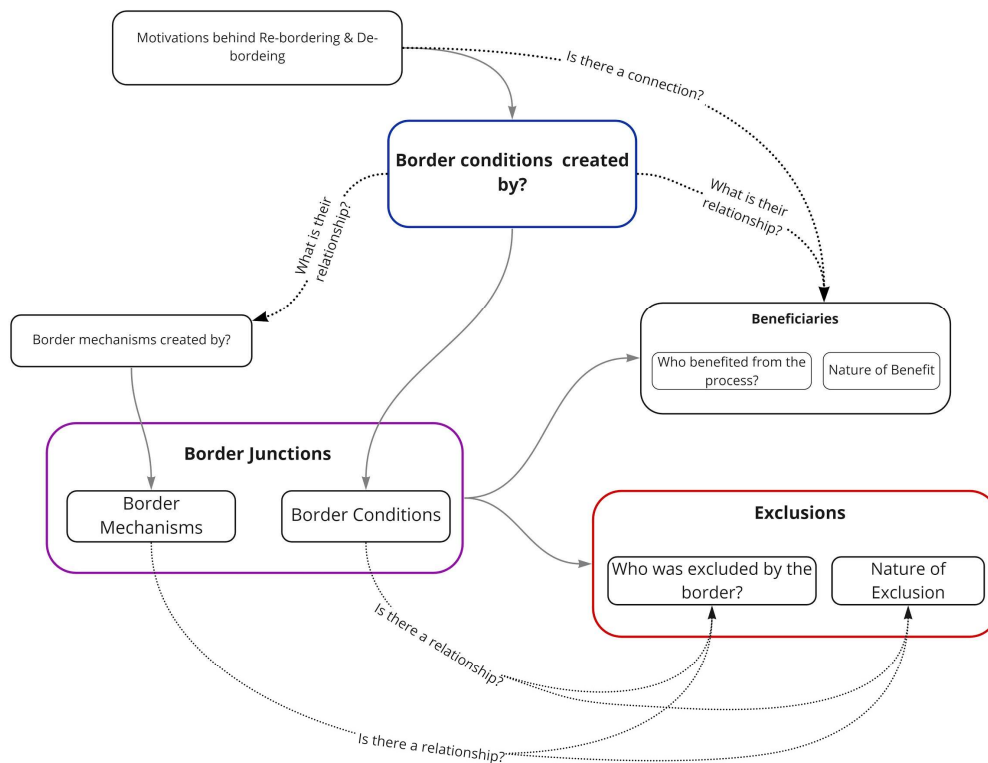


Figure 4: Image depicting the framework created to examine bordering processes based on “ Theory of The Border” by Thomas Nail

An examination of processes that came into picture during the pandemic outbreak, through the lens of border theory, prompts the following questions:

- 1) What were the nature of the junctions in the spatial re-bordering & virtual de-bordering process i.e. what were conditions of these junctions and the mechanisms through which the new borders were reinforced?
- 2) Who instrumented these bordering processes? What were their drivers and key motivators?
- 3) Who did these borders exclude and what was the nature of this exclusion?
- 4) What are the interrelationships between the nature of the junctions and the resultant exclusion?

Context : India and Bahrain

Bahrain and India are two developing countries that are not in the mainstream narrative of the pandemic. The global narrative of the covid-19 pandemic is focused on European countries and the United States of America. Although, India is the 2nd globally on the active cases, it is still not discussed on the level of how India is responding to the pandemic. Bahrain, on the other hand, is the 54th on the scale of active cases. Bahrain sets an example of how a small country in size is facing similar circumstances as India responded in a successful approach. The sizes of countries work best for discussing strategies and how effective are these strategies on these different scales.

The first positive case of COVID-19 in Bahrain was detected in the community of school bus drivers. Hence, educational institutions were shut down for two weeks from 24th February owing to concerns about the possibility of large-scale transmission. This was the first instance of spatial re-bordering that began in Bahrain. This closure period for institutions was further extended as the outbreak grew bigger. A subtler form of re-bordering that attempted to limit human-to-human contact, came into effect when a remote work policy which was stated on the Ministry of Health News (22 March 2020) was enforced from the 22nd March in Bahrain. The policy stated that at any given time only 50% of the office workforce would be physically present in the workplaces and the rest would work remotely. Working mothers were exempted from working in offices and were allowed to work from home as of the day after the policy was announced. Simultaneously, the borders of the country were closed for tourists and travellers coming in from other countries. This closure caused many travellers who had homes and jobs in Bahrain, to be stranded in their countries of visit. Students studying in foreign universities also faced difficulties in their attempts to reach their homes in Bahrain. On March 26th, the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism issued a notice that all businesses would close except essential businesses e.g. supermarkets, fueling stations, and hospitals as stated at Ministry of Health News (26 March 2020). Thus, as a consequence of these methods of re-bordering the physical spaces of movement and social contact, the majority of the country's population had been made to stay at home and limit physical contact for long periods of time.

This physical re-bordering process created a division of the society in Bahrain based on two dominant attitudes & behaviours in response to the process - one of compliance to this re-bordering and another that attempted to resist it. Certain groups of people who did not believe the hazard to be real (or believed that it was exaggerated by the government), either secretly or publicly defying the new policies and advice of authorities. There were other groups of people who, frightened of the spread of the virus, acted defensively and created thick socio-spatial borders around them to prevent the virus spread from reaching them.

In India, the inception of large-scale, nation-wide spatial re-bordering began with the enforcement of a curfew from March 22nd to April 14th in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Later, this curfew came to be known as lockdown 1.0. The curfew decreed that all forms of transport - road, air and rail would be disallowed except for the movement of “essential goods and services”. The curfew tightened the borders of various states within the country and prevented free inter-state movement of citizens (Modi, 2020). These were the two significant border conditions that reinforced various political (state boundaries), social (public gathering spaces closed) and domestic (residential apartments closed their gates) borders in space. These border conditions were enforced through various means - police forces monitoring streets for “unessential” movement and punishing people flouting the curfew, public gathering spaces such as parks were closed indefinitely etc. This significantly affected everyday functionality of the society - offices & educational institutions were temporarily closed, public transport options were significantly reduced, public entertainment zones such as movie theaters, malls etc were indefinitely shut down etc. Lockdown 1.0 was followed by a series of such curfews (lockdown 2.0, 3.0, 4.0 and Unlock 1.0, 2.0, 3.0) that varied their bordering conditions, making some of the borders more porous (freer movement was allowed through state borders and there was relaxation of some of the rules) over time (“COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown in India,” 2020). However, all of their border conditions had measures to ensure social distancing and restrict social contact in order to avoid disease spread. As many new borders were constructed and reinforced by the central and state governments, the fear of viral transmission also began creating internal borders in the society in the form of socially initiated measures to minimize physical contact. For instance, residential apartment complexes closed their gates to any visitors/guests and required residents to have their temperature checked and hands sanitized when they returned from grocery shops. These apartments also restricted access of delivery persons to the gate.

In both countries, this re-bordering of physical space and its restrictive nature, instigated attempts to move functionalities that weren't possible or were perceived to now be risky in physical space, to virtual or online modes.

Bordering Processes and Their Consequences

As witnessed in various phases of the lockdown in India and in the various policies enforced in Bahrain, spatial experiments effected by changing spatial border conditions, have been instrumented from February or March 2020 by the governments in order to identify the most effective strategies for preventing disease spread while balancing economic impact. On many occasions, the consequences of these spatial re-bordering processes on the populace of the countries have been sudden and drastic.

There were various virtual de-bordering experiments conducted by companies, governments and institutions that were prompted by the processes of spatial re-bordering. These processes began soon after the lockdown to solve the problems created by the latter.

Instance 1 : Harmful Border Mechanisms

In India, the process of virtual de-bordering prompted a capitalistic re-model of functionalities and structure of some service providers and companies, in order to ensure capital gains (Tyagi, 2020). Despite a deep depression in demand for food delivery apps (caused by both people's safety concerns and governmental curfews), the two major food-delivery apps in India, Swiggy and Zomato, stayed afloat financially through various means of de-bordering the virtual space like

experimenting with delivery models and including delivery of groceries as a part of their functions, along with cutting costs by significant downsizing. The aspects that dictated the de-bordering process by Swiggy and Zomato were - to create more market demand and to prioritize of the companies. In the case of companies like Zomato, this de-bordering helped the company retain control on costs and profitability as said in the MediaNama on the article Food Delivery Economics has Improved, Says Zomato (11 July 2020) but caused many people previously employed in the organisation to lose their jobs or take significant salary cuts (Poojary, 2020). Many of those who lost their jobs were delivery persons employed by these companies. Therefore, in the process of de-bordering despite the change of border conditions to permit transfer of more goods to customers, the delivery persons were vulnerable to losing their jobs.

This de-bordering process that ensured the safety of those who could afford to spend on delivery apps and own smartphones, exposed delivery personnel (those who remained employed) to the increased risk of pandemic spread. Also, they had to navigate the spatial re-bordering that had begun to occur due to nationwide lockdown. The junctions in this re-bordering process relied on the mechanism of strict policing by the government. Many of the delivery persons who remained employed, suffered violence in the hands of police forces (who mistook them for people who were trying to flout the curfew) during the initial stages of lockdown 1.0 stated the Hindu (26 March 2020). The method of police surveillance through which the border condition of spatial re-bordering was enforced in the initial stages and the virtual de-bordering that was constructed solely to focus on adapting the company structure to maintain profitability and respond to market demand, led to one of the primary stakeholders of these service apps - the delivery persons, to become the most vulnerable to police violence, to risk of disease spread and to financial distress

Fig. 5.

In Bahrain, virtual de-bordering occurred through the surge in demand for service apps like Carriage and Talabat that delivered both food and essentials. Many supermarkets, retail shops, large and small businesses partnered with these apps to keep their businesses running while their physical retail spaces remained closed (bizbahrain, 2020). This virtual de-bordering was further enhanced by the introduction of contactless payments and deliveries to customers. Similar to the processes in India, this de-bordering was capitalistically motivated and put the delivery persons at risk.

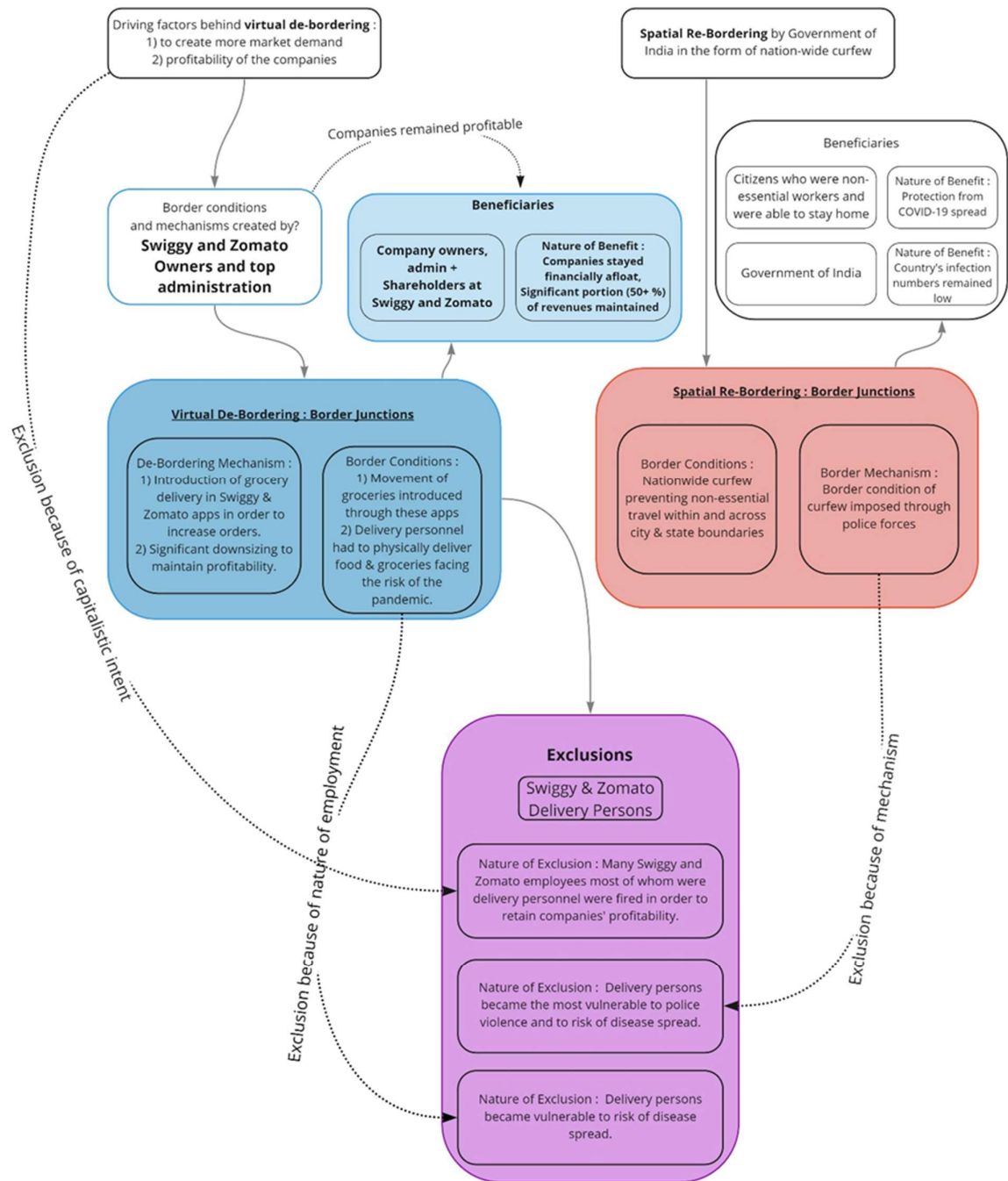


Figure 5: Image depicting the impact of bordering processes on delivery personnel in India

Instance 2 : Rigid Border Conditions

The imposition of lockdown in India was sudden and without warning. Two significant features of the border conditions of the junctions in this re-bordering process were: a) this curfew prevented any “non-essential” movement over inter-state borders and b) the conditions took immediate effect within a few hours of announcement. Many migrant daily-wage workers from states other than the ones they were working in, were faced with no daily wage jobs and no transportation to return home. The rigidity of the border conditions implied that there would be a greater amount of re-circulation - migrant workers returning to their cities of employment but without the jobs and financial means to support themselves. However, the Government’s mechanisms for handling re-circulation weren’t robust. The government announced relief packages for the workers. However, in a detailed article on “the Wire”, Jawahar Sircar highlights the insufficiency of the relief packages, a lack of a unified, robust distribution system, the delay in relief packages reaching the migrants and lack of social protection for the “informal” sector resulted in many migrant workers taking to travelling hundreds of kilometers by foot (Sircar, 2020). The processes of spatial re-bordering that created these curfews, failed to include border conditions that would allow and facilitate movement for migrant workers across these borders in a safe manner. Also, during the process of initial re-bordering, there were no gradations in the impermeability of the border over time i.e. no concessions for crossing the border through vehicles or provisions of public transport for such movement were made based on the need or urgency of travel. During the second phase of the lockdown, “Shramik trains” were introduced to transport stranded labourers home. However, despite this relaxation in the border conditions, the mechanisms that facilitated this relaxation was weak - the irregularity of the service along with its insufficiency resulted in not completely curbing the travel by foot. Travelling by foot caused many people to die of exhaustion on their way home (Chakravarty, 2020).

In Bahrain, due to similar instances of re-circulation by the border, low wage migrant workers suffered living conditions in the workers' camps which denied them from the basic safe separation distance in order to keep them safe (*COVID-19 Cases Rising among Migrants in Bahrain | Migrant-Rights.Org*, 2020). As the most economically underprivileged because of their low income, the Bahraini government’s promise to cover the nation’s wages did not apply to migrant workers from other countries. They also suffered loss of their jobs due to the lockdown of businesses. To address this, the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain planned to relocate the migrants to other spaces such as empty schools and hotels to ensure their safety. This step was taken after the increment of the positive tests among migrants and it is a high percentage between the contacts of the person tested positive to coronavirus.

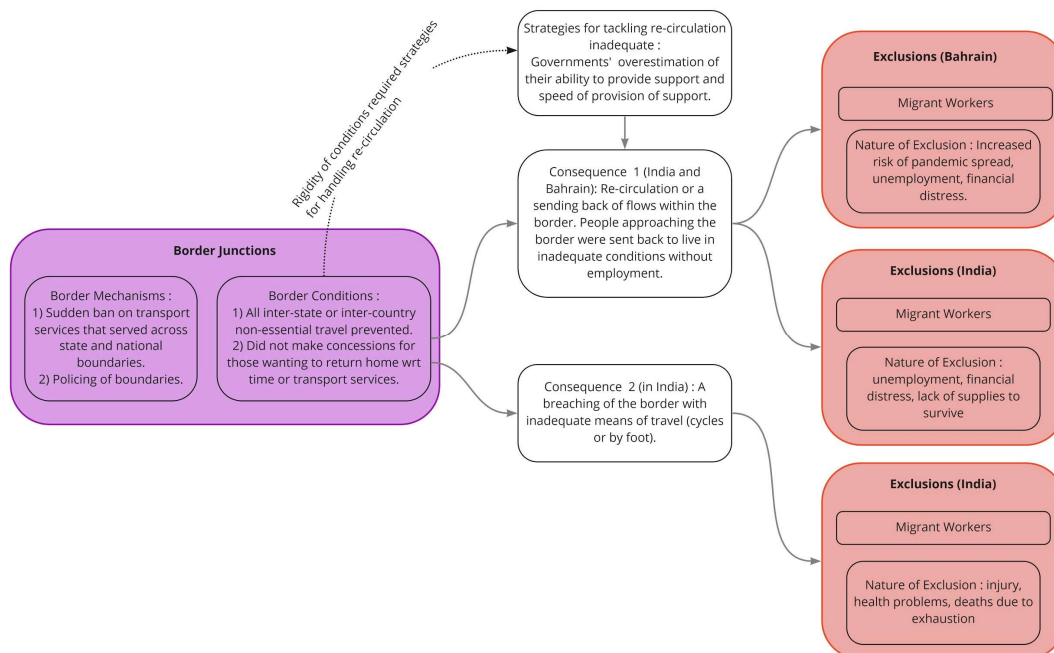


Figure 6: Image depicting the impact of border conditions of lockdown on migrant workers

Instance 3 : Infrastructure Inequality

In the field of education, in both countries virtual de-bordering occurred through switching to online modes of learning. In India, some companies operating in the education (Ed-Tech) hugely benefited financially from this process. (Correspondent, 2020) Most of the norms for operating online were dictated by individual educational institutions that switched to virtual classes over applications such as Zoom and MS teams. In April 2020, India accounted for the most downloads of the Zoom app worldwide (“Zoom Was the Most Downloaded App in April, Thanks to India,” 2020). However, due to this de-bordering process being initiated by independent institutions or individuals opting to learn online, it benefitted only those who could afford devices to access the internet and the Ed-tech/Video-conferencing companies themselves. Those without access to technology who comprised more than 70% of the country’s population were left with few or no means of access to education (*Only 23% of Indian Households Have Access to Internet for E-Education, Says UNICEF Report, 2020*). The spatial re-bordering that resulted in loss of jobs for the underprivileged, as discussed in the previous instances, widened the gap in access to e-education. One government initiative (SWAYAM Prabha) was taken to broadcast education channels for school education on TV. However, there were no measures taken to enroll those without access to the internet, in the virtual de-bordering of education, through subsidies for internet access or for electronic devices.

In Bahrain, the virtual de-bordering of education and the remote work policy, required internet connections and devices for working or studying from home. Lack of the sufficient devices in the family meant that their children had to take turns in order to fulfill their duties for schools and universities. The Ministry of Education addressed this issue by collaborating with the Ministry of Information Affairs, which allowed the latter to create lessons which then can be broadcasted through the television to make sure that the students are not missing their education because of the lack of devices that can stop their attainment (BNA, 2020).

The infrastructures of internet connection, online and other virtual platforms that faced high demand at all times faced problems with the connections and created many frustrations among people who wanted to do their jobs. The telecommunication companies (Batelco, 2020) as a part of their social responsibility tried to provide more reliable connection through the day in Bahrain by increasing the speed and providing unlimited data usage for the educational and collaborative platforms such as Teams, Google classrooms and Blackboard. Though driven by capitalist interests, this de-bordering attempted to provide temporary relief to families with multiple learners.

Conclusion and Discussion

Investigating pandemic response strategies through the lens of border theory, allows us to address exclusions created by these strategies. Also, mapping the excluded stakeholders of different bordering systems could provide foresight to prevent multiple kinds of exclusions as witnessed in the case of Instance 1. Also seen in this instance is the need to consciously investigate the nature of mechanisms used to execute bordering processes. In the case of instance 2, both bordering mechanisms and more importantly border conditions of the junction reflect the need for foresight with pandemic laws and response strategies. While it is evident in instance 1 that there is a need to offer socio-economic protection to those forced to pass through the junctions of borders during a pandemic, instance 2 highlights the need to plan the permeability of the border according to the potential consequences of the junction causing a re-circulation within the border and also to anticipate the support required to support the re-circulation. Instance 3 highlights the criticality of examining the infrastructure requirements built into junctions in order for them to permit de-bordering. In a sense, the virtual de-bordering wasn't a true removal of a border as much as an increase in the permeability of the border. Therefore, the knowledge of who are limited and excluded by the junctions of this border and to provide them the required support, is crucial to ensuring equity while responding to a pandemic outbreak.

The analysis presented here of various instances across India and Bahrain indicate that those affected most by both re-bordering and de-bordering processes are the economically underprivileged in the society. Also, as illuminated in instances 1 and 3, the various bordering processes that originated during the pandemic were either commercially driven or served the middle and upper classes of the society well. Therefore, it is essential to involve persons and organisations who have the interests of the economically underprivileged at heart, to be integrated into both spatial re-bordering and virtual de-bordering processes.

There are lessons for Bahrain and India to be learned from each other. As evidenced in instance 1, both countries could benefit from government involvement in various private sector operations and ensure that there are certain policies in place to protect the financially vulnerable. Instance 3 illuminates the need for creating financial subsidies for internet access for all through collaboration with private service providers in India. As online education is easily accessible and affordable, once the infrastructure of internet availability and electronic devices are in place, it is a trend that can be expected to continue beyond the era of the pandemic. Therefore, steps must be taken to make the internet an essential commodity.

In Bahrain, the system is predicted to be more flexible in terms of allowing people to work from home, it is clearly seen as the efficiency of working from home. The Civil Service Bureau CSB, is approving and regulating the working from home to many professions under its umbrella. In terms of learning and teaching, The ministry of Education does not accept certificates of Bahrainis that

took degrees online (Alzeny, 2015). Inevitably, this is on the way to be changed as the Bahraini institutions started to provide its services online and saw how successful the experience is.

There are several borders that have been established in the world before the pandemic, ranging from the political borders of countries to the fences peoples' build around their homes. However, with this pandemic, more borders are on the rise, borders that are not simply physical barriers. Some of them are predicted to last even after the threat of the virus is long gone. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the underlying mechanisms behind the creation or removal of these borders to understand interests they serve and the people they oppress.

Lastly, examining existing and proposed policies for pandemic preparedness, through the lens of border theory, can help to understand or foresee the impact of these policies on various sections of the society. Therefore, this method of analysis could be employed to create robust policies that are more inclusive and address the needs of all members of the society.

Future Research

This paper is still an ongoing research as many more investigations regarding the debordering and rebordering process can be carried out. Yet, it serves as the starting phase to research more in depth on the status quo. It also sets the themes and the instances which are associated with the two countries, and act as a starting point for separate investigations during the pandemic itself. It acts as well as a reference point to reflect on the research question: to what extent the debordering and rebordering resolution will continue after the pandemic? and is there a turning point? or a new course further?

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