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*International
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Special Issue*

*Edited by
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St. John's University*

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FROM THE INTERNATIONAL VINCENTIAN BUSINESS ETHICS SPECIAL ISSUE EDITOR

I was delighted when Dr. Yun Zhu, editor of the *Review of Business*, asked me to serve as the guest editor of this special issue of the journal. The papers selected for this issue were first presented at the 2022 International Vincentian Business Ethics Conference (IVBEC) hosted by St. John's University. It marked the 29th year of this annual conference, which rotates between the Vincentian universities: St. John's, De Paul, Niagara, and Dublin City (after its merger with All Hallows). I have been privileged to be a member of its organizing committee for many years, along with Dr. Linda Sama (chair), Dr. Cynthia Phillips, and Fr. Patrick Flannagan from St. John's and representatives from each of the other schools. As a member of the *Review of Business* editorial board as well, I appreciated this intersection of interests.

The theme of the 2022 IVBEC was "Ethical Implications for Business and Society of a Post-COVID Recovery: Challenges, Opportunities and Impact." The pandemic brought with it unprecedented challenges, impacting some industries and sectors of society more than others, but affecting all of us in some way. Recovery requires addressing issues of health and well-being; the workplace; economic freefall or economic rebound; climate change; social justice and equity; human dignity; and the common good. As you will see from the papers included in this issue, IVBEC attracts varied perspectives from a wide range of disciplines, all focused on facets of ethics in business.

The lead article, "The Effect of COVID-19 on Workplace Relationships, Attitudes, and Behaviors" by Blitz and Mason, was motivated by the desire to understand and address employee concerns related to workplace disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors developed a questionnaire to assess the effect of COVID-19 on workplace relationships, attitudes, and behaviors as they differ based on age, gender, and ethnicity. The paper finds a statistically significant correlation between age and workplace attitudes but not between age and relationships or age and behaviors. Additionally, the effects of gender and ethnicity were negligible.

In the second article, "The Messy Common Good: Constitutionalism Balancing Markets and Democracy," Dr. Windsor motivates the study from an ethical implication that post-COVID recovery is the vital role of constitutionalism as the necessary and desirable element for balancing capitalism and democracy. The associated welfare theorem is that the common good requires all three dimensions functioning appropriately. The paper thus proposes a theoretical investigation into the nature of common good as unavoidably a messy resultant (messy means complicated and unsatisfactory, in contrast to idealized), and develops three arguments. (1) The common good is unavoidably a messy resultant of complex interactions. (2) Business, like science and technology, should retain a relatively independent role. (3) Constitutionalism is an essential ethical frame-

work for balancing markets and democracy. For capitalism, common good occurs through relatively free markets and limited government. For democracy, relatively broad-scope government strongly regulates markets and outcomes. Unrestrained democracy tends toward authoritarianism and socialism. Unrestrained capitalism tends toward inequality and exploitation. To integrate capitalism and democracy, constitutionalism combines normative law with a system of checks and balances. With the developed arguments, the paper states that constitutionalism is the essential ethical dimension for keeping markets and democracy in balance. Business must have some relatively independent role rather than being subordinate to government. Authoritarianism and majoritarianism subordinate business to political preferences. Insufficiently regulated business abuses the common good.

Dr. Shen contributes his work “Message Framing, Regulatory Focus, and Venue of Consumption: An Interaction Study about Mask Mandate Compliance” as the third article of this issue. It is acknowledged that mask wearing can effectively control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the effects of message framing on mask wearing have been examined in previous studies. Thus, this study is intended to address some of the insufficiencies in this line of research and explore more effective ways to encourage mask wearing among the public. Built upon the extant literature about the compatibility among message framing, regulatory focus, and the hedonic/utilitarian nature of a consumption experience, the author hypothesizes that enhanced persuasiveness of a mask mandate due to the compatibility and finds that a gain-framed message leads to stronger compliance with a mask mandate than does a loss-framed message among those sensitive to positive outcomes in a hedonic setting. A loss-framed message leads to stronger compliance with the mask mandate than does a gain-framed message among those sensitive to negative outcomes in a utilitarian setting.

We hope that the papers in this special issue will provide an interesting sample of the various types of work being done to further ethical behavior in business. We believe that this perspective is vital to advancing sustainable business practices. The *Review of Business* will continue to publish high-quality scholarly articles that answer the most imminent questions in the business fields.

Victoria L. Shoaf, PhD

The Effect of COVID-19 on Workplace Relationships, Attitudes, and Behaviors

Reva E. Blitz

Susan E. Mason

Abstract

Motivation: The present study was motivated by the desire to understand and address employee concerns related to workplace disruptions.

Premise: There are clear changes in the workplace that have been brought about by COVID-19. It is useful to examine how those changes—good and bad—have affected and will continue to affect an organization's employees.

Approach: In the present study, a questionnaire was developed to assess the effect of COVID-19 on workplace relationships, attitudes, and behaviors as they differ based on age, gender, and ethnicity.

Results: There was a statistically significant correlation between age and workplace attitudes but not between age and relationships or age and behaviors. Additionally, the effects of gender and ethnicity were negligible.

Conclusion: The present study showed minimal immediate effects of the pandemic on employees. Additional research, particularly longitudinal studies, will be necessary for a full understanding of the impact of COVID on workplace relationships, attitudes, and behaviors.

Consistency: The methodology of this employee-focused study provides researchers and practitioners with an approach to assessing employee concerns regarding disruptions in the workplace.

Keywords: COVID-19, employee attitudes, employee behaviors, employee relationships, workplace changes

JEL Classification Codes: I12, I19, Z13

INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic rocked the world. As of February 2022, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that approximately 5.9 million people worldwide had died from the virus, 900,000 of those deaths being in the United States (WHO 2020). The required quarantine environment had negative physical, social, economic, and psychological consequences. Many people were

Reva E. Blitz, Niagara University, revablitz23@gmail.com

Susan E. Mason, PhD, Niagara University, sem@niagara.edu

dealing with depression and other mental health issues before the pandemic. An estimated 264 million people suffer from depression worldwide. Despite the prevalence of depression, there is a global shortage of mental health care providers, resulting in depression being one of the most undiagnosed but treatable disorders. WHO notes that before COVID suicide rates were increasing at alarming rates. It is currently unknown how the pandemic has affected that trend. Stress is another well-being issue the world faced before the pandemic. The World Health Organization identified stress as the “epidemic of the 21st century” with the workplace being a primary factor. Naber (n.d.) hypothesized that people spend roughly one-third of their lives at work. It follows that efforts to make the workplace a mentally and physically healthier environment could have significant benefits to both businesses and their employees. Unfortunately, the virus uprooted the workplace, and the long-term consequences are unknown.

The COVID-19 pandemic also interfered with what is known as the *Fourth Industrial Revolution*. The world has experienced multiple industrial revolutions, but the fourth is characterized by “unstable geopolitical systems and accelerated scientific and technological breakthroughs” (Broad and Luthans 2020). The research conducted by Broad and Luthans focuses on Wave 2 of Positive Psychology (PP2.0) in the Fourth Industrial Revolution and how COVID has impacted it.

The field of psychology traditionally studied the negative side of the human mind (i.e., psychopathy, dysfunctional behavior, mental illness). Wave 1 of Positive Psychology (PP1.0) aimed to move the focus of research to areas of well-being and strengths of humans. To make the shift, positive psychologists used traditional scientific experimentation to find reliable and repeatable methods for people to live longer and happier by changing their mindset. While focusing on the brighter side, positive psychology also accounts for negative emotions, feelings, and behaviors to aid our understanding of how to live a better life. As the Fourth Industrial Revolution altered the workforce, PP1.0 progressed into PP2.0. Wave 2 further moves positive psychology research to focus on what makes life worth living and how to improve one’s quality of life in general. Since most people spend a large portion of their life working, it is important that positive psychology practices are implemented in the workplace.

Broad and Luthans (2020) identify that psychological capital, the center focus of positive organizational behavior, can be useful in accomplishing the goals of positive psychology. Broad and Luthans formally defined *psychological capital* as:

An individual’s positive psychological state of development characterized by: having confidence to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; making a positive attribution about succeeding now and in the future; persevering towards goals, and when necessary, redirecting paths to goals in order to succeed, and when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond to attain success (p. 546).

The definition can be summarized into four main aspects: hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism. The psychological capital model fosters positivity while still accounting for negativity within human nature. The model has been proven to

account for changes in one's attitudes, behaviors, and performance. While it might seem like the COVID-19 pandemic greatly interfered with the progression of PP2.0, that is not the case. Scholars in the field can use the ideas of psychological capital and the pillars of PP2.0 to focus COVID-era research on progressive topics.

As COVID-19 has affected, and will continue to affect, virtually every aspect of life, the need for exploratory research is clear. An essential area for such research is the impact of COVID-19 on the workplace in terms of employees' behaviors, attitudes, and relationships.

WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR

Workplace behavior is referred to as *organizational citizen behavior*. Sharma and Sharma (2015) note that Dennis Organ coined the term to define one's behavior that is controlled by oneself. There are no rules or consequences that govern the behavior. One's organizational citizen behavior is not enforced or outlined by the organization; it is simply the actions one chooses to exhibit. Employees who exhibit positive organizational citizen behavior benefit the organization by helping it operate smoothly and effectively. Sharma and Sharma describe two additional categories of behavior within organizational citizen behavior: behaviors that benefit the individual and behaviors that benefit the organization. Sharma and Sharma also note that employees can exhibit counterproductive workplace behaviors that go against normal workplace or organization-specific behaviors and that threaten the functioning and culture of the organization.

Sharma and Sharma's 2015 study measured the relationship between psychological capital and counterproductive workplace behavior. The researchers were interested in the relationship because prior research found significant positive relationships between happiness, psychological capital, and organizational citizen behavior. Such relationships are associated with increased organizational effectiveness and success. Sharma and Sharma used 107 participants' responses to the Psychological Capital Scale, the Counterproductive Work Behaviors Scale, and the Organizational Citizen Behaviors Scale. The results indicated a strong positive correlation between the four dimensions of psychological capital (hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism) and both organizational citizen behavior that benefits the individual and organizational citizen behavior that benefits the organization. There was also a strong negative correlation between the four dimensions and the Counterproductive Work Behaviors Scale. Upon further analysis to validate the results, a regression analysis showed that psychological capital significantly impacted organizational citizen behaviors (those benefiting the individual and those benefiting the organization) and counterproductive work behaviors.

Other researchers hypothesized that employees under great stress would display higher levels of counterproductive work behaviors (Avey et al. 2011). Upon investigation, it was found that having high psychological capital can limit one's counterproductive work behaviors. Research has also shown that those high in resilience demonstrate fewer counterproductive work behaviors because they do not let stressors affect them in a detrimental way. Similarly, those with high levels of hope limit counterproductive work behaviors by finding alternative solutions to any stressors that arise. Furthermore, those high in optimism navigate through stressors without exhibiting counterproductive work behaviors by maintaining a positive outlook. The same research also investigated psy-

chological capital and employee attitudes. Avey et al. identified two types of attitudes: those that are desirable and those that are undesirable to the goals of a particular organization. Individuals who are high in psychological capital are more likely to exhibit desirable attitudes at work. Additional findings include that optimistic employees expect good things to happen to them in the work environment, employees with high efficacy and hope believe in themselves to make their own success, and employees with high levels of resilience can navigate stressors or setbacks.

WORKPLACE ATTITUDE

In a review article, Judge et al. (2017) identified various psychological perspectives that have been used to explain how attitudes are related to job satisfaction and job commitment. The review discusses how humanist, calculative, dispositional, and mood/event-based approaches explain the importance of attitudes in the workplace.

As outlined by Judge et al. (2017), the humanist perspective focuses on attitudes as they pertain to individuals' desire for growth and development. This perspective holds that employees' attitudes will be more positive if their needs for growth and development are met by the organization for which they are working. Using meta-analyses derived from the humanist theories, researchers have found that interdependence, feedback from colleagues, and social support in the workplace contribute to positive or negative attitudes. Humanist research strongly supports the association between social interactions and workplace attitudes. In contrast, the calculative perspective focuses on explaining attitudes through cognitive processes. This perspective holds that job attitudes are a result of what workers want from their job compared to the actual features of their job. Therefore, methods from the calculative perspective help explain how attitudes predict job satisfaction.

Judge et al. (2017) further explains that the dispositional approach focuses on job attitudes derived from the workers themselves. This approach takes the person's identity into consideration. It proposes that one's attitude at work is highly affected by one's overall disposition across many areas of life, over time. Similar to the dispositional approach, the mood and event-based approach relates the individuals' moods with their experiences at work. While the dispositional approach holds that one's attitude at work is related to one's overall disposition, the mood and event-based perspective acknowledges the variability in moods and how they affect attitudes. Drivers of variability are said to include an individual's flow of moods and an individual's experiences from day to day. This perspective hypothesizes that an individual with more negative moods will likely have more negative emotions, and therefore more negative attitudes. Similarly, the perspective hypothesizes that an individual with more positive moods will have more positive emotions and attitudes.

WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

Another important aspect of work life that COVID has likely affected is workplace relationships. Since many people have been required to work from home, there is a strong possibility of a negative effect on their work relationships. This

is concerning because past research has shown that work relationships are important for the individual and the organization. Venkataramani, Labianca, and Grosser (2013) identify two consequential types of relationships in the workplace: positive tie networks and negative tie networks. Positive tie networks make employees feel a greater sense of social prestige, feel like they have an important role in group discussions/decisions, and more likely to ask for and give advice and help to colleagues. It is also noted that those within positive network ties feel their colleagues are friendly and supportive; therefore they feel valued, respected, and included in group activities. A study conducted with the employees of a California biotech company showed that 27 percent of the employees left their old jobs to come work with previous coworkers, 34 percent felt valued by the leadership team because they make employees feel valued and heard, and 42 percent agreed that the people at the company were the main drivers of the attraction (Blitz 2021). In contrast, negative tie networks are relationships filled with animosity, avoidance, gossip, and refusal to collaborate. Such relationships at work are said to make employees feel as though they are socially isolated and significantly decrease organizational attachment.

Venkataramani, Labianca, and Grosser (2013) point out other studies showing negative tie networks causing employees to reevaluate their social environments and assess the social hierarchy of the organization, whereas positive tie networks increase employee social status and positively affect their attitude at work. It is also noted that the social exchange theory and the relational systems perspective hold that employee social satisfaction will retain them or drive them to leave in light of organizational changes. For example, employees with healthy and secure work relationships will likely stay working for their organization even when given a new boss whom they do not particularly like.

Venkataramani, Labianca, and Grosser (2013) obtained survey responses from 154 employees at a Midwestern organization. The results showed that employees who reported they were involved with positive tie networks also reported higher levels of social satisfaction. On the other hand, employees who reported they were primarily involved in negative tie networks reported lower levels of social satisfaction. The results also highlighted that the interaction between involvement in positive/negative tie networks and higher/lower social satisfaction was stronger for those who were involved in a negative tie network. In other words, if employees felt they were in a negative tie network, they reported a very low level of social satisfaction compared to employees who reported they were in a positive tie network. Finally, the research showed that employees' social satisfaction is positively related to their organizational attachment. This study highlights the importance of how workplace relationships affect employee satisfaction and organizational attachment.

A 2021 article by Kniffin et al. speculates on COVID's possible workplace implications and issues and suggests areas for future research. The article identifies the dramatic changes experienced at two levels: the individual level and the organizational level. Work environments changed overnight from in-person/in-office to work-from-home. Some were labeled "essential workers" and moved to the front lines of fighting the virus. As defined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, "essential workers are those who conduct a range of operations and services that are typically essential to continue critical infrastruc-

ture operations” (Kennedy and Hultin n.d.). Essential workers include those who work in hospitals, grocery stores, food production/agriculture, and water and waste management. Another change seen at the individual level was workers being laid off or furloughed. Those working in retail, restaurants, personal care, or entertainment were the most likely to be laid off.

Organizationally, Kniffin et al. (2021) identify three ways the pandemic will influence businesses in the future. The researchers hypothesize that some industries will be forever changed. For example, the world might never see another buffet-style restaurant. The second change will be seen in the acceleration of trends that were already underway. For example, online shopping and fast fashion were becoming popular before the pandemic. Once people were isolated in their homes, online shopping took off. Lastly, the researchers predict there will be an emergence of novel industries. Consider the popularity of ordering food online. The shutdown showed the world that one can work and function entirely from the comfort of one’s home.

Kniffin et al. (2021) discuss how new working conditions brought about by COVID will unfold. For those who transition to a work-from-home environment, many issues can arise. Researchers identify possible hindrances to working from home, such as roommates, children, other family members, inadequate office space, and lack of proper electronic resources. Before the work-from-home environment brought about by COVID, researchers found that workers found it difficult to maintain a healthy work-life balance. When they are required to bring work home, where they carry out their non-professional lives, the work-life boundary is more vulnerable.

In addition to requiring working from home, COVID also required employees to engage in virtual teamwork. A large part of working for an organization is being connected with coworkers. In the office, such interactions manifest as informal chats, going out for lunch with colleagues, or collaborating on a project to help one another. Prior research shows that virtual teamwork lacks the richness of in-person conversations and discourages prosocial behavior (Martins, Gilson, and Maynard 2004). This absence of face-to-face interaction can decrease collaboration and productivity and increase conflict. Shifting to virtual teams can also highlight strengths and weaknesses in management. Prior research shows that successful leaders can give their team a reachable goal and a plan to achieve such goal, no matter the circumstances (Antonakis et al. 2016). Therefore, if an organization has strong leaders, shifting to virtuality will be a smoother process compared to organizations with weak leaders.

An additional area of focus for Kniffin et al. (2021) was the psychological effects of the COVID work environment. Social distancing can foster feelings of loneliness and isolation. Work is often a place for people to socialize and make friends with people interested in similar things, and past research has proven that such social interactions at work are a key part of one’s mental and physical health (Mogilner, Whillans, and Norton 2018). Limiting these high-quality social interactions can lead to increased feelings of loneliness among workers. In turn, workplace loneliness has been shown to negatively affect commitment, productive behavior, and performance. Another consideration in understanding workplace loneliness is the fact that online communications provide limited nonverbal cues (e.g., facial expressions, hand gestures, and body language) and therefore can be misinterpreted as having a negative tone.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE VARIABLES

In discussing the future implications of COVID as it relates to employees' health and well-being, Kniffin et al. (2021) note that there is variance across different industries and jobs. For example, a frontline emergency room nurse is likely to be much more physically, mentally, and emotionally affected than those working in other fields. Past research also suggests that simply living through an impactful life event, like Hurricane Katrina or a deadly pandemic, leaves people stressed and depressed for at least a year following the end of the event (Kessler and McLeod 1984). Another pre-existing issue made critical by the pandemic is that people come to work despite being sick, known as *presenteeism*. Individuals might participate in presenteeism because the behavior is modeled by their boss, or because they do not receive adequate sick leave. The fear of spreading or contracting COVID increased concern about presenteeism.

While becoming unemployed because of the pandemic can make a worker more vulnerable to mental health related consequences, laying people off also negatively affects the organization. There is strong evidence that when organizations reduce staff there are lower levels of organizational commitment and job involvement and increased stress for the remaining employees. Prior research has shown that those who face the stress of job insecurity and financial insecurity are at greater risk of health issues (Probst, Lee, and Bazzoli 2020), and those who face economic stress have less time and energy to devote to staying safe from the virus.

The effect of COVID workplace changes depends, in part, on characteristics of individual workers. Since older people are more vulnerable to the virus, they may have a harder time returning to the office. Older people are more likely to struggle with the virtual work-from-home environment because they tend to be less tech savvy. With birth rates declining and older people at higher risk of dying from the virus, a less age-diverse workplace may be a post-COVID result. Another relevant demographic issue involves racial and ethnic group differences in access to technological resources and appropriate spaces for working from home. Research has also shown that preexisting health conditions disproportionately affect different races. This is reflected in the variance of fatality rates across racial groups. The APM Research Lab (n.d.) uses data from the Center for Disease Control to compile the cumulative COVID deaths per 100,000 persons by race in America. As of October 12, 2022, the numbers were as follows: 170 Asian, 269 Latino, 346 White, 358 Black, 360 Pacific Islander, and 471 Indigenous.

Since the pandemic only began in 2020, longitudinal research on the effects of COVID is limited. One longitudinal study by Breslau et al. (2021) used data from a national sample of adults in the United States. The researchers looked at psychological distress during the pandemic compared to the highest level of distress participants experienced the year before the pandemic. A baseline interview was conducted in February 2020 (T1) and a follow-up interview was conducted in May 2021 (T2), about 8 weeks after the United States shut down. The results of the interviews showed that the psychological distress the participants experienced at T2 was strongly related to the psychological distress experienced in the worst month of T1. The results also found that only 12.8 percent of the sample experienced an increase in overall distress at T2 relative to T1, and an increase in distress was more common in women than in men. The researchers hypothesized

that the newness of the pandemic meant that it had not yet had its full effect on the participants.

Interestingly, the longitudinal study of Breslau et al. (2021) found that those under the age of 60 experienced more of an increase in distress than those older than 60. Additionally, distress was doubled in those with a household income of \$35,000 to \$60,000 compared to those over \$60,000. The researchers explained these numbers as primarily caused by the economic troubles experienced by people who were laid off from their jobs, as opposed to fear of illness from the virus. The researchers also noted that the prevalence of serious distress among the participants was much higher during the pandemic than it was during non-pandemic times. This conclusion was highlighted by the finding that the number of participants who experienced serious distress within 30 days during the pandemic was equal to the number of participants who experienced serious distress over the entire year leading up to the pandemic.

As the preceding literature review documents, clear changes have been brought about by COVID-19 in respect to society, the economy, and business. There are elements of that change that make work a more enjoyable place for people to spend time, and there are elements that make work a less enjoyable experience. It is useful, therefore, to examine how the changes, good and bad, of COVID-19 in the workplace have affected, and will continue to affect, an organization's employees. Such research will further the goals of the second wave of positive psychology, examining topics that determine one's quality of life. The current study uses a questionnaire to assess the effect of COVID-19 on workplace relationships, attitudes, and behaviors as they differ based on age, gender, and ethnicity.

HYPOTHESES

Age

The literature suggests that older individuals are more susceptible to falling ill or dying from COVID-19. The literature also suggests that older individuals are less technologically advanced, therefore having difficulty adjusting to a virtual work environment. Lack of online bandwidth could prevent older individuals from productively interacting and connecting with their colleagues, thereby decreasing their positive workplace relationships. The online environment and stress of the pandemic are also likely to negatively affect one's attitude at work. COVID trends show many older individuals retiring early, therefore it was predicted that positive workplace behaviors would decrease among older populations. Due to the conditions of the COVID work environment and because older populations are more vulnerable to COVID, it was predicted that older individuals would experience a decrease in positive workplace relationships, attitudes, and behaviors.

Gender

Based on the literature, women are generally more empathetic than men and therefore experience more distress in times of crises. Women also are more likely to hold jobs that are viewed as being "replaceable" and therefore are more susceptible to being laid off. The wage gap disproportionately favors men, which

could lead to additional financial stressors for women. It was predicted that these factors would show a decrease in positive workplace attitudes and behaviors among women. On the other hand, it was predicted that the virtual work environment would increase positive workplace relationships for women.

Ethnicity

The literature suggests that ethnic minorities are more vulnerable to falling ill or dying of COVID-19. Also, ethnic minorities are more likely to live in crowded, urban, or multigenerational households, making a work-from-home situation more difficult. Based on these factors, a decrease in positive workplace relationships, attitudes, and behaviors was predicted for those of ethnic minorities compared to Caucasian individuals.

METHOD

Participants

The present study was open to individuals above the age of 18 who worked during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were 121 participants, who produced 116 usable responses. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 71, with a mean age of 32. Fifty percent of the sample identified as female, 49.2 percent identified as male, and one respondent identified as non-binary. A majority of the participants (75.8 percent) were Caucasian. Ethnic minorities groups, including Asian, African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and American Indian/Alaskan Native, together represented approximately a quarter of the sample. After Caucasians, the second largest group was Asian (11.7 percent). The participants were from a range of states across the United States, with the highest percentage residing in California and New York. The participants were asked to report their field of work, and there were 35 different fields represented. The fields with the greatest representation were sales (19.3 percent) and health care (17.6 percent). Participants also reported whether their work situation changed because of the pandemic. A relatively small percentage of workers (8.3 percent) were laid off; 20.8 percent changed from in-office to remote, 20.8 percent changed from in-office to remote and then back to in-office, 30 percent started remote and remained remote, and 20 percent started in-office and remained in-office.

Materials and Procedure

The Workplace Relationships, Attitudes, and Behaviors (WRAB) Questionnaire was developed (see Appendix). It consists of six demographic questions, which are followed by 53 items forming three subscales: relationships, attitudes, and behaviors. Participants were given a 5-point Likert scale for their responses, with options ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. To ensure the items of the questionnaire were measuring the effect of COVID-19 on workplace relationships, attitudes, and behaviors, three questions that directly addressed the three subscales were included at the end of the questionnaire.

The link to the questionnaire was posted on LinkedIn and Prolific. Prolific is a service that recruits individuals to participate in online studies for monetary compensation. Once the data were collected, each participant's survey was

scored and assigned a WRAB (workplace relationships, attitudes, and behaviors) score. Questions 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27, 28, 32, 34, 35, 38, 39, 41, 44, 46, 47, and 50 were reverse scored. Scoring each question out of 5, the highest possible total score was 250 and the lowest possible total score was 50. The highest possible subscale scores were 80, 95, and 75, for relationships, attitudes, and behaviors, respectively. The lowest possible subscale scores were 16, 19, and 15, for relationships, attitudes, and behaviors, respectively.

RESULTS

Age

A Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated for the relationship between participants' age and their WRAB score for positive attitudes. A positive correlation was found ($r(118) = .21, p = .029$), indicating a modest linear relationship between the two variables. Older participants exhibited more positive attitudes than younger adults. The Pearson correlations for age and positive relationships ($r(118) = 0.09, p = .32$) and age and positive behaviors ($r(118) = 0.09, p = .33$) were not statistically significant.

Gender

No statistically significant gender differences were found for any of the subscales. Mean attitude scores for men and women were $M = 3.31$ ($SD = .59$) and $M = 3.19$ ($SD = .72$), respectively, ($t(111) = .95, p = .35, d = .09, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.13, .36]$). Mean relationship scores for men and women were $M = 3.09$ ($SD = .41$) and $M = 3.02$ ($SD = .49$), respectively, ($t(114) = .87, p = .39, d = .08, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.09, .24]$). And, finally, mean behavior scores for men and women were $M = 3.22$ ($SD = .62$) and $M = 3.12$ ($SD = .61$), respectively, ($t(109) = .82, p = .41, d = .08, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.14, .33]$).

Ethnicity

Caucasian and non-Caucasian participants provided similar responses. The mean attitude score for Caucasian respondents was $M = 3.23$ ($SD = .67$), and the mean attitude score for non-Caucasian respondents was $M = 3.26$ ($SD = .66$), ($t(112) = -.19, p = .85, d = .02, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.32, .27]$). The mean relationship score for Caucasian respondents was $M = 3.04$ ($SD = .44$), and the mean relationship score for non-Caucasian respondents was $M = 3.10$ ($SD = .49$), ($t(115) = -.64, p = .52, d = .06, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.26, .13]$). The mean behavior score for Caucasian respondents was $M = 3.18$ ($SD = .65$), and the mean behavior score for non-Caucasian respondents was $M = 3.09$ ($SD = .52$), ($t(110) = .65, p = .51, d = .06, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.16, .33]$).

Comparing Subscales

The mean relationship subscale score was 3.04 ($SD = .46$); the mean attitude subscale score was 3.23 ($SD = .67$); and the mean behavior subscale score was 3.16 ($SD = .62$). The largest difference between subscale means was the difference between the relationship mean and the attitude mean, ($t(111) = 3.83, p <$

.001, $d = .36$, 95% CI [.09, .28]). Smaller differences were found between the mean attitude score and the mean behavior score ($t(107) = 2.05$, $p = .043$, $d = .20$, 95% CI [.00, .15]), and between the mean relationship score and the mean behavior score ($t(109) = -2.28$, $p = .024$, $d = .22$, 95% CI [-.19, -.01]).

When the mean score on each subscale was compared with the neutral response of three, a statistically significant difference was found for attitudes ($t(113) = 3.75$, $p < .001$, $d = .35$, 95% CI [.11, .36]) and for behaviors ($t(111) = 2.72$, $p = .008$, $d = .26$, 95% CI [.04, .27]). Both the mean attitude score and the mean behavior score were slightly higher than the neutral score of three. The mean relationship score was not significantly higher than three ($t(116) = 1.27$, $p = .206$, $d = .12$, 95% CI [.04, .27]).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There was a statistically significant correlation between age and workplace attitudes that was unexpected. In fact, age was predicted to be indicative of a lower, more negative score on the attitudes subscale of the workplace relationships, attitudes, and behaviors (WRAB) questionnaire. The present finding could be explained by what is referred to as the *positivity effect* (Mather and Carstensen 2005). Mather and Carstensen found that older adults tend to focus on more positive things in their environment. The researchers reasoned that this may be due to the shifting of goals and motivations as one ages, and the fact that older adults are better at regulating their emotions. It could be argued that the older participants in the present study had higher attitude scores because they focused on something positive—in this case, work—rather than focusing on the negative information related to COVID. A greater positivity effect for older adults was not evident in the relationship and behavior scores, however, as young and old participants had similar mean responses on the relationship and behavior subscales. It is particularly interesting to note that older adults did not show more positive relationship scores because attitudes have positively correlated with relationships (Judge et al. 2017). The data reported by Kniffin et al. (2021) suggest that the absence of face-to-face virtual teamwork hinders the quality of relationships. Perhaps, this can explain why there was no increase in positive relationships overall. Future research could examine the reasons contributing to an older person's lack of positive relationships and behaviors in the COVID work environment. Technological barriers would be one factor to consider.

The results of the current study did not find any significant relationship between gender and the three subscale scores. Kniffin et al. (2021) highlight that women experience more distress from stressful life events, but the current study does not support those findings. Kniffin et al. also point out that women tend to work in roles where they may be more easily replaced. Hence, an event like the pandemic would increase the likelihood of a woman losing her job. The present study hypothesized that women's WRAB scores would reflect a decrease in positive behaviors and attitudes. However, this was not the case. Similarly, the hypothesis that non-Caucasian individuals would experience a decrease in all three subscales scores was not supported. Despite greater concerns about high death rates and common comorbidities, the COVID workplace did not have significant effects on non-Caucasian individuals compared to Caucasian individ-

uals. Perhaps work served as an outlet for other stressors minority individuals were facing.

An examination of the subscales in relation to each other revealed that attitude scores were more positive than relationship scores. While this was not originally hypothesized, it is interesting to consider possible explanations. Because workers were out of the office, coworker relationships were likely unaffected because they were less relevant in the virtual environment. It is also possible that work became an outlet for people who were quarantined at home. For example, a parent whose children were home from school might have enjoyed work as a break from family responsibilities. Another possible reason that attitude scores were so high is that people enjoyed working more from home. Future research on organizational behavior should continue to evaluate the challenges and benefits of working from home.

Finally, the means of the subscale scores were each compared with the neutral response score of three. Attitude and behavior scores were significantly higher than a neutral answer. This tells us that most participants experienced an increase in the two subscales. On the other hand, there was only a small difference between relationship scores and neutral answers. Possible explanations of the relationship data are that work relationships were not significant before COVID, that relationships were positive before COVID and did not change during COVID, or that relationships were negative before COVID and did not change during COVID. Because there was no assessment of the participants' relationships before the pandemic, the design of the present study does not provide information that would favor one explanation over the other two.

There are a few limitations of the study to acknowledge. First, despite using an online service to gain participants, the sample was relatively small and lacked the diversity of the general population. More participants from minority groups would have been desirable because minority populations have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus. Additionally, while the sample included participants working in a variety of fields, the greatest representation was from sales or health care, which may limit the generalizability of the results. A final consideration regarding the sample is that the sample might have been limited or biased because of the politicization of COVID. Some individuals might be less willing to participate in a study related to COVID because of their personal stance on the topic. Those who do participate may bring biases into the study. For example, a participant who was especially concerned about COVID might have felt safer working from home and had a positive experience because of workplace changes. In contrast, a participant who did not understand the severity of the virus might have considered any workplace changes to be negative experiences.

Another limitation of the study is that data were collected in a self-report manner. With any self-report study there is a risk that some participants will select answers they feel are socially acceptable. It is also possible that some participants will interpret questions differently than the researchers intended.

In conclusion, despite significant changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the present study showed minimal immediate effect on the workplace relationships, attitudes, and behaviors of participants. However, researchers are only beginning to understand the immediate and long-term effects of COVID on

the workplace. As discussed earlier, the average person will spend a third of their life at work. Therefore, it is vital that the workplace be a mentally and physically healthy environment. The changes to the work environment brought about by the pandemic should be further dissected to determine if there are elements that should remain. Furthermore, it would be useful for future researchers to restrict their study to one of the demographic categories (e.g., age, gender, race, or type of work) or one of the subscale categories (i.e., relationships, attitudes, or behavior) to provide a more in-depth analysis of the effects of COVID relative to those specific factors. Finally, longitudinal studies will be necessary for a full understanding of the impact of COVID on employees.

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Appendix: Workplace Relationships, Attitudes, and Behaviors (WRAB) Questionnaire

Part 1: Please answer the following demographic questions.

1. Age
2. Gender
 - a. Male
 - a. Female
 - b. Non-binary
 - c. Other
3. Ethnicity
 - a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. African American
 - d. Hispanic or Latino
 - e. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 - f. Caucasian
 - g. Other (please specify)
4. Field of work
 - a. Health Care
 - b. Sales
 - c. Primary/Secondary Education (k–12)
 - d. College/University Education
 - e. Technology
 - f. Software Engineering
 - g. Research
 - h. Finance
 - i. Construction or Architecture
 - j. Government/Public Administration
 - k. Legal Services
 - l. Office/Administration
 - m. Arts
 - n. Farming or Forestry
 - o. Other (please specify)
5. State you work in
6. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, my work environment:
 - a. Remained in the office
 - b. Remained remote
 - c. Changed due to layoff
 - d. Changed from in-office to remote (work from home)
 - e. Changed from in-office to remote, to back in-office

Part 2: Please choose an answer based on the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements, where a = strongly disagree, b = disagree, c = neutral, d = agree, and e = strongly agree.

1. Throughout COVID-19 I looked forward to working everyday
2. Throughout COVID-19, I did NOT feel accomplished at the end of a workday

3. I was fearful of losing my job because of the COVID-19 pandemic
4. Job-security anxiety affected my personal life more between 2020–2021
5. I took pride in my work before the COVID-19 pandemic
6. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the level of pride I had for my work decreased
7. I have been less committed to my work because of the COVID-19 pandemic
8. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has increased my level of commitment to my employer
9. The amount of control I have of my workday increased because of the COVID-19 pandemic
10. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I was less free to make decisions for myself at work
11. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I found it difficult to have a positive attitude at work
12. My organization has defined cultural values. These values were upheld by a majority of my colleagues prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
13. I feel that my organization's cultural values were NOT upheld by a majority of my colleagues throughout COVID-19
14. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has not impacted my attitude at work
15. I DID NOT seek out opportunities to take more responsibility at work because of the COVID-19 pandemic
16. I was less proactive at work because of the COVID-19 pandemic
17. I feel that my organization's support of my career goals lessened because of the COVID-19 pandemic
18. Throughout COVID-19 I was NOT able to productively collaborate with my colleagues
19. My work life balance was healthier because of the COVID-19 pandemic
20. My ability to engage in open communication with my colleagues decreased because of the COVID-19 pandemic
21. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, I often met with colleagues to socialize outside of work
22. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I only interacted with colleagues during the work day
23. My organization hosted social activities or events (virtual or in person) before the COVID-19 pandemic
24. My organization hosted social activities or events (virtual or in person) throughout the COVID-19 pandemic
25. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, my relationships with my colleagues were inappropriate for work
26. Despite COVID-19, the work I do feels important to me
27. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has negatively impacted the fulfillment I get from my work

28. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I found myself having frequent thoughts questioning whether or not I like the field of work I am in
29. My change work environment because of COVID-19 has positively impacted my sense of job satisfaction
30. Because of COVID-19, my level of pride in the people that I work for and with increased
31. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has positively impacted my level of commitment to the work that I do every day
32. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has decreased the level of autonomy I feel at work
33. The work environment throughout COVID-19 has positively impacted how my organization's defined values are upheld
34. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has decreased my motivation to be more proactive at work
35. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has negatively impacted my path towards reaching my career goals
36. The COVID-19 pandemic positively impacted my access to training programs that help with career development.
37. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has positively impacted the amount of collaboration with my colleagues
38. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has negatively impacted the quality of work my colleagues and I complete through collaboration
39. I found it difficult to have a healthy work-life balance based on my organization's policies and expectations before the COVID-19 pandemic
40. My change in work environment throughout COVID-19 has improved my work-life balance
41. My work environment throughout COVID-19 did NOT allow me to communicate effectively with my colleagues
42. The communication among people at my organization throughout the pandemic was more productive than before the pandemic
43. COVID-19 has positively impacted my desire to form relationships at work
44. COVID-19 has negatively impacted my ability to form relationships at work
45. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has positively impacted my relationships at work
46. My relationships with my colleagues have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 work environment
47. My work environment throughout COVID-19 has increased the amount of personal information I share with people at work
48. I have noticed a decrease in gossip at work throughout COVID-19
49. COVID-19 has increased my desire to connect with colleagues outside of the work environment
50. I withdrew socially from my organization because of the COVID-19 pandemic

Part 3: Please answer the following questions:

51. On a scale from 1–5, how has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your overall attitude at work? 1 = most negative 5 = most positive
52. On a scale from 1–5, how has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your overall relationships at work? 1 = most negative 5 = most positive
53. On a scale from 1–5, how has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your overall behavior at work? 1 = most negative 5 = most positive

The Messy Common Good: Constitutionalism Balancing Markets and Democracy

Duane Windsor

Abstract

Motivation: A key ethical implication for post-COVID recovery is the vital role of constitutionalism as the necessary and desirable element for balancing capitalism and democracy. The associated welfare theorem is that the common good requires all three dimensions functioning appropriately.

Premise: This paper is a theoretical investigation into the nature of common good as an unavoidably messy resultant. *Messy* means complicated and unsatisfactory, in contrast to idealized. Viewing one dimension in isolation will emphasize ideal strengths of a preferred dimension while criticizing evident weaknesses of other dimensions.

Approach: The paper develops three arguments. (1) The common good is unavoidably a messy resultant of complex interactions. (2) Business, like science and technology, should retain a relatively independent role. (3) Constitutionalism is an essential ethical framework for balancing markets and democracy.

Results: For capitalism, common good occurs through relatively free markets and limited government. For democracy, relatively broad-scope government strongly regulates markets and outcomes. Unrestrained democracy tends toward authoritarianism and socialism. Unrestrained capitalism tends toward inequality and exploitation. To integrate capitalism and democracy, constitutionalism combines normative law with a system of checks and balances.

Conclusions: Constitutionalism is the essential ethical dimension for keeping markets and democracy in balance. Business must have some relatively independent role rather than being subordinated to government. Authoritarianism and majoritarianism subordinate business to political preferences. Insufficiently regulated business abuses the common good.

Consistency: The paper is consistent with the journal's purpose in addressing how business interacts with and affects society. Business owners and managers should support and promote constitutionalism. This conclusion is generalizable across national political systems.

Keywords: capitalism, corporate social responsibility (CSR), democracy, ethics, markets, messy common good, socialism

JEL Classification Codes: M14, N40, P12

Duane Windsor, PhD, Rice University, odw@rice.edu

INTRODUCTION

The fundamental theoretical question concerning the relationship between business and society going into post-COVID recovery is whether society should dominate business, or business should dominate society, or business should operate independently of society. Hussain and Moriarty (2018) support society's strict supremacy, in response to the political corporate social responsibility (CSR) theory of Scherer, Palazzo, and colleagues (Scherer and Palazzo 2011; Scherer, Rasche, Palazzo, and Spicer 2016) who support businesses providing public goods in conditions of perceived governmental incapacity and fostering democracy in business and in society. In either approach, the associated welfare theorem is that democracy best fosters the common good. Alternatively, strict subordination to democracy of business, science, and technology is problematic theory and practice. There are two different expositions of the independence of business. The neoclassical economic theory of business emphasizes profit or shareholder wealth maximization in relatively free markets, although there are moral and legal requirements and business can lobby government (Friedman 1970). Publicly traded corporations emphasize shareholder value maximization and managerial agency theory, but this argument does not apply to privately owned businesses free to function as if households. The explicit welfare theorem of capitalism is that profit seeking leads to aggregate social welfare, under competitive conditions without negative externalities. The other exposition is stakeholder theory, in which management improves welfare of multiple stakeholders; government is one of multiple constituencies (Freeman 2017). The associated welfare theorem is that successful stakeholder management resolves all interest conflicts locally, and this resolution can occur across all businesses so operated. The thesis of this paper is that the appropriate welfare theorem requires constitutionalism, defined as the set of normative laws and checks and balances, to obtain from democracy and capitalism an unavoidably messy common good.

Economics, the foundation for capitalism, is a moral science, aimed at improving aggregate welfare (Boulding 1969). There is no automatic requirement in such a moral science for businesses to be ruthless in profit maximization: Friedman (1970) expresses the exact opposite understanding that there are minimum ethical and legal "rules of the game" in capitalism. Whitehead (1933, 124) argued that "A great society is a society in which its men [and women] of business think greatly of their functions," an argument echoed in political CSR. There are variants of compassionate, conscious, or enlightened capitalism (George, Singh, and McLean 2005). Franco Bernabè (CEO of Eni and then Telecom Italia) stated: "Leadership is fundamentally about humanity. It is about morality. Your primary job as a leader is to see what is good for your organization and what is good for the people who work for you, and to create something for the well-being of your fellow citizens" (Hill and Wetlaufer 1998, 93).

The missing dimension in these debates is the role of constitutionalism as the necessary balance between democracy and capitalism (Dahl 1992; MacLeod 2006). Constitutionalism is a set of normative laws and checks and balances. Without constitutionalism, there is simply a power struggle between business and society. All three domains are subject to different kinds of failures (Buchanan 1988), such that balancing is necessary. Idealized capitalism is conscious, enlightened, inclusive, and stakeholder oriented. Real capitalism is profit-seeking.

Idealized democracy is rational discourse for identification of best policies. Real politics increasingly features polarization, identity, and ruthless contest for governmental power. The baseline conception for this paper is that constitutionalism is the ethical framework within which democracy and the market economy can work in the same direction toward common good. Unless stakeholder-citizens and leaders are all virtuous, ethics resides in constitutionalism, not in democracy or capitalism. Otherwise, democracy works against capitalism, or vice versa.

One can separate between formal ethics and personal morality (Goodpaster 1984, 5). There are two different formal theories of ethics developed logically and thus independently of belief about divine order. *Consequentialism* includes both egoism (i.e., self-interest) and utilitarianism (i.e., aggregation of self-interest into social welfare). *Social contract theory* culminates in Kantian moral duty rules, also captured in professional and business codes of conduct. Personal morality, effectively informal theories of ethics, is often grouped under the rubric of *pluralism*, to include religion, care, natural law, and virtue.

Both government and market approaches to determining social welfare outcomes are mechanical applications of self-interest. Both approaches are simply aggregations of individual preferences, through voting in government and pricing in markets. Each approach disregards ethics in practice, albeit in violation of ill-supported assumptions about mutual forbearance or CSR. Governments and markets are about aggregating individual preferences (i.e., utilitarianism); government additionally is about outcomes (i.e., consequentialism) in the form of distribution of power, benefits, and burdens. Moral beliefs and virtues must reside in citizens and stakeholders for democracy and markets to operate other than mechanically (Evensky 2005). Ethics requires *other-regardingness*, personal concern for one's right and wrong actions in relation to good and bad outcomes for others (Saunders 2016, citing Mill 1859). Constitutionalism addresses norms, principles, rules, values, and natural law.

Post-COVID recovery involves two conditions. First, recovery is arguably an opportunity for reinventing social outcomes within an ethical society of behavioral norms. Second, problems confronting civil society must be tackled directly in the future. The future is not one of recovery from a specific pandemic but one of future "wicked problems" not susceptible to easy solution (Rittel and Webber 1973) and calling for new understandings (Moritz and Kawa 2022). A key issue is whether the best social approach is coordinated planning (whether centralized or decentralized) or a checks-and-balances system of contest among multiple actors of different kinds.

The term *the common good* or alternatively *the public interest* or *the commonwealth* is a vague notion (Glazer 2007) suggesting that all citizens in a society have shared interests or welfares in a way that is superior to self-interest. The conditions for this notion to function politically are quite stringent. Lippmann (1955, 42) defined public interest as follows: "the public interest may be presumed to be what men would choose if they saw clearly, thought rationally, acted disinterestedly and benevolently." The market economy can deliver goods, services, and innovations to individuals—for aggregated welfare. But the market economy does not effectively address inequity and exploitation.

This paper argues that the "common good" is inevitably messy; and that the common good is a resultant of complex interactions among multiple dimensions. A simple common good can take concrete definition in either of two

conditions: (1) everyone gains; or (2) if someone gains, no one loses. Otherwise, if someone gains and someone loses, common good is a matter of subjective interpretation and self-interest. Reinvention cannot be readily designed; direct tackling must be by organizations—including governments and NGOs that empirically will behave politically rather than constitutionally. The proper prescription for businesses is to behave ethically. These observations require defining politics, constitutionalism, and ethics in the context of a civil society. Politics is self-beneficial maneuvering; constitutionalism is adherence to norms, rules, and principles. Ethics is three-dimensional: avoid wrong and harm to others; obey civil authority except in instances of civil disobedience; attempt to accomplish some social contribution beyond market conduct (Windsor 2013).

The paper develops the findings in steps as follows. The next section explains the key dimensions of a messy common good. The third section addresses the role of business in shaping common good. The fourth section discusses problems of democracy. The final section explicates the fundamental role of constitutionalism.

KEY DIMENSIONS OF A MESSY COMMON GOOD

Basic elements of the common good are democracy (citizen voting), market economy (capitalism), stakeholder-citizens (self-interested or other-regarding), and civil society (associations of stakeholder-citizens). Constitutionalism—meaning norms, principles, rules, values, and natural law of a social contract—is the influence nudging toward a common good.

The common good is, at best, a messy resultant. Democracy and market economy are utilitarian institutions: each aggregates individual preferences (see Vincke 1982)—votes in democracy (defined as majority wins), and dollars in market economy (defined as disposable income wins). Capitalism, the dominant market economy model, emphasizes business profit orientation. Any individual within the society is both a stakeholder (of various organizations, including businesses) and a citizen (with legal and civil rights). The stakeholder-citizens are the ones whose preferences democracy and market economy aggregate. Soma and Vatn (2014) keep stakeholders and citizens separated as different forms of participation. Democracy and market economy outcomes can differ. Civil society is a set of nonprofit organizations and similar informal organizations (or groups) operating as glue binding individuals together.

The notion of messy common good conveys two conditions. First, the outcomes are inequitable. There can be an aggregative improvement in welfare due to a combination of individual gains and losses. There is not necessarily a Pareto improvement in individual welfares. A *Pareto improvement* is a change from the status quo in which at least one individual gains something without another individual losing something. In a Pareto improvement, there is necessarily a gain in aggregate welfare: the change is positive. In a messy process, someone can lose. Evaluating aggregate welfare is then a problem in determining that the gain and the loss are both prescriptively desirable. Even if the gain is more positive than the loss, such that there is a net increase in aggregate welfare, the distribution of gains and losses must be evaluated. Even if everyone gains from a change, and no one loses, there remains the problem of assessing any differences in gains. When

one individual gains more than another individual, the question is whether this distribution of gains (rather than distribution of gains and losses) is fair.

Second, the social decision-making process is not necessarily anything resembling either a rational discourse among informed participants seeking to determine the common or a negotiated compromise in which the participants get their minimum requirements, which are generally consistent with a common good. Rather, the process is more akin to a brawl. Participants' requirements are incompatible and may be ideologically or identity driven in a way that prevents compromise or collaboration. The brawl is an infinite game, repeated, unless extreme actions occur, such as secession (the 1814 Hartford Convention and the American Civil War), insurrection (January 6), or riots over unsolvable policy issues.

A messy process is not elegant or ideal, and outcomes do not satisfy everyone. Table 1 provides a sketch of the key dimensions of a messy common good. The essential problem of civil society is to combine protection of individual rights and willingness to self-sacrifice with production of a common good benefiting all citizens (or at least a super-majority of the commonwealth). The fundamental institutions for this production process are markets and democracy. The table depicts these dimensions as balanced in the center by constitutionalism: a set of rules and principles for how to weigh individual rights and self-sacrifice against common good and weigh markets against democracy. Markets can operate as competitive (tending to foster more amoral actors) or cooperative (tending to foster more enlightened actors). Democracy can operate as deliberative (tending to foster greater cooperation) or interest group (tending to foster greater competition for power and wealth).

Options for markets and democracy lie along an ideal-type continuum: real institutions are messy combinations of competition and cooperation, amoral and enlightened actors, and deliberation and interest group competition. A constitutional republic subdivides powers and functions. A majoritarian democracy tends to merge such powers and functions into a stronger unified state, in which individual rights tend correspondingly to be diminished. Diminution of rights is

TABLE 1. Key Dimensions of a Messy Common Good

Civil Society			
	Individual rights and self-sacrifice	Constitutionalism governs the balance horizontally and vertically (Burke 1790)	Common good benefiting all citizens
Markets	Competitive		Cooperative
Amoral actors (self-interest)	(Ruthless monopolization)		
Enlightened actors (other-regarding)			(CSR and social enterprises)
Democracy	Competitive		Cooperative
Deliberative	(Adam Smith's 1759 "impartial spectator")		(Rousseau, Habermas)
Interest group	(Ruthless self-benefit from public policy)		(Compromise in balance of power)

at work whether one is considering regulation of firearms access (i.e., save lives) or regulation of abortion (i.e., approve termination of lives).

Competitive markets tend to foster (and reflect) ruthless monopolization. Cooperative markets tend to foster (and reflect) CSR and social enterprises. Interest group competition tends to foster (and reflect) ruthless self-benefit. Interest group cooperation tends to foster (and reflect) compromise, but typically aligned with balance of power.

Deliberation aligns with Adam Smith's "impartial spectator" (*The Theory of Moral Sentiments* 1759): one tries to appreciate another's considerations. Social cooperation aligns with the social contract tradition leading through Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Kant to Habermas. Edmund Burke (1790) counseled being careful about revolutionary changes to evolved institutions considering the French revolution (Claeys 1989).

The Role of Business in a Messy Common Good

Business should retain an independent role rather than being strictly subordinated to democracy. The same argument applies to science and technology. Business executives possess both discretion and interest in political and social issue action (Bennett 2022; Hambrick and Wowak 2021). The theory of political CSR expounded by Scherer and Palazzo (2011; Scherer, Rasche, Palazzo, and Spicer 2016) advocates expanding the democratic role of business. The theory of deliberative democracy (Elkin 2004) must address the question of the appropriate role of business in the deliberation process (Gombert 2022). The conception of this deliberation process also embraces discourse between managers and stakeholders as a model of corporate governance (see Freeman 2017). An extension of U.S. federalism may be to formulate a theory of a "federated" CSR intended as some set of institutional devices for constraining corporations in their pursuit of social responsibilities (Caulfield and Lynn 2022). The Caulfield and Lynn proposal is a counter to the expansive business role envisioned in political CSR.

The fundamental question concerning the role of business in a messy common good is whether business should be viewed as strictly subordinated to society as captured in the phrase "business in society" or as an independent influence on society as captured in "business and society." This question is the centerpiece of Hussain and Moriarty's (2018) criticism of political CSR theory. In political CSR, the approach is that businesses have duties to provide public goods when government, especially in developing countries, is incapable of doing so and to improve democracy both within the business and in society in all countries. Hussain and Moriarty argue against Scherer and Palazzo that business should be strictly accountable to democracy.

We argue that their model of integration has a fundamental problem. Instead of treating business corporations as agents that must be held accountable to the democratic reasoning of affected parties, it treats corporations as agents who can hold others accountable. In our terminology, it treats business corporations as "supervising authorities" rather than "functionaries." (Hussain and Moriarty 2018, 519)

This paper argues that business should not be subordinated to democracy, although subject to appropriate regulation, but rather must be an autonomous force in shaping social change. However, the argument does not extend to endorsing Scherer and Palazzo's broad view of political CSR. The distinction is between independence of business and subordination of governments (at least those exhibiting incapacity) to business. The paper advocates for independence but not for dominance of business.

A difficulty is that the academic study of business–society relations is a constellation of multiple approaches, some competing and some complementary (Schwartz and Carroll 2008). Schwartz and Carroll propose an integrative approach for five approaches: CSR, business ethics, stakeholder management, sustainability, and corporate citizenship. The integrative approach combines value, balance, and accountability (VBA). Businesses provide value and balance considerations, while being accountable to society.

Consider the question of defining the public interest and the ethical obligations of business in lobbying government. The public interest does not involve the right procedure or context for control of self-interest (Amit and Singer 2020). The ethical standard for business lobbying is narrow avoidance of corruption, defined broadly to include corruption of procedures and norms for democracy (Amit and Singer 2020). Trying to extend the ethical standard to “truthfulness” or “public interest” is not workable.

This inquiry considers the role of business in a messy common good. One approach subordinates business and constitutionalism to democracy, interpreted as the will of the majority. This paper raises two objections. First, drawing on Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), relatively free markets play a semi-independent role not only in producing material wealth but in demolishing serfdom, slavery, monopolizing guilds, and governmental monopolies. Progress since 1776 has been material, technical, and social. Subordinating business wholly to society presumes that a majority knows what it is doing. A constitutional order balances powers and functions. Second, the responsibilities of business—beyond profit seeking—involve multiple dimensions of different characters. Drawing on Windsor (2013), businesses should not engage in wrong or harm and should obey public policy except in instances of morally necessary civil disobedience. The problems lie in expecting non-profitable social contribution and excluding business from political participation. Drawing on Freeman (2017), businesses perform better when engaging positively with specific stakeholders.

Edgeworth (1881, 16; cited by Sen 1977, 317) emphasized self-interest in economic behavior as a first principle. However, Edgeworth also recognized that a real person is “an impure egoist, a mixed utilitarian” (1881, 104; cited by Sen 1977, 317). Collard (1975; cited by Sen 1977, 317) discusses Edgeworth's altruism perspective. There is a comparison of selfishness and “otherishness” in Crocker, Canevello, and Brown (2017).

Mill linked a principle of harm prevention (1859, 223) to a distinction between self-regardingness and other-regardingness (1859, 224). This conception is here treated as broader than a conventional notion of other-regardingness regarded as synonymous with altruism in the form of philanthropy (see Basu 2010).

TABLE 2. Self-Regarding and Other-Regarding Interpretations

Self-Regarding (Edgeworth 1881)		Other-Regarding (Mill 1859)	
Selfishly amoral in the sense of harm to others	Moral in the sense of no harm to others (Mill 1859)	Altruism in the sense of helping others in need (Edgeworth 1881)	Good citizenship in promoting the general welfare (Smith 1759)
	(Smith 1759) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance citizenship • Moral sentiments 		

Table 2, designed as a logic table, expands on the notions of self-regarding and other-regarding behavior. There are two kinds of self-regardingness. A strong form suggests selfishly amoral behavior encompassing harm to others. A softer form suggests compliance with laws and norms and possibly moral sentiments (Smith 1759). This softer form seeks to avoid harm to others. There are two kinds of other-regardingness. A softer form suggests altruism in the sense of helping others in need. A stronger form suggests good citizenship in the sense of being concerned to promote the general welfare. Smith (1759) explains the distinction between compliance citizenship and good citizenship as follows:

He is not a citizen who is not disposed to respect the laws and obey the civil magistrate; and he is certainly not a good citizen who does not wish to promote, by every means in his power, the welfare of the whole society of his fellow-citizens (Smith 1759, VI.ii.2, paragraph 11, cited by West 1976, 193).

Problems of Democracy

Democratic theory is popular sovereignty superior to government or constitution. The reality is more complicated. “Public opinion sets bounds to every government, and is the real sovereign in every free one” (James Madison 1791; cited in Bowie and Renan 2022). However, other actors—including government and business—can influence public opinion (Madison 1791). This section examines whether democracy can manage the political tasks facing society today. Modern democracy arguably confronts internal polarization, identity politics, and partisan news media, in addition to external challenges. The problem is how to interpret democratic politics in such conditions (Eckstein 1956).

The market economy is more compatible with a commercial republic than with a direct democracy (Elkin 2001). There are important differences among representative democracy in a parliamentary system, representative democracy in a federal republic, and direct democracy. One school of thought is that democracy must be direct for democratic citizenship to be truly “democratic” (Holston 2022). In modern conditions, direct democracy suggests referenda on policy choices. Democracy is ideologically contested. China and Russia assert that they are “real” democracies. The Chinese foreign minister reportedly stated via video link at a China–Russia think tank summit, attended by the Russian foreign minister “China is willing to work together with Russia and the global community to promote real democracy based on nations’ own conditions” (Bloomberg News 2022).

There are different conceptions of how the democratic process can or should work. Peterson (2022) compares the approaches of Dewey, Habermas, and Rawls to “the public sphere” defined as the realm in which public opinion emerges. Habermas (Rasche and Scherer 2014; Verovšek 2022) emphasizes “discursive interaction in the marketplace of ideas” and the role of media (Peterson 2022, 142). His approach posits that democracies engage in a rational process. Rawls (1987), in contrast, posits emergence of an “overlapping consensus” within a pluralism operating through reciprocity and some sense of shared identity or destiny. Peterson points out that a failure of communication whether in the media or group interaction undermines either approach. Dewey (1927, 314) viewed multiple “publics” as self-emergent sharing a “common interest” in controlling consequences of behavior. Democracy is the culture of living in a community. If there are problems in democracy, then the more democracy, the better (Dewey 1927, 327). Democracy is a process of communication. In this context, interest group lobbying arguably improves equality of political influence (Havasy 2022).

One interpretation of voting outcomes in a democracy is that the extremes (left versus right) succeed in debilitating the center. For example, in the May 2019 elections for the European Parliament, the highest turnout in 25 years resulted in a loss of majority for the first time for the combination of center-left and center-right representatives. The majority went to the combination of “social liberals” (such as Greens) and “far right” parties (Birnbauer, Witte, Harlan, and McAuley 2019). European Parliament elections occur every five years. The centrist majority fell from 53% in 2014 to 43% in 2019; the turnout rose from 42.6% in 2014 to 51% in 2019. However, the “social liberal” parties support both environment and the European Union, in contrast to the “far right” parties tending to opposition with the European Union. “Social liberal” gains were substantial, while “far right” gains were incremental (Birnbauer, Witte, Harlan, and McAuley 2019).

Destruction of the center was arguably one strategy and outcome of the struggle between Nazis and Communists in Weimar Germany in the lead up to the Hitler dictatorship. Civil society, defined as associations among individuals, may work against rather than for democracy (Berman 1997). A longitudinal study (Stögbauer 2001) of major party and party bloc voting shares in 830 localities in the Weimar Republic traces the regime’s political collapse to the economic crisis of the Great Depression in Germany. Unemployment favored the Nazis.

A problem with subordinating business and civil society to democracy is that there is then little method for marshaling opposition to expanding dictatorship. There may be two roads to dictatorship. The classical and readily recognized road is the seizure of power by or development of a totalitarian-oriented party, whether fascist or communist. China, under the Xi regime, is in process of building a neo-totalitarian party-state of new design arguably based on surveillance technology (Béja 2019; Cain 2021; Clarke 2018; Kang 2018; Ringen 2016; 2017). Xi is now effectively president for life, in a shift from the traditional two-term limitation. The China model differs from the Russia model of authoritarianism and nationalism under Putin.

The other road is more difficult to describe and forecast, since that road involves movement from majoritarian democracy to majoritarian dictatorship.

The chief elements along this road involve marked expansion of the administrative and regulatory state, use of executive emergency powers, and erosion of constitutional safeguards. This road differs greatly from the scenario of central planning and socialist ownership of the means of production pictured in Hayek (1944). A central argument in Hayek is that what unifies forms of fascism and communism is totalitarian control of society emphasizing central planning as distinct from simply negative reactions to capitalism. The state does not need to own very much of the economy, in the conventional socialism sense. On the contrary, with majority support the state can tax and regulate the private sector of both the market economy and civil society. Additionally, some ideologically oriented civil associations would be mobilized in support of the regime. In this approach, the state is cloaked within democracy. The problem is that the ideal of democracy is control of the state by the people; the reality of majoritarian dictatorship is that the state, even with circulation of elites, controls the people.

The Madison approach is simple majority voting. In 1860, Lincoln received only the largest plurality of the national vote, just under 40% although receiving an Electoral College majority. A Condorcet approach aims at electing a candidate most preferred by a majority of the electorate and minimizing election of an authoritarian candidate representing only a minority of the electorate (Foley 2023; Hansson 2022; Sen 2020). Condorcet advocated a unicameral legislature and assumed rational discourse among educated citizens. A bicameral legislature may reflect classes (the Lords and the Commons in the United Kingdom) or states in a federal republic (the Senate and the House in the United States); a multi-cameral legislature may reflect a conception of legally defined estates. The intermittent French Estates General (1302–1484, 1560–1614, and 1789), a purely advisory or consulting institution without legal authority concerning taxation or legislation, comprised three chambers for clergy, nobles, and commoners (Ulph 1951). The Swedish Riksdag of the Estates (1436–1866) comprised four chambers for clergy, nobles, burghers, and peasants—dividing the commons into two kinds (town and rural) (Bellquist 1935).

Constitutionalism

The constitutional problem is that there are competing visions for a commonwealth in which there is a continuing struggle for power. The people retain a supreme power and right to effect revolutionary change of government (Locke, *Second Treatise* 1689). A fundamental principle of the Federalist Papers was rejection of extra-constitutional democracy: assertions of formal or informal authority should have legal foundations (Wilson 2022). Government is a fiduciary agent and officials should feature impartiality, integrity, and virtue. The role of constitutionalism is to balance democracy and capitalism toward the common good. Habermas (2004) advocated a constitution for Europe. A cynical or skeptical approach to defining democracy is to envision having a pack of wolves and a lamb vote on what to have for lunch. Variants of two wolves attributed to Benjamin Franklin and four wolves attributed to Ambrose Bierce can be located online. Accurate attribution is less important than the idea itself. The minimum set is two wolves and one lamb, as the vote to eat the lamb is a two-thirds strong majority; four wolves increase the majority, and one can keep adding wolves while not adding lambs. At some point the wolves will fall out over the limited

availability of lambs. A dictatorship is, by analogy, a wolf selecting which lamb to eat. A constitution defends lambs against wolves (see Orwell 1945), defining what the wolves cannot or should not in principle do (Faigman 1992).

The essential notion of a constitutional polity is a set of widely agreed norms or principles for the governance of the society. There are three features of constitutionalism. First, there is a conception of some fundamental law superior to politics and government officials. Second, there is a conception that government must have the consent of the people. Third, protection of individual rights, and especially of political minorities, is a key dimension of constitutionalism. Law and consent regulate government officials; protection of rights regulates government officials and the majority. A constitution may be a written document as in the United States or an unwritten institution as in the United Kingdom (Walters 2012).

A point of contention is the appropriate role for the judiciary, and specifically of judicial review of executive and legislative actions. Waldron (2006) is an advocate for judicial minimalism, seeing judicial review as antithetical to democratic principles better located in the legislature. Another view characterized the case for judicial review as uneasy (Fallon 2008). Fallon's argument is that both legislatures and courts should protect individual rights, an argument that diminishes somewhat the traditional theory for judicial review. Judicial processes contribute to democratic disaffection when court decisions are unpopular (Jones 2023).

A book review article (Gould 2022) suggests three different perspectives on the political role of a constitution. In one view, constitutionalism is a governance ideology: a supreme court helps decide policy issues and national values. The judiciary can impede broad transformation. In a second view, constitutionalism results in arguments for policies framed in constitutional terms. The policies might occur through either judicial or legislative branches. The judiciary sets constraints on how policy cases can be presented. In the third view, a constitutional design sets "the rules of the political game that dictate how lawmaking takes place" (Gould 202, 2054). The judiciary sets constraints on institutional reform.

The essence of common good constitutionalism is that originalism in the sense of a fixed meaning constitution should be succeeded by an understanding that strong government is necessary to advance the common good due to changes in circumstances (Casey and Vermeule 2022; Vermeule 2020). This understanding links back to the natural law tradition of common good and justice (Foran and Casey 2023, 1): "We argue that debates over unwritten constitutional principles cannot be resolved without some resource to the philosophical or theoretical concept of a constitution: What it is, what it does, what it is for, and whom it is for." Governments can operate through genuine or manufactured emergencies enjoying judicial deference (Tsai 2020) and arguably without facing much judiciary capacity to constrain authoritarian tendencies (Tsai 2022). The constraint is respect for the judiciary and the constitution as superior to specific policy preferences.

A democracy may substitute directive principles for legislation. In Ireland, directive principles (Kenny and Musgrove McCann 2022) attempted to protect "economic, social, and cultural rights" and shift protection of such rights from courts to cultivation of a political culture supportive of such rights. There are

constitutions that make moral commitments to redistribution, social minimums, or some religious or secular identity (Khaitan 2019). There are different possible foundations for political legitimacy (Fossen 2022). Moralism and realism are arguably both forms of normative reasoning in that each form dictates the principles for legitimacy. Fossen argues that Rawls and Habermas express legitimacy of a regime rather than solving the problem of legitimacy. Fossen (2022, 89) argues that pragmatism addresses legitimacy through “practical engagement” with issues. Self-enforcing democracy requires that political parties refrain from exploiting legal opportunities to tilt electoral rules (Helmke, Kroeger, and Paine 2022). Helmke, Kroeger, and Paine (2022, 434) formally model an interaction of “informal norms of mutual forbearance and formal constitutional rules ... via a logic of deterrence.” The logic of deterrence can fail when “the foundations for forbearance crumble” (Helmke, Kroeger, and Paine 2022, 434).

Theories of democracy and the market economy impute different kinds of rationality to those institutions (Elkin 1985; Rommetvedt 2006). The economic theory of markets models a mechanical efficiency in which the interactions of ideally large numbers of buyers and sellers establish prices and volumes. Arguably, there will be a tendency toward monopolization (see Ordoover and Saloner 1989). The (F. Y.) Edgeworth conjecture is that as the number of traders grows toward infinity the core of the economy reduces toward competitive outcomes (Aumann 1964; Debreu and Scarf 1963). The political theory of democracy models a process of rational discourse leading to widely acceptable outcomes, such as Rousseau’s general will (Grofman and Feld 1988) or Habermas’s conception of deliberative democracy (Rasche and Scherer 2014). There can be a tendency toward the extremes (left and right) disrupting the center. For instance, consider rational discourse concerning *Roe v. Wade* abortion policy. The policy has effectively divided pregnancy into three phases, three groups of three months. That policy is under contest—as anti-abortionists seek to prohibit abortion entirely and pro-abortionists seek to extend abortion up to birth, if not beyond—due to opposed moral perspectives.

The U.S. Constitution divides between governmental machinery of powers and responsibilities and a federal “bill of rights”: some amendments are about machinery and some amendments are about rights (beginning with the initial ten amendments). State bills of rights do not operate to protect rights in the same way, functioning instead as devices for democratic majorities to control government (Marshfield 2022). The machinery includes issues such as the Electoral College, impeachment (Rathey 2022), indirect or direct election of the Senate, and delegation to the houses to determine voting procedures such as the Senate filibuster.

What holds a society together may be a sense of national identity defined by history, traditions, and shared values (Pitts 2022). Loss of such national identity does not necessarily mean descent into civil war (Olsen 2022). One solution is that leaders and citizens recognize and appreciate that higher values supersede binary moral disputes (Olsen 2022). A binary moral dispute is one which two sides have irreconcilable moral positions. In the American Civil War, the North viewed slavery as morally wrong while the South viewed slavery as morally acceptable (Olsen 2022). Southern secession arguably expressed that preservation of slavery was more important preservation of union. However, since seces-

sion occurred in state conventions, the political arithmetic of controlling those conventions may have outweighed slavery as a determinant of the outcomes (Chacón and Jensen 2020). A contrary view holds that secession was a defense of states' rights and resistance to economic exploitation by the North and this defense was independent of or subordinate to slavery.

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Message Framing, Regulatory Focus, and Venue of Consumption: An Interaction Study about Mask Mandate Compliance

Feng Shen

Abstract

Motivation: Mask-wearing can effectively control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the effects of message framing (i.e., messages emphasizing the gains/losses of wearing/not wearing masks) on mask-wearing have been examined in previous studies. This study is intended to address some of the insufficiencies in this line of research and explore more effective ways to encourage mask-wearing among the public.

Premise: Built upon the extant literature about the compatibility among message framing, regulatory focus (i.e., an individual's sensitivity to positive/negative outcomes), and the hedonic/utilitarian nature of a consumption experience, this study hypothesizes enhanced persuasiveness of a mask mandate due to the compatibility.

Approach: Data was collected through an experiment, and analysis of covariance was used to examine the enhanced persuasiveness.

Results: A gain-framed message leads to stronger compliance with a mask mandate than does a loss-framed message among those sensitive to positive outcomes in a hedonic setting. A loss-framed message leads to stronger compliance with the mask mandate than does a gain-framed message among those sensitive to negative outcomes in a utilitarian setting.

Conclusion: The hypothesized enhancement effect is supported, and the study contributes to building a better framework for the mechanism involved.

Consistency: This study provides guidelines to more effectively manage mask mandates in hedonic and utilitarian venues. Given that we have entered a pandemic era and mask mandates are likely to be re-implemented, guidelines will be valuable.

Keywords: hedonic/utilitarian consumption, mask mandate compliance, message framing, regulatory focus

JEL Classification Codes: C91, I18, M31

Feng Shen, PhD, Saint Joseph's University, fshen@sju.edu

INTRODUCTION

Our daily life has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (Ping and Buoye 2022), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released multiple mitigation guidelines and urged the public to take protective measures—such as handwashing, mask-wearing, and social distancing—to control the spread of the pandemic (Shoenberger, Kim, and Sun 2021). While those measures are proven to be effective, they are nevertheless met with considerable resistance among the public, and there is a substantial number of individuals who openly defy mask mandates (Kahane 2021). As a result, there has been strong interest in examining the public's compliance with mask mandates (Bright and Schau 2021), and researchers have investigated the effects of message framing or the extent to which gain-framed messages (i.e., messages emphasizing the benefits of wearing masks) differ from loss-framed messages (i.e., messages emphasizing the harms of not wearing masks) in promoting mask-wearing (Jiang and Doodoo 2021; Steffen and Cheng 2021).

The effects of message framing are associated with an individual's regulatory focus (Lee and Aaker 2004), which refers to the individual's sensitivity to positive and negative outcomes (Higgins 1997). Furthermore, mask-wearing is particularly essential to curb the spread of COVID-19 in indoor venues (Guy, Massetti, and Sauber-Schatz 2021), and individuals go to those venues for different reasons. A venue may be regarded as a hedonic facility if individuals go there primarily for an enjoyable experience the venue offers (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982), so for instance museums are perceived as hedonic facilities (Joseph-Mathews, Bonn, and Snepenger 2009). Utilitarian facilities are those where individuals go for the venue's instrumental and functional values (Batra and Ahtola 1991); for instance libraries are perceived as utilitarian facilities (Allison 2015). To the best of the author's knowledge, neither regulatory focus nor hedonic/utilitarian consumption has been included in studies about the effects of message framing on mask-wearing.

The purpose of this study is to address this gap in the literature and investigate the effects of message framing (gain versus loss), regulatory focus, and the hedonic/utilitarian nature of a venue (museum versus library) on patrons' compliance with a mask mandate through an experiment. Prospect theory, regulatory focus theory, and theories about hedonic and utilitarian consumptions are reviewed and used as the conceptual foundation of this study. The analyses on the experimental data reveals an interaction effect, that is, the gain-framed message leads to stronger compliance with the mask mandate than does the loss-framed message among those sensitive to positive outcomes in the museum setting, whereas the loss-framed message leads to stronger compliance with the mask mandate than does the gain-framed message among those sensitive to negative outcomes in the library setting.

This study makes several important contributions. First, this study is among the first to apply prospect theory, regulatory focus theory, and theories about hedonic and utilitarian consumptions to examining the public's compliance with mask mandates. Second, based on the results of this study, to generate stronger compliance with a mask mandate, managers of hedonic facilities should use gain-framed messages when communicating the mask mandate to patrons that are sensitive to positive outcomes, whereas managers of utilitarian facilities

should use loss-framed messages when communicating the mask mandate to patrons that are sensitive to negative outcomes. While the world is recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, we have nevertheless entered a pandemic era and novel infectious diseases are likely to periodically emerge (Morens and Fauci 2020). As a result, mitigation measures such as mask mandates are also likely to be re-implemented, making it crucial to investigate the public's compliance with those mandates.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Message Framing and Prospect Theory

While the variety of theories employed in previous research on loss/gain-framed messages is staggering, most of the studies appear to be embedded in prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky 1979), which posits that an individual's judgment of a prospect is based on the prospect's deviation from a reference point and is coded either as a loss or a gain. Because non-compliance with mask mandates increases an individual's chance of being infected with COVID-19 and subsequently harms the individual's health, the non-compliance is likely to be regarded as a loss. Conversely, because compliance with mask mandates decreases an individual's risk of being infected and therefore helps the individual stay healthy, the compliance is likely to be regarded as a gain. Furthermore, because "a loss decreases value more than an equivalent sized gain will increase value" (Hardie, Johnson, and Fader 1993, 380) and "losses loom larger than corresponding gains" (Tversky and Kahneman 1991, 1039), a message emphasizing losses or harms due to not wearing masks should be more effective than another message emphasizing gains or benefits associated with mask wearing to persuade the public to comply with mask mandates.

Nevertheless, the available evidence is inconclusive regarding the superiority of loss-framed messages over gain-framed messages in influencing health-related behaviors (Jung and Villegas 2011). The relative effectiveness of the two types of messages appears to be moderated by factors such as personal relevance (Jung and Villegas 2011), vulnerability (Bartels, Kelly, and Rothman 2010), cessation or detection of a health issue (Gallagher and Updegraff 2012), to name a few. Following a wide application of regulatory focus theory (Higgins 1997) in business research during the past decade (Motyka et al. 2014), the concept of regulatory fit has been gaining prominence in a new approach to comparing the effects of gain-framed versus loss-framed messages (Lee and Aaker 2004).

Regulatory Focus Theory and Regulatory Fit

According to regulatory focus theory (Higgins 1997), people are guided by two distinct regulatory orientations: promotion focus and prevention focus. Promotion-focused individuals are eager to acquire gains and sensitive to positive outcomes, for example, the benefits of complying with mask mandates. Prevention-focused people are vigilant to avoid losses and sensitive to negative outcomes, for example, the harms of not complying with mask mandates. A comparison between regulatory focus theory and prospect theory indicates that the prospect of acquiring a gain involves moving toward a desired end-state. This

represents a maximal goal in a promotion focus but a minimal goal in a prevention focus. The prospect of averting or reducing a loss involves moving away from an undesired end-state, which represents a maximal goal in a prevention focus (i.e., moving away from an undesired end-state is the desired end-state of a prevention focus) but a minimal goal in a promotion focus (Idson, Liberman, and Higgins 2000). There is also empirical evidence that the promotion-focused are more persuaded by gain-framed messages whereas the prevention-focused are more persuaded by loss-framed messages (Lee and Aaker 2004). Alternatively speaking, regulatory fit occurs when a gain frame is paired with a promotion focus and when a loss frame is paired with a prevention focus, and the same frame should be more effective when it is compatible with one regulatory focus (Lee and Aaker 2004). In the context of mask-wearing, it is hypothesized:

H1: A gain-framed message emphasizing the benefits of wearing masks will result in stronger compliance with a mask mandate than will a loss-framed message emphasizing the harms of not wearing masks among the promotion-focused.

H2: A loss-framed message emphasizing the harms of not wearing masks will result in stronger compliance with a mask mandate than will a gain-framed message emphasizing the benefits of wearing masks among the prevention-focused.

Hedonic/Utilitarian Consumptions and Regulatory Fit

The idea that consumption is largely driven by hedonic and utilitarian motivations is not new in business research. Products and venues are often categorized based on their relative hedonic or utilitarian nature (Dhar and Wertenbroch 2000). Although the hedonic and utilitarian motivations to consume a product or patronize a venue are not mutually exclusive (Batra and Ahtola 1991), a product or a venue is regarded as hedonic if it is primarily used for sensory pleasure, fun, and excitement. A product or a venue is regarded as utilitarian if it is primarily used for basic needs or functional tasks (Strahilevitz and Myers 1998).

More importantly, there is another regulatory fit between regulatory focus and hedonic/utilitarian consumptions (Chernev 2004). The regulatory orientation concept that the promotion-focused are sensitive to positive outcomes whereas the prevention-focused are sensitive to negative outcomes is developed from the hedonic principle that people are motivated to approach pleasure and avoid pain (Higgins 1997). Empirical evidence suggests that the promotion-focused tend to view hedonic consumptions as more appealing due to their attachment to pleasure, fun, and excitement, whereas the prevention-focused tend to view utilitarian consumptions as more appealing due to their aversion to frustration, inefficiency, and lack of practicality (Chernev 2004). In other words, regulatory fit occurs when a hedonic consumption is paired with a promotion focus and when a utilitarian consumption is paired with a prevention focus. The same consumption should be evaluated more favorably when it is compatible with one regulatory focus (Chernev 2004).

As discussed, gain-framed messages fit the promotion focus whereas loss-framed messages fit the prevention focus (Lee and Aaker 2004). Hedonic consumptions fit the promotion focus whereas utilitarian consumptions fit the prevention focus (Chernev 2004). Viewed together, those findings further suggest that there is a fit among gain-framed messages, hedonic consumptions, and the

promotion focus, and there is also another fit among loss-framed messages, utilitarian consumptions, and the prevention focus. Empirical evidence in advertising literature indicates that the regulatory fit between regulatory focus and message framing is further enhanced by the regulatory fit between regulatory focus and hedonic/utilitarian consumptions (Lin and Shen 2012). Given that museums are typically regarded as a venue for hedonic consumption (Joseph-Mathews, Bonn, and Snepenger 2009) whereas libraries are typically regarded as a venue for utilitarian consumptions (Allison 2015), H1 and H2 were developed further:

H3: A gain-framed message emphasizing the benefits of wearing masks will result in stronger compliance with a mask mandate than will a loss-framed message emphasizing the harms of not wearing masks among the promotion-focused, and this effect will be more pronounced in a museum setting than in a library setting.

H4: A loss-framed message emphasizing the harms of not wearing masks will result in stronger compliance with a mask mandate than will a gain-framed message emphasizing the benefits of wearing masks among the prevention-focused, and this effect will be more pronounced in a library setting than in a museum setting.

METHODOLOGY

Participants and Design

A total of 264 undergraduate students participated in this study. They were first asked to respond on five 7-point-scale items, which were the likelihood for them to contract COVID-19 in the future, how often they wear masks in public, attitude toward mask-wearing in public, political ideology, and interest in visiting libraries or museums depending on which venue condition they would be assigned to. These items were similar to those used in previous research on mask mandates (e.g., Jiang and Doodoo 2021; Steffen and Cheng 2021) and regulatory fit (e.g., Lee and Aaker 2004; Lin and Shen 2012) and were used as covariates in this study. Next, they were randomly assigned to one of the eight conditions in a 2 (regulatory focus: promotion versus prevention) \times 2 (message framing: gain versus loss) \times 2 (hedonic/utilitarian venue: museum versus library) between-subjects design. They completed questions about the message framing manipulation, their compliance with a mask mandate, i.e., the dependent variable, and demographics. The average age was 20 years, and 53 percent of the students were female.

The first between-subjects factor, regulatory focus, was manipulated by asking participants to complete two priming tasks at the beginning of the experiment. Participants in the promotion condition were first asked to report their current hopes and goals and how they differed from those during their childhood; participants in the prevention condition were first asked to report their current duties and obligations and how they differed from those during their childhood (Higgins et al. 1994). Next, participants in the promotion condition were asked to complete a maze featuring a mouse with a piece of cheese at the entrance and were instructed to guide the mouse to the cheese for nurturance; participants in the prevention condition were asked to complete another

maze featuring a mouse with a predatory owl looming over above the maze and were instructed to guide the mouse away from the owl to safety (Friedman and Förster 2001). These tasks have been used extensively in the regulatory focus theory literature (Motyka et al. 2014).

The manipulation check on regulatory focus was conducted among 41 students who did not participate in the experiment. Immediately after the promotion or prevention priming tasks, they were asked to indicate what was important for them to do on a 7-point scale (1 = something I ought to do, 7 = something I want to do). Those in the promotion condition scored significantly higher ($M = 4.67$) than those in the prevention condition ($M = 3.65$, $t = 2.74$, $p < .05$), indicating the manipulation was successful. This practice has been used in previous research (e.g., Lin and Shen 2012).

Four versions of a mask mandate were created to manipulate the second between-subjects factor, message framing, and the third between-subjects factor, hedonic/utilitarian venue. Specifically, those assigned to the hedonic venue condition were asked to imagine themselves going to a local museum and seeing a sign stating “Face Mask Required for Entry” and a brief justification emphasizing either benefits of wearing a mask or harms of not wearing a mask. Those assigned to the utilitarian venue condition were asked to imagine themselves going to a local library and seeing the same sign and the same justification message about the positive or negative outcomes of wearing/not wearing a mask. The manipulations were similar to those in previous research (e.g., Jiang and Doodoo 2021).

A manipulation check of message framing, similar to those in previous research (e.g., Jung and Villegas 2011), was employed. Experiment participants were asked to respond to a 7-point semantic differential scale, anchored by “1 = the negative outcomes of not wearing a mask” and “7 = the positive outcomes of wearing a mask,” following the statement “the message is about ...”. The manipulation was found to be successful: those in the loss-framed message condition ($M = 2.26$) differed significantly from those in the gain-framed message condition ($M = 4.88$, $t = -18.08$, $p < .05$) in their perceptions of what the message focused on.

Although the literature reports that museums are hedonic venues (Joseph-Mathews, Bonn, and Snepenger 2009) and libraries are utilitarian venues (Allison 2015), a check on the hedonic/utilitarian venue manipulation was still conducted among another 36 students who also did not participate in the experiment. After reading definitions about hedonic and utilitarian consumptions, they were randomly divided into two groups to evaluate ten venues in a random order on a 7-point scale (1 = totally utilitarian, 7 = totally hedonic). Libraries were among the ten venues evaluated by one student group, and museums were among the ten venues evaluated by the other student group. The evaluation of libraries ($M = 3.06$) differed significantly from that of museums ($M = 5.61$, $t = -5.09$, $p < .05$), indicating that the manipulation was successful. This practice has also been used in previous research (e.g., Kivetz and Zheng 2017).

Dependent Variable

Mask mandate compliance was the sole dependent variable in this study, and it was measured with two items with a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The items were “I should wear a face mask in this venue”

and “It is a good idea for me to wear a face mask in this venue,” similar to those used in previous research (e.g., Jiang and Dodoo 2021). Responses were averaged to form an index of mask mandate compliance ($r = .86$).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The hypotheses were tested through an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) of regulatory focus (prevention versus promotion) by message framing (gain versus loss) by hedonic/utilitarian venue (museum versus library) with the five aforementioned covariates. No effects of demographics were discovered in preliminary analyses, and therefore they were not included in the ANCOVA.

There was no main effect of either message framing or hedonic/utilitarian venue, but there was a significant main effect of regulatory focus: the promotion-focused ($M = 5.70$) reported stronger compliance than did the prevention-focused ($M = 5.39$, $F(1, 251) = 6.10$, $p < .05$). More importantly, there was also a significant interaction effect of regulatory focus by message framing ($F(1, 251) = 9.88$, $p < .05$); specifically, the promotion-focused reported stronger compliance ($M = 5.95$) in response to the gain-framed message than to the loss-framed message ($M = 5.45$, $F(1, 260) = 5.87$, $p < .05$), whereas the prevention-focused reported stronger compliance ($M = 5.59$) in response to the loss-framed message than to the gain-framed message ($M = 5.18$, $F(1, 260) = 4.00$, $p < .05$). Therefore, the results supported both H1 and H2.

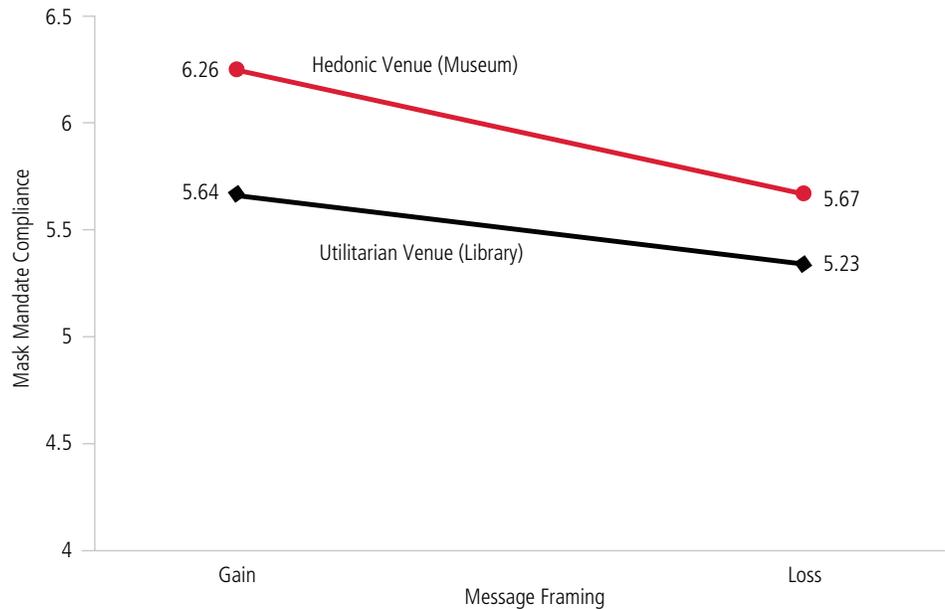
The three-way interaction of regulatory focus by message framing by hedonic/utilitarian venue was also significant ($F(1, 251) = 5.89$, $p < .05$). Further analyses on the three-way interaction indicated that among the promotion-focused in the museum condition, the gain-framed message led to stronger compliance ($M = 6.26$) than did the loss-framed message ($M = 5.67$, $F(1, 127) = 4.26$, $p < .05$), whereas among the promotion-focused in the library condition, the gain-framed message ($M = 5.64$) did not differ from the loss-framed message ($M = 5.23$, $F(1, 127) = 1.88$, $p > .05$) in compliance. Therefore, the results also supported H3 that hypothesized the enhanced superiority of the gain-framed message over the loss-framed message in the museum setting rather than in the library setting for the promotion-focused. The effects were visually presented in Figure 1.

The analyses on the three-way interaction also indicated that among the prevention-focused in the library condition, the loss-framed message led to stronger compliance ($M = 6.17$) than did the gain-framed message ($M = 4.99$, $F(1, 129) = 23.85$, $p < .05$). Among the prevention-focused in the museum condition, the loss-framed message ($M = 4.96$) did not differ from the gain-framed message ($M = 5.38$, $F(1, 129) = 2.50$, $p > .05$) in compliance. Therefore, the results supported H4 that hypothesized the enhanced superiority of the loss-framed message over the gain-framed message in the library setting rather than in the museum setting for the prevention-focused. The effects are visually presented in Figure 2.

CONCLUSIONS

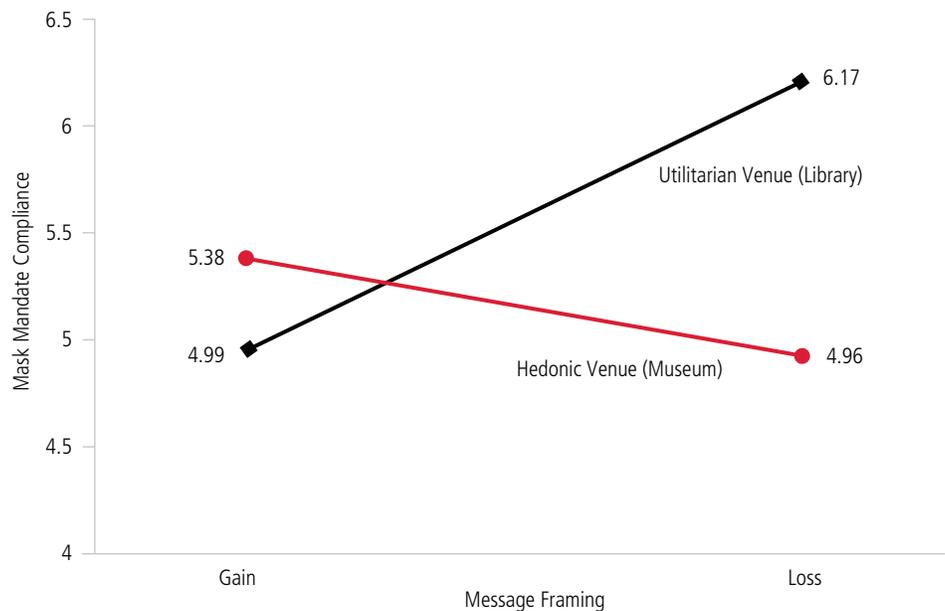
While a number of researchers have investigated the effects of message framing on mask mandate compliance (Jiang and Dodoo 2021; Steffen and Cheng 2021), neither regulatory focus nor hedonic/utilitarian consumption has been in-

FIGURE 1. Effects of Message Framing and Consumption Venue on Mask Mandate Compliance among the Promotion-Focused



cluded in their studies. This insufficiency was addressed in this study. Built upon property theory, regulatory focus theory, and theories about hedonic and utilitarian consumptions, this study hypothesized and proved that the gain-framed message outperformed the loss-framed message in encouraging mask mandate compliance among the promotion-focused in the museum setting, whereas the loss-framed message outperformed the gain-framed message in encouraging the compliance among the prevention-focused in the library setting.

FIGURE 2. Effects of Message Framing and Consumption Venue on Mask Mandate Compliance among the Prevention-Focused



Theoretical Implications

The concept of framing is useful to understand the mechanism of decision-making, choice, and preference. According to prospect theory, loss-framed messages should be more persuasive than gain-framed messages (Meyerowitz and Chaiken 1987). Nevertheless, there is no conclusive evidence supporting the superiority of loss-framed messages over gain-framed messages (Jiang and Doodoo 2021). In this study there was no main effect of message framing on mask mandate compliance, which further indicates the limitation of using prospect theory alone to understand human behavior in general and health-related behavior in particular.

A better approach, as illustrated in this study, is to examine the effects of message framing in terms of its compatibility or regulatory fit with other personal and consumption characteristics. Although this study is not the first to examine the regulatory fit among message framing, regulatory focus, and hedonic/utilitarian consumption, it is among the first to examine such a regulatory fit in the context of encouraging mask mandate compliance in hedonic and utilitarian venues and contributes significantly to building a better theoretical framework for the mechanism involved.

Managerial Implications

The regulatory focus in this study was activated through priming tasks, but the promotion or prevention orientations can also be activated by marketing stimuli such as advertising messages and positioning statements (Lin and Shen 2012). Based on the findings that the gain-framed message outperformed the loss-framed message in encouraging mask mandate compliance among the promotion-focused in the museum setting, whereas the loss-framed message outperformed the gain-framed message in encouraging the compliance among the prevention-focused in the library setting, it can be well argued that managers of hedonic venues should use gain-framed messages to encourage mask mandate compliance if they are able to activate promotion orientations through advertising and positioning. Conversely, managers of utilitarian venues should use loss-framed messages to encourage mask mandate compliance if they are able to activate prevention orientations through advertising and positioning.

The findings can also have implications for venues that may be perceived as both hedonic and utilitarian. There is evidence that the perception of the hedonic or utilitarian nature of a product or a venue can vary depending on the emphasized consumption benefits in advertising messages and position statements (Kivetz and Zheng 2017). If managers of venues that are both hedonic and utilitarian can activate promotion orientations and strengthen the hedonic perception of their venues through advertising and positioning, they should use gain-framed messages to encourage mask mandate compliance. Conversely, if those managers can activate prevention orientations and strengthen the utilitarian perception of their venues through advertising and positioning, they should use loss-framed messages to encourage mask mandate compliance.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are three major limitations. One is the generalizability of the findings. The participants were undergraduate students. Although they are among the typical patrons of museums and libraries (Allison 2015; Hendel and Harrold 2004), we make no claim that they are representative of the entire patron population of museums and libraries. A second limitation is the laboratory nature of the study. The participants were asked to respond to a mask mandate of a museum or a library after a one-time exposure to the mandate with limited information, but people in real life can be repeatedly exposed to various mask mandates and they may also differ substantially in their knowledge about and experience with a particular venue. The third limitation is that the regulatory focus in this study was activated through priming tasks, as mentioned in the managerial section. Although the procedures in this study are extensively used in the regulatory focus theory literature, activating regulatory focus through advertising messages and positioning statements can be particularly useful for managers to implement the findings in this study.

For future studies, it is desirable to recruit respondents who are more representative of the patron population of museums and libraries and activate regulatory focus through marketing stimuli. It is also worthwhile to create experimental settings that are similar to our daily life, for example, repeated exposures to mask mandates, and to provide more information about the venues to be patronized. Those new studies will be very useful for researchers to examine whether the effects in this study can be replicated and extended to other health-related behaviors. Insights learned from those new studies will eventually help optimize the management of public health campaigns, which is of vital importance to both scholars and practitioners.

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