

APNME 2022

Moral Education During the Global Pandemic

Moral Education During the Global Pandemic

Reflections on Moral Issues in a Challenging Time

Featuring contributions by members of a leading moral education network, this publication presents both the outcome of invaluable collective research in the Asia-Pacific region and a pathway for further academic collaboration in the future.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has undeniably been a disaster for human development worldwide, it has also sharpened our awareness of the need for a more sustainable society and better social governance. In this book, multidisciplinary authors from different countries and cultural settings explain to readers their analyses of the social and human vulnerabilities that the pandemic has exposed, and offer some ideas for the practice of moral education at home, in schools and various other social domains in the years ahead.



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APNME

The Asia-Pacific Network for Moral Education



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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

Foreword I

Monica Taylor

Foreword II

Christopher Drake

Introduction

Meiyao Wu

1

- | | | |
|----------|---|-----|
| 1 | Has the COVID-19 Pandemic Strengthened Unity and Caring? A Survey of Children on the Chinese Mainland
<i>Caiping Sun, Fengfeng Zhang and Zhanbiao Li</i> | 7 |
| 2 | Institutionalization and Resistance: A Qualitative Study of the Daily Lives of Female Chinese Scholars During the COVID-19 Pandemic
<i>Hongyan Cheng</i> | 27 |
| 3 | Family-School Partnership as an Indispensable Avenue for Moral Education Stressing Pandemic Prevention and Control: A Case Study From Beijing, China
<i>Jin Xie and Yifan Wang</i> | 49 |
| 4 | How Do People Respond to COVID-19? A Set of Reflections
<i>Mei-Yee Wong</i> | 65 |
| 5 | Spread of COVID-19 and Moral Issues in Japan
<i>Yasunari Hayashi</i> | 81 |
| 6 | Moral Education and Post-COVID-19: Two New Normals
<i>Vishalache Balakrishnan</i> | 93 |
| 7 | Chinese and British Virtues in the Time of the Coronavirus: Reflections on Virtue Language From a Cross-Cultural Perspective
<i>Yan Huo and Yong Guo</i> | 107 |
| 8 | An Ethical View of Globalization in the Post-Epidemic Era: Reflections on Multiculturalism and Patriotism
<i>Cheng-Hsi Chien</i> | 119 |

9	The Contribution of Online Tools to Thinking and Deliberating about Morality in Japanese Schools: A Preliminary Experiment with Student-Teachers <i>Aya Fujisawa</i>	139
10	Moral Dilemmas for Teachers and Students in the COVID-19 Era <i>Jiyoung Choi</i>	155
11	Moral Dilemmas During the Global Pandemic and Implications for Moral Education in Current and Post-Pandemic Times <i>Meiyao Wu</i>	175
	Notes on Contributors	191

FOREWORD I

It has been an ambition of the Asia-Pacific Network for Moral Education (APNME), and especially of Professor Meiyao Wu, its Chairwoman, (2017-2022), to have a book publication, a sequel to the Journal of Moral Education (JME) Special Issue, *Cultivating Morality: The Asia-Pacific Experience*, which marked the 10th Anniversary of the Asia Pacific Network for Moral Education (Kim & Taylor, 2017). This new online publication is grounded in the Coronavirus outbreak which spread from China across the whole world in 2019-20. The pandemic, and the many significant ethical issues which it raised and their implications for moral education, has provided a focus around which members of APNME could continue their theoretical and empirical research during lockdowns and social isolation from students and colleagues.

This collection of book chapters contains contributions from mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia and South Korea which address some key concerns during the most challenging of times for societies and citizens. The papers demonstrate the commonalities and diversity of governmental and organisational responses across the different countries of the Asia-Pacific region, which have been further diversified globally and in countries unused to viral outbreaks and severe restrictions on personal liberties. Timely in its publication, researchers here record various ways in which institutions, teachers, students and parents have responded, with ingenuity, resourcefulness and care, to severe requirements and ongoing needs whilst trying to maintain and develop educational practices and moral learning during unprecedented times.

The pandemic in all contexts across the world has called into question fundamental issues of morality and real-life daily practices in terms of thinking, decision-making, behaviour and action and our willingness to reappraise these in relation to their effects on others and ourselves. This is the very stuff of moral education. For a time—a year or so—until vaccines were discovered which reduced the most severe effects of COVID-19 and reduced the number of deaths, which dominated each day's news, our individual health and social situations and our behaviour in relation to others and theirs in relation to us were our predominant consideration. The pandemic highlighted the moral principle of universalizability. For example, mask wearing—which is much more common in many countries of the Asia-Pacific than in the West, where it was

reluctantly but legally required at the height of the pandemic—is as much for the safety of others, and thus other-considering in practice, as much as it is for one’s own personal safety. The pandemic highlighted, most dramatically, our human interdependence locally, nationally and globally. Temporarily at least, in the UK, for example, we had a heightened consciousness that what an individual did or did not do could clearly and directly affect others. People reassessed their priorities and life’s meaning for them. Moreover, the pandemic emphasized social and economic inequalities, which meant that certain ethnic groups of people, especially the poor, living in overcrowded conditions, in face-to-face jobs with the public, including schoolteachers, and particularly those caring for others in homes and hospitals, were disproportionately at risk and affected. Although health workers were given genuine recognition and appreciation by the public, opportunities for governmental reassessment of health priorities and other social challenges may have been short-lived. Can we maintain the same degree of care and consideration for others, and ourselves, as the virus becomes less prevalent, and we easily revert to a semblance of pre-pandemic, new normal life?

This book is an historic contribution, at a specific point in time, to an analysis of how the pandemic in certain countries of the Asia-Pacific has given rise to new ethical issues and questions for the moral life and implications for moral education in theory and in practice at all ages across the lifespan. The book’s editor, Professor Wu, and the APNME colleagues whose work is represented here, should be commended for their research in challenging circumstances and written efforts to make their endeavours freely available to the widest possible global audience through the internet. There is much of interest to make reading worthwhile and, hopefully, to encourage responses from other colleagues in other Asia-Pacific countries, where moral education is also valued. APNME was quick to embrace new ways of working as an organisation online during the pandemic and to offer webinars to its members and others who were seeking support through a community of scholars. It is to be hoped that this publication will provide a lead to the academic work of members of the organisation so that other topics of common interest can be explored and brought to wider attention beyond that of conferences and the Asia-Pacific region itself.

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FOREWORD II

More than two years after the first waves of the COVID-19 tsunami washed ashore around the world, humanity is still grappling with the longer-term impact of the pandemic while more immediate and tragic consequences also continue to leave their mark. Although it has paradoxically brought prosperity to some, for the majority, the pandemic has left people of all walks of life struggling, if not with the disease itself then with the fallout, the lockdowns and other measures taken to respond to this tiny virus. Particularly hard-hit—as almost always is the case—have been those in lower socio-economic strata with fewer healthcare, technological and financial resources and facilities.

As some societies begin to return to normality (or a new normal) and strive for social and economic recovery, it's apparent that overall human development has been set back many years, notably with regard to education, including moral education. But if, as is said, there is an opportunity within every crisis—and the pandemic has surely created many a crisis—then it is well worth reflecting on what has happened during the past couple of years, not only to look at underlying fault lines that have been exposed but also to see how we may correct course and co-create stronger and better societies. This book is a contribution to just that exercise as the distinguished authors of each of its chapters share their experiences, consider some of the moral issues that educators, and each of us, have been called upon to contend with and report on their analysis, research and observations of moral education and related issues in the context of the unparalleled challenges of the past two years. The book also represents an important milestone for The Asia-Pacific Network for Moral Education as an embodiment of its purpose of bringing moral educators together and fostering collaborative relationships among them for the advancement of moral education and research in the region.

Unsurprisingly, the effect of isolation, lockdowns and worries on students' mental, emotional and social health and well-being loom large on the following pages. Academics, teachers and the broader adult population have experienced significantly more symptoms of anxiety and depression than previously, as typical day-to-day activities including family, social, work and academic life have all been impacted and all at the same time. Young adults have been amongst those most affected in this regard with some school and university populations reporting depression amongst well over

the majority of their students. The aftermath of this will be with us for years to come and is a pressing issue that must be given the attention that the overall well-being of our youth, and society as a whole, deserve.

And yet it is not all bad news. Moral education (whether called as such or by other names) has deep, strong and diverse roots in our region and, connected as it so surely is with the best of the human spirit and life, this book shows how resilient educators have risen to the challenge in many ways, both helping us to understand and make better sense of what has happened and pointing to some initial implications for the way ahead for moral education. In that regard, going beyond the disruptions to routines that most of us experienced in one way or another, a common theme for many during the past two years has been a reassessment of the priorities and what's most important in our lives. Health and well-being, good relationships with others and a sense of meaning or fulfilment in life are only likely to attract greater focus in the years to come and feature more prominently within moral educators' remit.

In a similar vein, it was often during the darkest days of the pandemic that we saw some of the best of the human spirit in uplifting and heart-warming outpourings of care, commitment, responsibility, love and selflessness. Carrying some of those images in our mind's eye is both reassuring and an important reminder of how essential the work of moral educators is in helping keep the light of such values shining bright and strong to the best of our ability, no matter the circumstances. Huge thanks are therefore due to all those who have contributed to this publication and the many others who continue to work in this field. Moral education could not be more important in today's world.

Christopher Drake
President, Association for Living Values Education International
Member of the APNME Advisory Board

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of 2020, the world has experienced several waves of a global pandemic that has continually challenged our lives as human beings, and more specifically our reliance on moral education. Therefore, at this historic moment, APNME scholars are reflecting on the most relevant moral issues and thinking further about how this global pandemic has given us a clearer understanding of the need to promote moral education. This book is a collection of APNME members' reflections and collective memories regarding this event.

During this challenging period, different countries and cultures have adopted different strategies, rules, and methods for dealing with various problems arising from the global pandemic, and people from different areas have also had different responses to the continually changing nature of the pandemic. As a result, people's ideas about and conceptions of morality have also been changing. Scholars and educators in the field of moral education have been especially influenced. Moreover, those coming from different cultural traditions have naturally responded in different ways to the current urgency of dealing with the COVID-19 situation, leading to still further moral issues and ethical dilemmas.

In this book, authors from different countries and cultural settings provide their collective data, analyses and interpretations regarding the social and educational phenomena and related moral issues tied to the pandemic. The various analytic approaches include qualitative and quantitative methods, and both micro and macro perspectives. The book chapters comprise psychological, philosophical, sociological, and comparative cultural studies. When the initial outbreak of COVID-19 appeared in 2020, the APNME committee quickly decided to compile this book. Our 2021 APNME online conference was an additional source for APNME members' reflections on these historic events. However, collecting scholars' completed chapters, editing the English text, and making other improvements took a considerable amount of time. We hope this book will not only record the APNME's collective memories of the pandemic, but also help us to think more generally about how to best promote moral education in current and future societies, especially those in the Asia-Pacific region.

Four chapters report empirical studies by researchers in Mainland China who collected students' and teacher's experiences during the global pandemic. They clearly show how the pandemic has changed children's and teachers' behavior patterns and moral values in that country. In one of these studies, Caiping Sun and her colleagues developed a questionnaire to survey how the pandemic was influencing children's understanding of moral values in China's Hubei and Jiangsu provinces. In 2020 Hubei province and its capital city, Wuhan, were severely affected by COVID-19, much more so than Jiangsu province and its capital, Nanjing. This research shows that children from Hubei province had more negative emotional and physical reactions to COVID-19 than children from Jiangsu province. In addition, awareness of the value and importance of the society's good health, unity, and solidarity increased during the pandemic period.

Jin Xie's and Yifang Wang's chapter describes their investigation of how the pandemic influenced the conduct of online classes dealing with moral education in primary and secondary schools in Beijing, and how these classes advanced the healthy functioning of school-family partnerships. During this period, teachers and parents adopted digital platforms to better communicate with each other and make their relationships more cooperative. Moreover, humanistic and life-centered themes, social norms related to the pandemic and its social controls, and positive values such as empathy and caring were further emphasized.

Hongyan Cheng's research project included interviews of six female professors who worked in Wuhan. The professors had to face many new challenges in their daily life during all four stages of the pandemic: the initial period of Wuhan's closure, the period of online classes, the period when the ban was lifted, and the period when people's routine life could be resumed. The pandemic gave these female scholars not only greater difficulties in their family and professional lives, but also new opportunities to reflect on and perhaps change their status in the academic society.

The fourth chapter by an author from Mainland China describes Meiyee Wong's empirical exploration of the situation in Hong Kong during the pandemic. She reports that even people who experienced negative emotions such as worry, anxiety, and stress still clearly retained at a high level positive values such as caring, empathy,

sharing, commitment, courage, and responsibility. Moreover, she came to better understand people's everyday life and the everyday dilemmas they faced.

As we know, moral education has been greatly emphasized in the Asia-Pacific region for a long time. Among the countries in this area, Japan in particular is known for its moral education. However, the pandemic seems to have created many new challenges for moral education in Japan. Yasunari Hayashi's chapter not only highlights the effectiveness of online or hybrid classes in Japan, but also exposes the contradictions between Japan's moral education curriculum and social phenomena such as expressions of the Olympic spirit and the commercialization of sports games. He further distinguishes two Japanese folklore terms, "*hare*" (celebration days) and "*ke*" (ordinary days) to analyze the moral problems created by the Olympics being held in Japan. Finally, he suggests that Japan's moral education should focus more on a behavioral orientation and social cooperation.

In addition to Yasunari Hayashi, whose chapter notes how Japan's cultural background has affected people's reactions to the pandemic, the authors of two other chapters based their comparative studies on cultural factors. Visha Balakrishnan compared how different cultures have influenced people's behavior in Japan, Malaysia, and Indonesia during the pandemic. For example, she notes the significance of certain Japanese cultural characteristics, including the fact that the Japanese tend to have fewer physical interactions with one another than do people in Malaysia and Indonesia, where Islam and various other religions or belief systems play a significant role in citizens' common life. Therefore, it seemed easier for the Japanese than for the Malaysians to follow the new norms required by the pandemic. Even though the pandemic has confronted us with many challenges, moral education can clearly help us form new behavior patterns and adopt positive perspectives on our "new normal" society.

Another comparative study is described in the chapter by Yan Huo and Yong Guo, who analyzed Chinese and British virtue languages. Specifically, she discovered much commonality between the key virtues emphasized in speeches by Chinese President Xi's and the British Queen's speeches and those found in neo-Aristotelian virtue-ethics language, while noting other relevant similarities and differences between the two speeches. For example, the speeches highlight that while the virtues

of appreciation, responsibility/duty, helping others, and compassion are prominent in both cultural contexts, the virtue of modesty has higher billing in Chinese society, whereas the virtues of pride and humor are emphasized more in British society. Here again, we find that whereas some values, such as goodness, may seem to be universal, others clearly expose cultural differences.

Besides Yan Huo and Yong Guo's chapter presenting their analysis of virtue terms used in the pandemic period, the book contains another philosophically oriented chapter by Cheng-Hi Chien, who discusses global ethics in the post-pandemic era. He suggests that communitarianism and multiculturalism challenge liberalism, and he uses an evaluation of contrasting opinions about the necessity of wearing a mask in Asian and Western socio-cultural contexts to support his argument. In addition, Chien invokes I. Primoratz's ethical patriotism as a theoretical foundation for his views, and he argues that this ethical patriotism can be conducive to international cooperation in the post-pandemic era.

Two chapters focus mainly on the online lessons taught in Japanese and Korean schools. Aya Fujisawa found in her quantitative research study in Japanese schools that there were no significant differences in the effectiveness of online moral-dilemma discussions (OMDD) and face-to face moral dilemma discussions (FMDD) for teaching morality and communication skills, even though the pre-test scores of the two groups showed little difference. In other words, her study confirmed the effectiveness of online lessons in moral education. Jiyoung Choi reported her study in which she employed a qualitative method to analyze four kinds of dilemmas teachers face about how to conduct online classes in Korean schools: the appropriate role of the teacher, how to protect privacy rights, the meaning of "class participation," and how to ensure the fairness of online examinations. She concludes the chapter with suggestions for improving the efficiency of online moral education lessons.

In the third of three chapters that deal in different ways with dilemmas faced by teachers in online classes, Meiyao Wu reflects on various moral dilemmas appearing at individual, organizational, and societal/national levels during the pandemic period from a macro-sociological perspective. She points out that individuals, organizations, and societies often differ in how they understand the importance of moral values or virtues. Making proper moral decisions in a short timeframe requires long-term

cultivation of one's personality, sufficient professional competence, and knowledge of how to work effectively in a team.

To sum up, this collection of studies and reflections by Asian scholars on the moral issues raised by the COVID-19 pandemic teaches us that people's prioritizing of moral values or virtues tends to continually change during the course of their life, and cultural factors may influence how they decide to follow the new norms of a post-pandemic society. Of course, digital devices and online modes of instruction will increasingly enable face-to-face interactions between and among teachers and students; therefore, developing new ways of using these tools to further enhance students' professional competence and encourage good behavior will become increasingly important in the post-pandemic era. Readers can find more detailed and in-depth discussions of the relevant issues in the chapters not summarized in this introductory chapter. The APNME's publication of this anthology will surely encourage educators and scholars in the field of moral education to further promote this discipline not only in the Asia-Pacific region but all over the world.

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Chapter 1

Has the COVID-19 Pandemic Strengthened Unity and Caring? A Survey of Children on the Chinese Mainland

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 has had a significant impact not only on our daily life, but also on global economic and political conditions. Does it also potentially impact the psychological well-being and values of children? Is there any link between crisis psychology and values? This research was conducted through a questionnaire completed by 32, 150 Chinese children (9-18 years old) in a typical pandemic area (Hubei Province) and an atypical pandemic area (Jiangsu Province). The questionnaire concerned their experiences during the pandemic. The conclusions are as follows: (a) besides health, unity and caring were prominent reactions to the psychological crisis; (b) a weak “Ripple Effect” in children’s psychological reactions to the pandemic was found; (c) the crisis made the children believe common good is more important than their own life convenience during the pandemic; (d) the children’s moral judgements highlight the distinction between justice and benefits.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19, unity, caring, children, Chinese mainland

There is no doubt that COVID-19, which has caused more than 530 million infections and 6 million deaths worldwide, has become a global crisis in the 21st century. It has had a significant impact not only on public healthcare but also on global economic and political circumstances. After a relatively stable period in the summer of 2020, a new wave hit many countries and regions in America and Europe, resulting in the reimposition of city lockdowns and curfews. According to the *World Economic Outlook Report* released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the global economy shrank by 3.3% in 2020, arguably the largest decline since the Great Depression.

Many studies have demonstrated that a change in individuals' social environment has a significant impact on their moral values (Chen, 2014; Manago, 2012; Weinstock et al., 2014). A dynamic social environment also plays this role in the long term (Greenfield, 2009, 2013). Likewise, emergencies and crises can potentially affect people's cognition, values, and behavior. Furthermore, an empirical study on the impact of the Great Depression on children's values and behavior found that it strengthened the sense of responsibility and lust for money, especially in boys.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, many experiments have been conducted on the impact of the pandemic on human psychology. Cole (2020) found that due to their substandard living and working environments, low-income residents in the Northern Hemisphere suffer from a higher risk of infection and death, and more severe mental health problems, than high-income residents. Rahman (2020) reported that the pandemic increased terror and agony among Australians ages 30 through 59 as well as frequency of smoking and drinking. Using the Beck Anxiety Scale, Zohn et al. (2020) found that isolation increased people's anxiety, and if they couldn't see the chance of returning to a normal life in the short term, their feelings of depression, loneliness, and despair tended to become worse. Children were found to have an increased number of psychological and behavioral problems during the pandemic. Zhao (2020) found that 22.0% of a sample of 396 school children in China ages 8 through 18 suffered from anxiety, 4.1% higher than before the pandemic. A survey conducted by Fontanesi et al. (2020) on autistic children revealed that they were two times more likely to have more frequent and more severe behavioral problems during the pandemic than before. Neece et al. (2020) found that 85.7% of parents noticed that

their children had abnormally high levels of emotions such as boredom, anxiety, and irritability when required to stay home during the pandemic. Liu et al. (2020) found that during the pandemic there was an increase in somatization symptoms in 10%-22% of a sample of children. In two other studies, both discovered two major triggers of anxiety amidst the children: (1) concern that both children and their family would become infected, and (2) recognition that their learning might be affected by school suspensions and having to take courses online (Tang et al., 2019; Zhou et al., 2020).

Some researchers have focused on the impact of COVID-19 on morality. Borges et al. (2020) reported that the pandemic had an impact not only on mental health but also on moral behavior; she suggested Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT-MI) and prosocial intervention as treatments for psychological and moral problems. Kumar (2020) noted that the new social values that emerged in India during this period might facilitate the development of a more scientific and civilized society.

The research of Bacchini et al. (2014) and Eskin (2013) demonstrated that values play an important role in children's mental health, prosocial behavior, and aggressive behavior. Recent research has been focused much more on children's mental health during the pandemic than their values. One consequence of this trend is that children's mental health and values during the pandemic have tended to be studied separately, with no in-depth discussion of the relationship between them. What has the crisis taught Chinese children about values? Is there any relationship between children's values and their mental health? We conducted the research reported below to answer these questions.

METHOD

Questionnaire Design

To further explore these questions, we had our research participants complete a questionnaire investigation. In developing the questionnaire, our team adopted a five-step procedure to ensure high reliability and validity. First, we created draft items. Second, we invited five scholars with expertise in both psychology and moral education to discuss and revise the items. Third, we invited 15 children of different ages to respond to these items. Fourth, we interviewed them for their advice on how to

modify and improve the questionnaire. Finally, we created the final version of the questionnaire.

Structure of the Questionnaire

The first part of the questionnaire asked for demographic information about age (grade), gender, area of residence (urban or rural, which province). The second part consisted of questions about the four main dimensions of response to the pandemic: lifestyle, feelings and judgement, attitudes, and values. Each dimension is represented by four items, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Questionnaire Items for Each of the Four Dimensions

Lifestyle	Feelings and judgement	Attitudes (toward)	Values
Changes in health habits	feelings of the pandemic	People in high pandemic areas	Most important
Changes in learning	feelings when near to the infected person	Volunteers	Freedom vs. common good
Changes in diet	information trust	Medical staff	Ecological ethics
Parent-child relationship	Judgement of the action to pandemic	Speculators	International assistance

Children were selected from two provinces representing different rates of COVID 19 infection. Most provinces had high infection rates at the time of the survey. Hubei Province was chosen as the high infection area. It was the first province in mainland China to experience an outbreak and was the hardest hit of them all. By July 5, 2020, it had recorded 68,162 cases (57.3% of the total for the mainland) and 4,512 deaths (81.5% of the mainland total). Jiangsu Province was selected as the low infection area. By the same date (July 20), it had recorded only 743 cases (14th highest among the 31 provinces other than Hubei) and 0 deaths. Because of the pandemic the

questionnaire was posted and completed online, and 32,150 valid questionnaires were submitted, an impressive response rate of 99.7% of children ages 9 through 18, who volunteered to participate in the investigation. The demographic distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Demographics of the Sample

Category		Sample size	Percentage of sample
Gender	male	17,237	53.61
	female	14,913	46.39
primary school		20,095	62.50
middle school		10,429	32.44
high school		1,626	5.06
Age (years)	9	2,636	8.20
	10	5,951	18.51
	11	6,686	20.80
	12	6,295	19.58
	13	4,090	12.72
	14	3,594	11.18
	15	1,347	4.19
	16	697	2.17
	17	541	1.68
	18	313	0.97
Province	Jiangsu	10,994	34.20
	Hubei	21,156	65.80
Residence	city	14,193	44.15
	town	8,892	27.66
	rural	9,065	28.20

DATA ANALYSIS

IBM SPSS Statistics 22 was employed for data analysis. In order to avoid the influence of large sample size on the significance of difference, this study makes further supplementary explanation on the significance of difference with effect size (ES), the values of which were obtained from chi-square tests. The following criteria were used to label the strength of those effects found to be statistically significant ($p < .05$) and thus considered to be genuine: When $ES \leq 0.1$, the effect is considered weak; when $0.1 < ES \leq 0.2$ the effect is considered moderate; when $ES > 0.2$ the effect is considered strong.

RESULTS

Weak Psychological Ripple Effect

The data analysis showed that there was a ripple effect of children's emotional states during the COVID-19 pandemic. The term "ripple effect" is used to label the situation in which the higher the objectively defined risk, the higher the levels of fear and other negative emotions (see Burns & Slovic, 2012; Kasperson et al., 1988). The results indicate that the children from Hubei Province, where the infection rate was relatively high, had significantly higher scores than the children from Jiangsu Province, where the infection rate was relatively low, on negative emotions (fear and anxiety), $\chi^2 = 54.927$, $p < .01$, and negative behavior triggered by these emotions (frequent bathing and stockpiling of medical masks), $\chi^2 = 31.936$, $p < .01$, in response to COVID-19. However, both effects are considered weak because the effect sizes were < 0.1 ($\phi = 0.033$). These results are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 respectively.

Figure 1

Differences Between Hubei and Jiangsu Provinces in the Proportions of Children Experiencing Fear and Anxiety

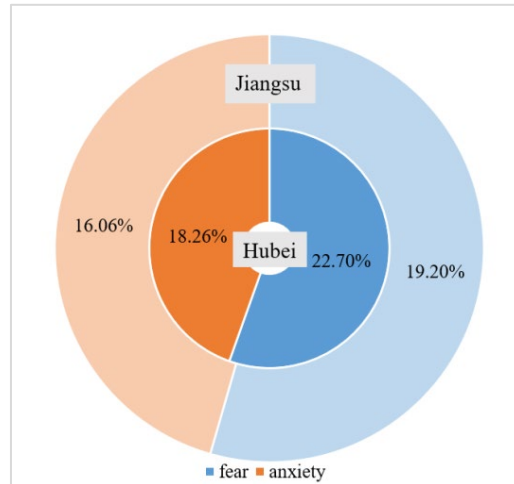
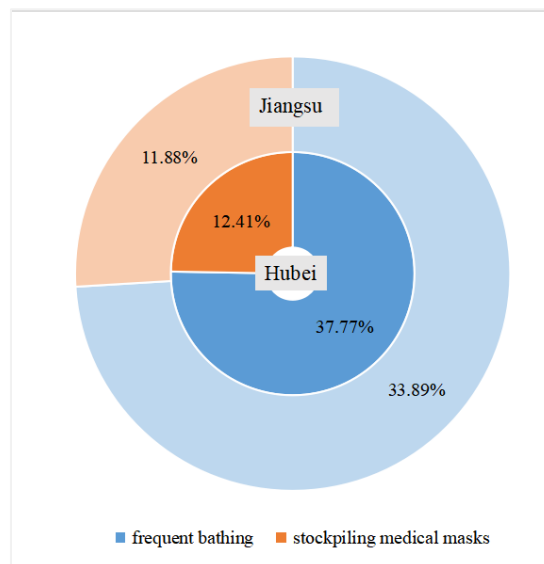


Figure 2

Differences Between Hubei and Jiangsu Provinces in the Proportions of Children Exhibiting Behaviors of Frequent Bathing and Stockpiling Masks



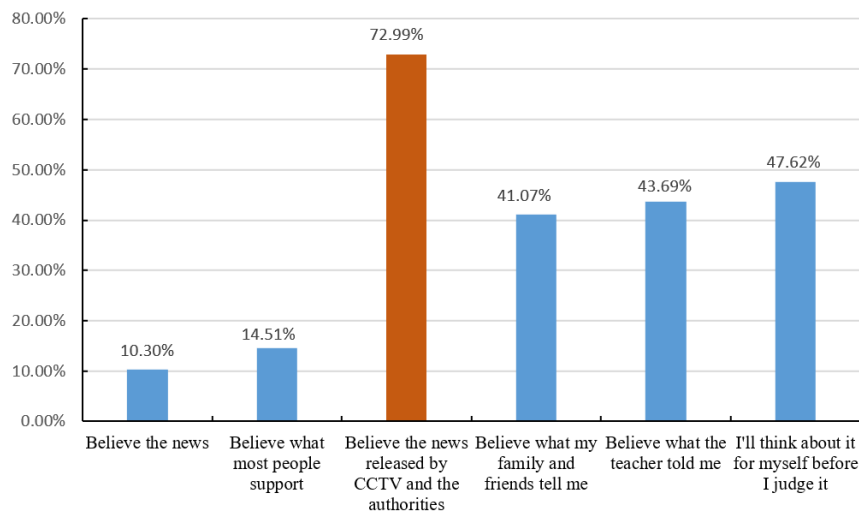
Trust in Sources of Information About the Pandemic

The questionnaire results showed that the most trusted source of information about the pandemic was the news released by China Central Television (CCTV) and the authorities (endorsed by 72.99% of the children), but only 47.62% claimed to

think about it before making a judgment about the information of pandemic (see Figure 3). Moreover, the percentage of children who think before making a judgement does not increase significantly with age ($\phi = 0.070$), nor does trust in any of the specific sources of information (see Figure 4).

Figure 3

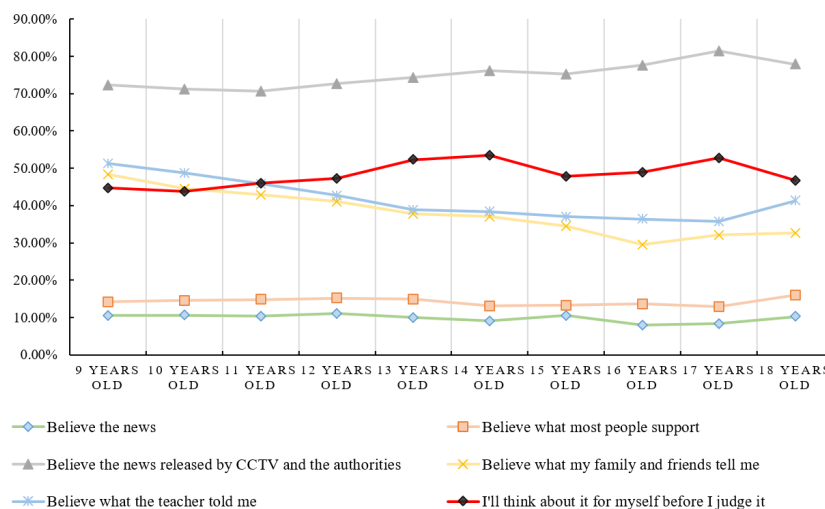
Trust in Sources of Information About the Pandemic



Note. Because respondents could endorse more than one option, the sum of the percentages exceeds 100%.

Figure 4

Changes in Trust in Various Sources of Information About the Pandemic as a Function of Age



Attitudes Toward Morally Relevant Behavior in Response to the Pandemic

Responding to the question about whether they endorsed the policy of home isolation (HI) during the pandemic, 88.19% of children claimed that they endorsed it because it was necessary to protect the life and health of other people, and 70.94% claimed that they endorsed it because it is necessary to follow the rules and regulations of the government; only 4.56% of the children rejected the policy because “it interfered with my normal life,” but 29.53% stated that the policy should be voluntary. In general, the children showed a positive attitude toward the government’s policy of home isolation during the pandemic, reflecting very good awareness of and affirmation of the social norm that the common good is more important than their own life convenience (see Figure 5). The great majority of the children were strongly against embezzling goods from the government intended for the public, and 27.65% of them went even further, asserting that it is a moral obligation to donate goods to others that you don’t need for yourself; only 2.5% found the embezzlement acceptable (see Figure 6).

Figure 5

Attitudes Toward Home Isolation (HI) Policy

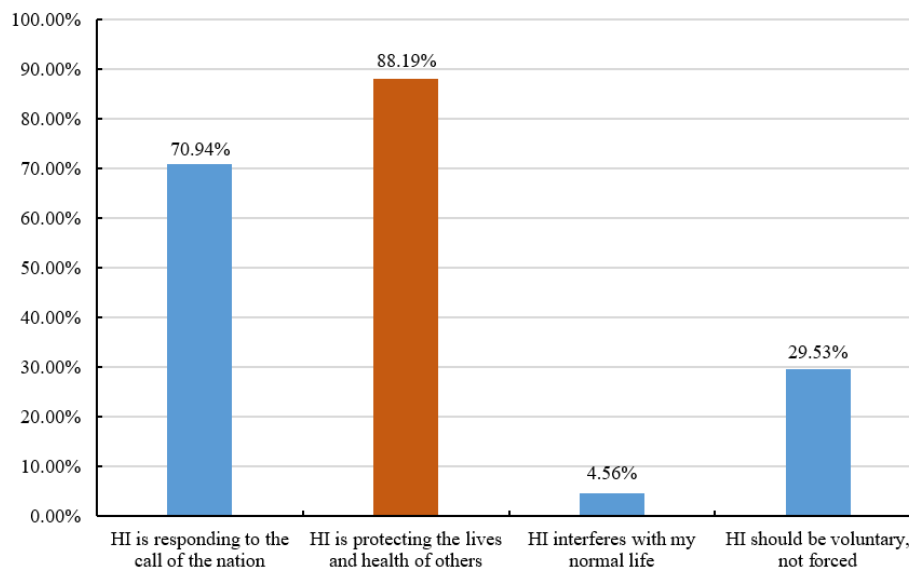
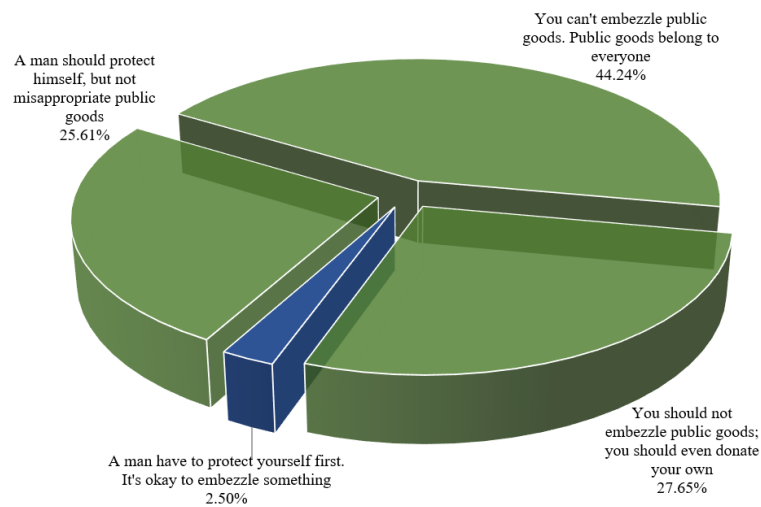


Figure 6

Attitudes Toward Diversion of Goods Intended for the Public



Children's Moral Judgements Demonstrate the Distinction Between Deontology and Consequentialism

The consequentialists such as John Stuart Mill, typically hold that happiness is the only purpose worthy of desire. If other things are also worthy of desire, it is only because they can be used as a means to achieve happiness (Mill, 1861/2019). In other words, the quality of something should be judged according to its contribution to happiness. Although the deontologists like Kant's contention that moral principle and absolute law come from purely practical reason, ". . . act[ing] only according to the criterion that you want it to become a universal law at the same time" (Kant, 1785/2013, p. 428)—happiness and the result of action are not included in the agent's concerns.

In our survey, 68.46% of respondents agreed with the statement "Chinese government donated medical materials to other countries" because "there is no benefit for us if the pandemic is not under control globally"; these responses illustrate the perspective of consequentialism. On the other hand, 66.13% agreed with the statement that "they need help and we should not leave them to die"; this response illustrates the perspective of deontology (see Figure 7). In a similar vein, 93.57% of respondents claimed that they were against killing wild animals, including bats, for food, but 44.74 % claimed that "the virus carried by bats is harmful to human beings"; these

responses illustrate consequentialism. However, another 42.36% of them claimed that it is “cruel to kill other creatures,” which obviously illustrates deontology (see Figure 8).

Figure 7

Reasons for Helping Other Countries With the Pandemic

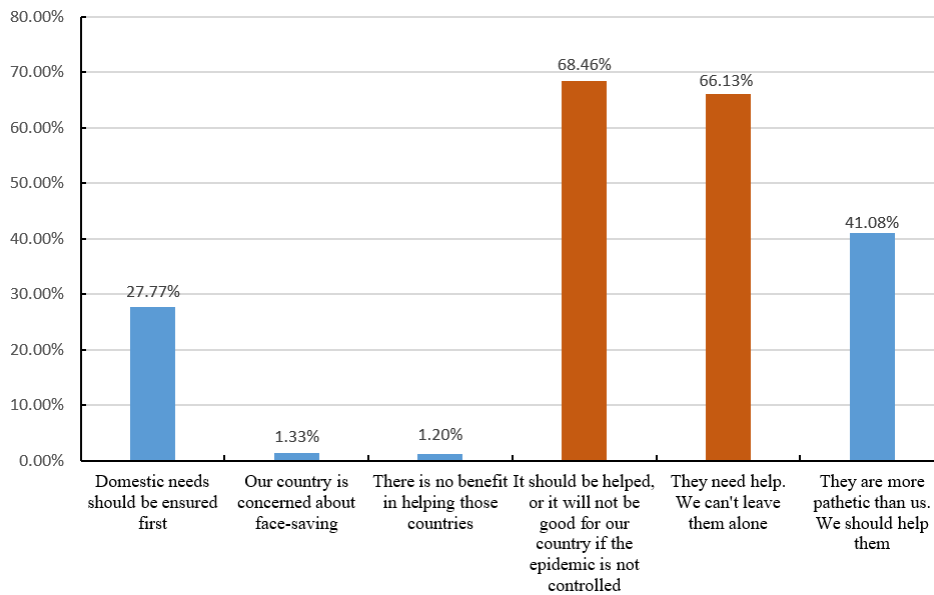
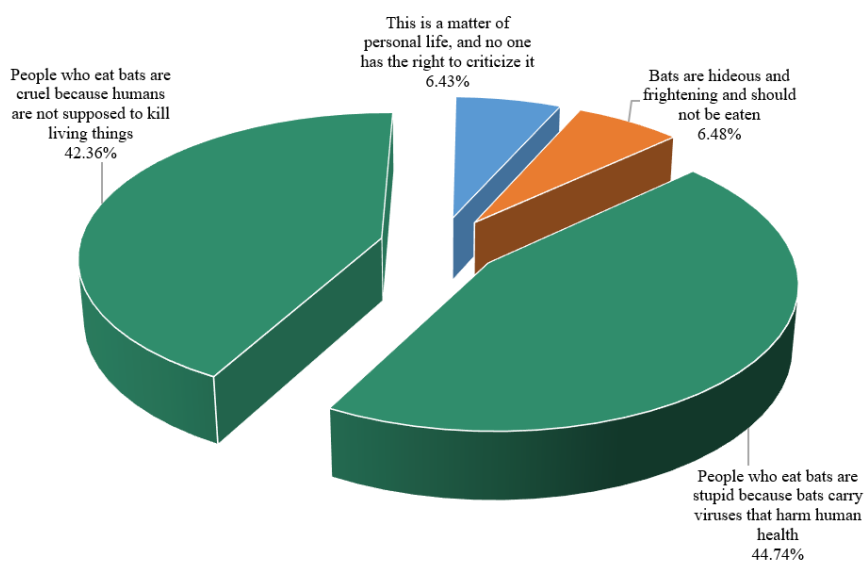


Figure 8

Attitudes Toward Killing Wild Animals for Food



Valuation of Unity and Caring Has Been Strengthened

It is evident from our data that Covid-19 has raised the value and importance that residents of the Chinese mainland place on health. After the pandemic, 83.25% of respondents listed good health as their most important value, followed by unity with and caring about others (see Figure 9). In contrast to good health, which is of interest to individuals perse, unity and caring help the community of humans. In fact, the notions such as “As we unite as one, we can overcome difficulties” and “Mankind is a community and we need to help each other overcome difficulties” were the two most frequently endorsed items in the questionnaire (see Figure 10). In a crisis situation, people are desperate for help and caring, and they seek to overcome their difficulties through unity and cooperation with others. The COVID-19 crisis obviously highlights the strong value that the children placed on unity and caring.

Figure 9

Percentages of Children Endorsing Importance of Various Values During the Pandemic

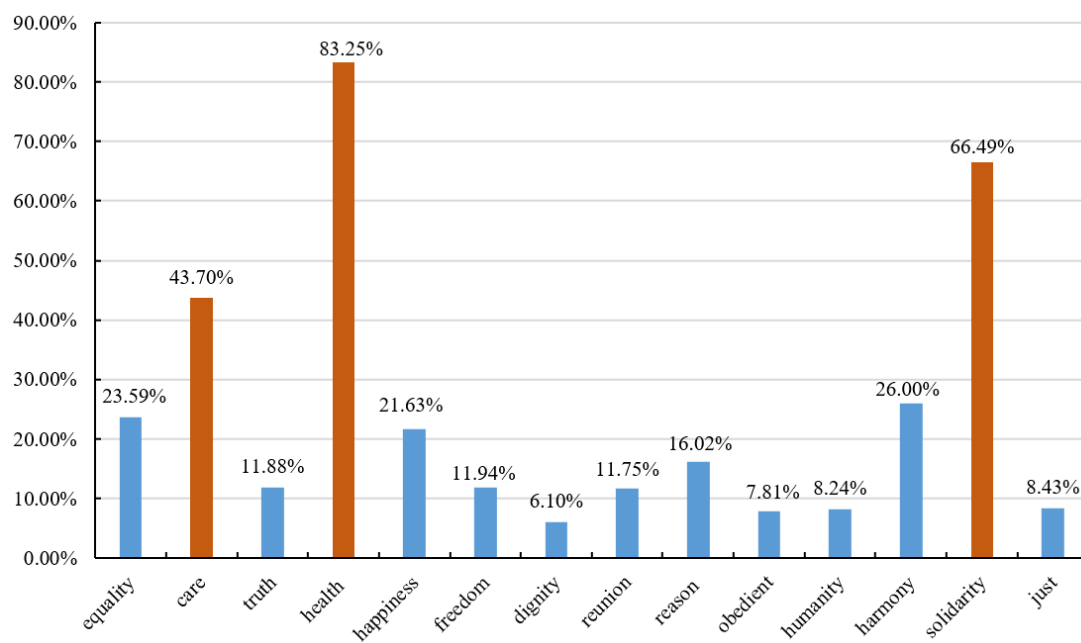
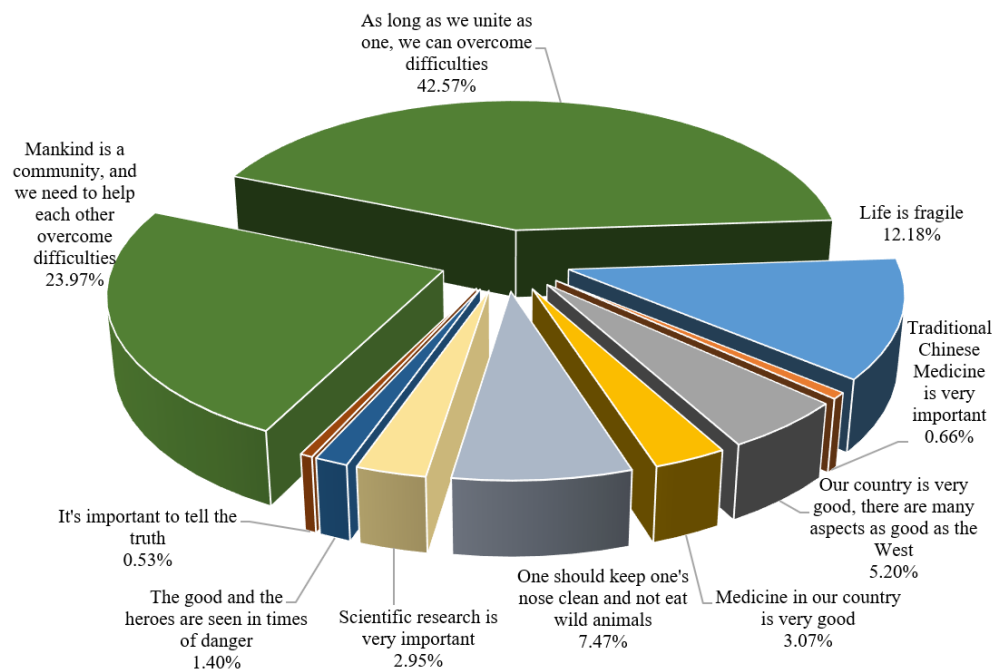


Figure 10

Percentages of Children's Thoughts and Feeling During the Pandemic



DISCUSSION

Weakening of the Ripple Effect Over Time

As predicted by the ripple effect model, children from Hubei Province, which had the greatest virus spread in mainland China, showed more negative emotion and associated behavior abnormalities during the pandemic than children from Jiangsu province, which had the lowest spread. The effect size of the difference was not as large as predicted, which may be partly due to the duration of the pandemic, which was not taken into account in the study. Caplan's (1964) research on crisis psychology shows that although people intended to maintain a stable emotional state during the pandemic, the crisis in fact caused them to break down emotionally at first, but they gradually recovered. This finding suggests the differences in emotion and behavior between children in the two provinces in our sample lessened with time. The data were collected from September to October 2020, when COVID-19 was already under good control in China. By this time, China had seen life and the economy return to normal, and there were no new cases reported from Wuhan for over five months

(since March 18, 2020). Jie et al. (2003, p. 599) reported that people's emotional state began to recover five weeks after the onset of the pandemic. In short, the weakness of the ripple effect is likely attributable to the time at which the data were collected.

Good and Bad Sides of Self-Centeredness

A tendency toward the abandonment of egocentrism was more obvious during the ascendancy of the pandemic than before its onset. To abandon egocentrism in this context refers to whether people care more about others or the common good than themselves and trust authorities more than themselves in making determinations. In this study, the great majority of children chose to believe the information about the pandemic from official media. If people could not deal with the difficulties caused by the pandemic themselves, they sought help from others and relied on authorities to guide them. Individuals may have received encouragement from others, social media, and the central government. The unified nature of the nation's response also gave them more confidence in China's ability to overcome the difficulties. These responses reflect the upside of reduced self-centeredness. On the downside, people may suffer the crisis of getting lost in themselves. Le Bon (1895/2015) suggested that when people in this condition join a group, the condition leads to increased emotionality, less objectivity, and a worsening of cognitive functioning. In other words, it is more easily for people in the group to give up thinking by themselves, and to get emotionally infected by others. This in turn can lead people to trust information from official media without thinking critically. This is extremely dangerous both for individual child, and thus the nation as a whole, because it may lead them to allow themselves to be controlled by the government.

Weakening of Values as the Crisis Ends

People always seek to build emotional connections with others, especially when they cannot move forward alone (Smith, 1759/2009). Psychological state of panic and anxiety can increase the importance of values such as unity and caring in children. These values may not be so salient in ordinary times. For example, when children are exposed to danger, the value of safety becomes salient to them. This proves that values are not inborn but constructed in social interaction. Momentous social events

and impressive personal experiences may change what people value and how much they value them, but we can't know at the time how long the effect will last.

Limitations of the Study Due to Chinese Culture

The participants in this study were from mainland China, which has a long-standing cultural tradition of Confucianism. The social construction of people's personality and other psychological characteristics is conditioned by their cultural experiences and environment. The Chinese are especially conservative, driven by emotions, and used to analyzing problems with holistic thinking. Unity and caring are valued in Chinese culture because the traditional Chinese live in a distinctive and family style social environment, named "Cha-xu" ("差序") by Xiaotong Fei (1948/2018), in which the individual is attached to a nexus of ethical norms. With the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, collectivism, which places a high value on unity and the common good, became the dominant ethos. The last 40 years have seen big changes featuring a more open society and the development of commercial markets. This represents a transformation from collectivism to individualism, in which people's behavior is determined by what benefits them personally rather than the common good (Fan, 2009; Sun, 2017). However, the traditional cultural norms and social ideology are still the foundation of moral judgments. Hence, what this survey provides is a historical and cultural perspective on China's emotional and moral response to the pandemic.

Need for Further Research

Although there has been a massive amount of research on children's post-disaster emotions, few studies have addressed whether there is a correlation between these and values. Based on the analysis of data from a large sample of Chinese children, we offer the new proposition that emotional reactions to the pandemic indeed have an impact on children's values. However, due to the limitations of our research methods, this conclusion needs to be further verified. First, as values were measured in the questionnaire on nominal variables rather than a continuous, our conclusions about the relationship between psychological traits and values are not as refined as they could be. Second, as the onset of COVID-19 was not predicted, there are no pre-test

data, and the validity of respondents' descriptions of their pandemic experiences depended on the accuracy of their memories. This likely means that their descriptions were more positive than their actual reactions. Fortunately, there was a significant difference (with an albeit small effect size) between children from Hubei Province and those from Jiangsu Province on our emotions and values, providing some support for the hypothesis.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis of data from a large sample of Chinese children 9 to 18 years old, conclusions were drawn as follows. First, besides health, unity and caring were listed as the most important values, far ahead of harmony, equality, and happiness. Second, children's emotional states during the pandemic have weakly followed a ripple effect model. Third, the children believe common good is more important than their own life convenience during the pandemic. Lastly, the children's moral judgments highlight the distinction between deontology and consequentialism.

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Chapter 2

Institutionalization and Resistance: A Qualitative Study of the Daily Life of Female Chinese Scholars During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The traditional life of Chinese scholars is characterized by spiritual abundance and inner peace amidst a simple material life, but today's scholars face challenges in their daily life under the “academic tournament” system. Based on the critical theory of daily life, the author describes the spatial and temporal structure of the daily life of female scholars, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, determined through a qualitative study of the daily life of six female professors in humanities and social sciences departments at a Chinese 211-project university. The professors describe the puritanical lifestyle of female scholars and reveal their own experiences of struggling between sinking and advancing, while the author explores the network of relationships between the genders and multiple relationships, and describes subjectivity under the institutional social structure. The author further proposes strategies for female scholars to apply in everyday life aimed at achieving liberation: resistance in collaboration, adoption of an integrated whole-person perspective, and creation of a community of meaning.

KEYWORDS: female scholar, daily life, subjectivity, relationship, critical theory

Chinese education has made great strides in promoting equal access to education for men and women, and the number of women entering higher education has skyrocketed. Data from China's Ministry of Education show that in 2019, there were 1,225,310 faculty members in China's general undergraduate institutions, of which 86,040 were female, accounting for 53.97% of the total number of full-time lecturers (Ministry of Education, 2020, as cited in Guan, 2020). The Global Gender Gap Report 2020 documents that China is close to the level of developed countries in terms of gender equality in educational achievement, yet there are still significant gender gaps in economic income and political empowerment (World Economic Forum, 2020). University teachers, especially those in key universities, such as those designated as World Class Universities, 985 universities or 211 project universities are seen as the intellectual elite and belong to the middle class based on social stratification. Among this elite, female university teachers are the main representatives of female scholars, and their living conditions can reflect the state of gender equality in intellectual and academic circles. This paper focuses on the daily life of female scholars in China during a segment of the COVID-19 pandemic, from January 2020 to January 2021, as revealed through the application of qualitative research methods to their experiences of survival. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the understanding of gender equality in higher education.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DAILY LIFE OF SCHOLARS

The daily life of scholars has distinctive professional characteristics. On the one hand, they have relative time autonomy, setting their own long-term goals and arranging their own daily affairs; on the other hand, their habits of regularity, cyclicality, and planning create a relatively fixed pattern of daily life. The most well-known of these patterns in history is the daily life of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. Modern scholars, with their three main tasks of teaching, research, and social service, have to some extent departed from the very strict self-disciplined lifestyle of Kant. However, Kant's life still embodies the most central elements of the modern humanities scholar's daily life—simplicity, a focus on work (teaching, thinking, and writing), maintaining contact with others, maintaining harmony with the self, and taking care of one's body. The daily life of current scholars still maintains a certain degree of distance from and transcends the temptation of the many material attractions

in the outside world, a certain calm detachment from the hustle and bustle of various fashionable trends, and even a gesture of voluntary exile and oblivion.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SCHOLAR'S DAILY LIFE

Since 2000, as the development of higher education in China has been driven by an increasingly strong motivation to catch up with the world's top universities, the quiet and autonomous life of academics has been disrupted by the ever more rigorous assessment standards for faculty performance in higher education. The worldwide competition between nations to become the most powerful in multiple domains continues to demand new knowledge, and higher education institutions are under constant pressure from the Ministry of Education in China to strengthen and raise the evaluation scores of the university faculty members' research enough to justify promotions and salary increases. This trend is known as the "academic tournament" system. It puts university teachers under the constant pressure of quantitative evaluation of their work and requires them to apply for research grants and publish their results in peer-reviewed journals. The higher the stature of the university, the greater the pressure. Knowledge of one's field, academic journal publications, disciplines, subjects, titles, and so forth, are all ranked by the evaluation system and given different scores and weights.

CHALLENGES FOR FEMALE UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

Although the gender pattern of Chinese families has undergone great changes and the status of men and women tends to be equal, the traditional pattern of "men heads the society and women head the family" still has great influence in China. Young female university teachers usually wait to have children until after they get their Associate Professor title. Also, women's commitment to their family reduces their motivation to pursue administrative promotions (Zhou, 2016). The male-dominated academic circles reduce the opportunities for female participation and promotion. In 2006, a survey of the presidents of 1,792 China's colleges and universities found that 95.5% of them were men and only 4.5% were women (Tao, 2016). The average age at promotion to Full Professor was 44.8 years for the female teachers and 40.3 years for the males (Yue, 2020). Thus, although more than half the

teaching personnel in colleges and universities are women, men are still at the center and occupy the great majority of high-level administrative positions in management and scientific research, while women are at the margins and tend to occupy lower-level positions. These results indicate significant gender segregation, especially in colleges and universities with a strong science and technology focus.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A university is an institutionalized site for learning. Foucault criticized schools for their persistent disciplining of students through spatial separation, hierarchical surveillance, normative rulings, inspections, and requirement of written reports (Foucault, 1975/1999, pp. 194–212). The personal life of the scholar has been inevitably permeated by the institutionalized features of school life, with an emphasis on instrumental rationality, compliance with rules, obedience to authority, and goal-orientation. Personal life is relatively uniform and little individualized.

CRITICISM OF THE DAILY LIFE OF SCHOLARS

Heidegger argues that daily life is a field of total alienation: “We read, see, and judge about literature and art as they [emphasis added] see and judge; likewise, we shrink back from the ‘great mass’ as they shrink back; we find ‘shocking’ what they [emphasis added] find shocking. The ‘they,’ which is nothing definite, and which all are, though not as the sum, prescribes the kind of Being of everydayness” (Heidegger, 1962/1967, p. 127/164). The common man is in a state of mediocre averaging: “The they [emphasis added] . . . is the ‘nobody’ [emphasis added] to whom every Dasein has already surrendered itself in Being-among-one-other [Untereinandersein]” (Heidegger, 1962/1967, pp. 128/165-164). Berger and Luckmann (2019) give the reality of everyday life a special supremacy over other realities. They argue that everyday life dominates one’s consciousness in the most comprehensive, most urgent, and most intense way, characterized by a focus on the here and now. It is impossible to ignore it: The reality of everyday life forces the individual to be fully engaged with it. Other types of reality exist only in enclaves of limited significance, fully wrapped up in the reality of everyday life, to which people return when necessary, as if from a long journey (Berger & Luckmann, 2019, pp. 25-26). Lefebvre (1971), a well-known

representative of the critical theory of everyday life, states that daily life cannot be regarded as a mere “non-philosophical” or “non-truth” existence; both philosophy alone and daily life alone have their limitations, the former is “truth without reality,” the latter is “reality without truth,” and only the combination of the two can offset their respective limitations. Therefore, a critical philosophy of everyday life in the modern world should be developed, “attempt a philosophical inventory and analysis of everyday life that will expose its ambiguities-its baseness and exuberance, its poverty and fruitfulness-and by these unorthodox means release the creative energies that are an integral part of it” (Lefebvre, 1971 pp. 13). The daily life of scholars is also at risk of alienation, due to the influence of technocracy and consumerism; the life of scholars is both repetitive and monotonous because of the need to handle daily chores and meet assessment requirements, yet it also opens up a wealth of opportunities.

METHODOLOGY

This study focused on scholars’ daily lifestyle during the worst stage of the COVID-19 pandemic (from January to April 2020) and reveals new information about the changes that occurred in this lifestyle during a period of stability in the pandemic (from April 2020 to the end of the year). Due to the research-oriented emphasis of the paper-evaluation system for inclusion in the Science Citation Index, scholars in traditional humanities and social science disciplines are at a disadvantage in their university’s evaluation system. They also feel more pressure to conform to China’s long-standing utilitarian academic tradition, which emphasizes science over the humanities. Female scholars in humanities and social science, therefore, are doubly disadvantaged, because of their discipline and their gender. The paper consists primarily of the results of qualitative research on female scholars in university humanities and social science departments, describing their vivid daily life stories and typical daily living patterns during the pandemic, while exposing the powerful conflicts in their daily life and exploring their path to self-liberation, breaking through gender stereotypes and achieving a well-rounded, holistic life.

The paper describes a case study of University A, a comprehensive university directly under the Ministry of Education. It is a 211 project university, a high-stature Chinese university (second tier) that has ranked about 50th of among universities for

many years. University A is located in central China, and its management level and development status are at the norm for high-stature Chinese universities. It has 1,797 full-time faculty members, more than half of whom are female, and 550 professors, 122 of whom are female (22.19%). National data from 2009 show that there was no significant difference between men and women in Chinese universities in the number having an intermediate title¹, with the largest gender gap being in Full Professor titles, of which women account for only 25.68%. University A is below the national average in terms of the percentage of women holding the title of full professor. Although like other universities, University A does not have a low percentage of female faculty members, men still dominate the positions of power in the academic and administrative sectors.

Six female professors from University A were selected for this study by both convenience and purposive sampling methods. Becoming a professor is the goal of every young university teacher; however, only a small number of excellent and lucky women can become professors. A study focusing on female professors can provide a perspective on the ecological environment of women's professional development in Chinese higher education as a whole. The criteria for selecting the participants for this study were (a) having a doctoral degree and (b) supervising doctoral dissertations (doctoral supervision responsibility is seen as an important indicator of professional development in Chinese higher education). Some studies reveal that female university teachers born in the 1940s and 1950s regard an academic career as “sacred labor,” a role in which they see themselves more as society builders than as women, and gender identity is completely ignored. Female teachers born in the 1960s and 1970s endure many conflicts and contradictions in forming their gender identity (Wang, 2011). The present study examined female Full Professors in humanities and social sciences at University A. They ranged in age from 40 to 55, and thus most were born in the late 1960s and 1970s. Their disciplines are education, economics, and literature, all relatively prominent at University A. I know all six professors and have interacted with them to a greater or lesser extent in my work. I interviewed each of them once or twice and kept in touch online to ask them some follow-up questions. I also work at a

¹ Generally speaking, the titles of teachers in Chinese universities are divided into four levels from low to high: Assistant Professor, Lecturer, Associate Professor, and Full Professor. Assistant Professor and Lecturer are intermediate titles, whereas Associate Professor and Full Professor are senior titles.

nearby university and know University A well enough to understand the context of their statements.

Table 1

Participant Profiles From the Interviews

Code	Relevant information
C	Born in 1975; specializes in education; named a professor in 2013; child is now a minor.
H	Born in 1968; specializes in literature theory; named a professor in 2009; child is now an adult.
S	Born in 1972; specializes in economics; named a professor in 2012; child is now an adult.
X	Born in 1969; specializes in education; named a professor in 2018; child is now a minor.
Y	Born in 1970; specializes in education; named a professor in 2009; child is now an adult.
Z	Born in 1970; specializes in education; named a professor in 2014; child is now an adult.

DAILY LIFE DURING THE PANDEMIC

With the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2019, the Chinese government was forced to adopt a city shutdown strategy and daily life was put on hold. Almost everything was temporarily halted except coping with the daily necessities of life. The year 2020, when the pandemic was most pronounced, can be divided into four periods: the initial period of Wuhan closure (late January–mid-February), the period of online classes (March–early April), the period when the ban was lifted (early April–late May), and the period of resumption of routine life (June).

THE FOUR STAGES OF THE PANDEMIC

The shutdown of Wuhan came in the earliest stage. The decision to seal the city was so sudden that the people of Wuhan were in a state of great panic due to the lack of supplies and information. They were forced to be confined to their homes, following the news of the progress of the pandemic online every day, hearing about the deaths of people around them, and panicking even when they pressed the elevator

button. Of the six professors interviewed, two (Professors X and Y) mentioned the lack of supplies. During these difficult times, Professor X relied on phone calls with a student every afternoon to get through her predicament, while Professor Y walked around her house every day.

There was no toilet paper and a shortage of everything. For more than 20 days, there were no eggs or meat. Worrying about what to eat every day. Lost more than 10 pounds in a few dozen days. I didn't dare to go downstairs.

It's too hard to fight all this at home alone, and you need to resort to the group for warmth. Call a student or a friend every day, call a PhD student after a master's degree, call a friend after a PhD student, not all at once, or there will be no phone calls to make the next day. (Professor X)

Although Professors H, S, and Z were also in Wuhan, they maintained their work habits and did not pay undue attention to the crisis. Professor C, who went to Kunming to reunite with her family for New Years, was forced to stay in Kunming. Although the risk of the infection in that area was low, she fell into a state of anxiety because she was not able to practice the work habits she had formed over the years and “could not even respond to a simple email.” The faculty work-information-exchange online group at University A suddenly went very quiet, with no messages for more than 10 days in a row. The various notifications for filing projects, filling out forms, and informing of university affairs and administrative requirements seemed to have come to a halt as well.

The second stage was online teaching. The Ministry of Education (2020, as cited in Guan, 2020) launched the “Study Must Not Stop” program, and classes became online in the primary and secondary schools as well as the universities. Normalization of the availability of living supplies and the start of online classes eased people's fears. Online classes brought some new experiences to teachers, and according to the narratives of five of the professors, their students were more active in discussions than they were in the live classes, because they did not experience the pressure and shyness of speaking in public that they endured during live classes. However, in the primary

and secondary schools, online classes did not go well. Professor C, whose son was in elementary school, was caught in the middle of parent-child conflicts over online classes, while Professor X strongly opposed the Ministry of Education's "school closure but learning continues" approach as well as the shift to online classes for elementary and middle school students.

In my opinion, how can I care about learning when I can't even care about my life? Life is more important than study. If we didn't have online classes, we would have our own arrangements to make food, play games and do experiments. Therefore, I don't care how much he can learn. After the online classes, my child's grades were awful, he failed many classes and his grades fell to the last few in the class. I was afraid that he wouldn't even be able to get into a high school.
(Professor X)

The third stage was lifting of the ban. The city of Wuhan was open again, but University A still required an access pass to enter the buildings. Faculty meetings, masters' enrollments, doctoral enrollments, and doctoral dissertation defenses all had to be conducted online. At the same time, a variety of cross-school and cross-region academic seminars sprang up, and because they were all conducted online, the convenience of participation was greatly enhanced and the audience was much larger. Due to the reduction of daily chores at University A, all six professors agreed that they were working more efficiently than usual.

In the fourth stage, routine life resumed. The gated barriers erected in various neighborhoods during the pandemic were finally removed. The gates of University A were open for its teachers, but still not for the rest of the population. At the end of June, online classes for all levels of students ended and schools entered the summer vacation phase. Everything returned to normal, except for people always wearing masks when going out. The gaps in information control and in clamping down on speech, which had opened up in response to people's outrage caused by the news blackout during the pandemic, were again closed. College and university faculty were notified that all papers about the pandemic had to be reviewed before they could be published. By this time, the social networks of the colleges and universities were

again flooded with information about inspections, evaluations, filling out of forms, and message flashing. Many of this information represented top-down requirements from the university.

INFLUENCE OF THE PANDEMIC ON DAILY LIFE

The pandemic pressed the pause button on scholars' daily life, causing them to reflect on social issues and the value of life. After the pandemic ended, Professor X and Y confessed, "I have to slow down the pace of my work" and "living is most important." Value was also found in activities on which the professors had previously been reluctant to spend time, for example, cooking food, beautifying the room, or even taking on household chores.

Overall, the pandemic has reduced the academic output of female researchers (Vincent-Lamarre et al., 2020). The qualitative study also revealed that satisfying the needs of their child had a greater impact on the research activities of the professor if the child was not yet an adult. The pandemic also changed the parent-child relationships. For adult children at home, the pandemic made these relationships more harmonious. As Professor S said, "I found out that my child has a lot of ideas due to the epidemic, and I didn't communicate with him in depth before."

The pandemic has changed work habits, making people more accustomed to working from home. Working from home eliminates travel time to the office and is compatible with exercising. The pandemic increased the faculty's appreciation of the advantages of online learning and online seminars. According to Professor H, online lectures and scholarly exchanges greatly reduced travel time, and as a result she attended more than eight online academic conferences in July and August. The pandemic brought the more active scholars closer to their professional community.

The pandemic affected the way students and faculty communicated with each other, both positively and negatively. Professor C shifted from individual face-to-face mentoring of graduate students to group mentoring in online meetings. The latter were more frequent, more reliable, and less likely to be affected by faculty members' personal chores. Professor H, on the other hand, was forced to change her habit of meeting with all graduate students for dinner every month. She "has not organized

such events for the past year,” so she has had less face-to-face communication with her students.

Nonetheless, the impact of the pandemic on the daily life of Chinese scholars has been either temporary or minimal, especially for those who had already been used to working from home before the outbreak of the pandemic or had adult children. The pandemic caused a temporary change in scholars’ habits of daily life and ways of working; it was just a passing episode in their daily life. After the pandemic subsided, powerful forces likely reintegrated those scholars who had been derailed by the pandemic back into their institution.

DISCUSSION OF FEMALE SCHOLARS’ DAILY LIFE

Some basic features of the daily life of female scholars are of a persistent nature. Most female scholars lead a simple life focused on their work. The interviews suggest that female scholars adopt a puritanical lifestyle characterized by strict self-discipline, struggles with striving and stagnating and lack of entertainment.

THE PURITANICAL LIFESTYLE

Whether working from home or at the office, female academics have a disciplined lifestyle. They place a high value on saving time, and they adopt relatively strict measures to control and plan their time. Apart from their teaching duties, they must work on some holidays, and their so-called “freedom” is the permission they are given to choose for themselves when to work overtime. As professor S said: “Every Saturday, I work at the office. Some of my colleagues have to rush home to write a project application, and their family does not understand why.” Even though they have become professors and PhD supervisors and the pressure of external evaluation is relatively low, practicing the puritanical lifestyle at work has become a habit. This lifestyle is in stark contrast with the modern indulgent lifestyle wrapped up in consumerism.

The professors need “large chunks of time to sit and think and read quietly” and “more time to think without being distracted.” In the time they have at their disposal, often on holidays, they devote the best part of the day—usually 3–4 hours in the

morning—to thinking and writing; after lunch, they often take a 1-2-hour nap and wake up to continue their unfinished writing from the morning. After dinner, they relax, exercise, take a walk, chat, watch TV, and such., and then they do some less mentally demanding work (reading, preparing a lesson, or instructing students). This lifestyle, in essence, is consistent with the Kantian lifestyle, where the day is strictly divided into three segments. Unlike Kant, who felt the dynamism of real life in casual conversation, Chinese female scholars acquire a sense of social reality and human connection primarily through their domestic and child-rearing responsibilities. Their consciousness is constantly moving between the conceptual world represented by book knowledge and the everyday reality of the here and now, and they can quickly sit down at the computer table to continue writing a paper after completing their daily chores or compose an article in their brain while cooking dinner. During the workday, they have to switch their attention between teaching, research, and social service. They spend time teaching and preparing lessons, as well as attending many faculty meetings and engaging in university governance, inspections, and form-filling tasks assigned by the university. All this leaves only a few half-days for reflection, so they often feel they have very little time for research. In addition, working for five consecutive days leaves just one day for household chores such as shopping, cleaning, and doing laundry. Female professors with young children also have to help them with their homework.

When our participants were asked how female scholars can achieve career development in male-dominated academic circles, most replied that they rely mainly on their own continuous effort. Professors all noted that "The academic circle is relatively fair, as long as they can produce results, people still recognize them." In this struggle, especially during the difficult ages 30–45 when they work and raise young children at the same time, they must sacrifice personal hobbies and recreation, shop less, wear no makeup, travel less, rarely enjoy life, and even overstretch the body, simply to ensure that they maximize their time for work. Professor S talked about "My life [as] a two-point line, from home to school, with occasional trips to the governmental sector to do research." Professors C, X, and Y talked about exercising mainly by walking in the neighborhood or in the park. None of them go to the gym because it takes up too much time. They spend very little time on social media during the day. Because of these struggles, they also need to sacrifice time with their children,

and all six of them agreed that they regret not being able to devote more time to their child's development, despite their efforts to balance family and work.

SPACE AND BODY IMAGE IN DAILY LIFE

The word “space” has a distinct meaning in feminism, defined as the ideal of “having a room of one’s own” by Woolf. This ideal has been realized by these six female professors. Professor S chose to work in the office: “I can’t concentrate at home, and though the office is often distracting during the day, I can still concentrate on my work at night.” Professor C has gone through the process of moving her workplace from the office to the home: “I always walk quickly, nearly run when I work at school and drink as little water as possible. I am more relaxed at home, and I can take a nap and have time to exercise.” Female academics who choose to work primarily in offices are more inclined to consciously separate or even create a sharp distinction between their professional and family lives. This professional-family dichotomy facilitates an overall increase in productivity, but further reduces the pleasure of life and increases alienation from their real self. The rift between professional and personal life is “an artificial boundary that separates us from ourselves and from knowledge of self and the world” (Miller, 1990, p. 172). In a sense, the home is a barrier to institutionalized power, protecting itself from this power. “It is particularly pleasant to enjoy working- alone time in my study, which is also my bedroom with my bookshelves, closet and bed” (Professor H). Women can think in this relatively relaxed setting at home, and it is a way for them to successfully return to themselves.

A woman’s body and image are under the gaze of a society dominated by male culture. In a consumer society, the standard of body aesthetics has been dominated by the various media such as advertising, magazines, talent shows, and television dramas. While the social media and consumer culture cause women to become dissatisfied with their body, they have a cure for this “imperfection”: a wide range of body-related treatments or beauty products, including cosmetic surgery (Wen, 2010). However, the puritanical lifestyle of female academics is quite different. Female scholars are less concerned with brands, rarely shop and wear makeup, and instead keep their faces unadorned. Beauty salons and other standard features of modern life seem to be of no

interest to them. They only pay attention to their clothes and makeup when they need to project their professional image. They have no desire for good food; instead, most female scholars are more vigilant about weight gain and moderating their diet, priorities that fit in with their culture of self-discipline.

SINKING INTO THE ROUTINE OF DAILY LIFE

The lifestyle of female scholars is shaped by a long and institutionalized school life. When they were students in school, they were excellent, diligent, and hardworking; when they entered the workplace, they were dedicated, obedient, responsible, and eager to be recognized as teachers. However, this institutionalized life brings on depression and a loss of self-reflection.

When a woman enters the academic field, she actually uses her vivid and round[ed] life as a mortgage and a price. She will forget the bright scenery outside the window, and she needs to imprison herself in the chamber, in the endless up and down roll, suffering the kind of scorching that she is bound to experience in the spiritual field (Wang, 2011).

Academic women are concerned primarily with professional development and have no time or opportunity to focus on the public sphere and their real self; they are caught in their own war against themselves, seeking perfection but also suffering from self-doubt and a fear of “sinking.” This is not a real sinking or degradation, but a weakness of will, a lack of self-confidence, or frustration. They fear that they may lose strict self-control over their own life, abandon their dedication to living up to professional ideals, stop thinking deeply, and bring their professional development to a standstill; they become ordinary people, wives, and mothers, lost in the world, falling into the swamp of a trivial and repetitive daily routine.

A few of the professors are very pessimistic and disappointed with the whole education system. When she was young, Professor X was committed to her academic aspirations, had two post-doctoral research appointments, and used to sit in on the philosophy class at another renowned university nearby for almost 10 years, entirely

because of her interest in the subject matter. For some reason, however, she is now somewhat disillusioned.

The academic plutocracy, the academic jungle, and the connections in academic circles are not academic freedom in the full sense of the word. What status do we have? We are the front-line workers. Who listens to what you say? Who will read what you write? What is the meaning and value of what you do? I'm a degenerate, I'm not motivated anymore. In the past, the motivation of work was that I had to get the Professor title, regardless of whether the system was reasonable or not, and I had to make it desperately. After that, what should support our professional development is the real love for research. But the evaluation system is so bad that I don't want to do it anymore. I publish fewer articles now, and I don't want to compete with young people for resources. If there is no originality, if there is no value, do the results make sense? . . . The peak of my originality has passed, and now I have no passion or motivation. I have no environment to stimulate my thinking, no academic masters around me, and the academic resources to feed my thinking have also dried up.
(Professor X)

However, most academics remain focused on professional advancement. In order to resist the pressure of sinking, female scholars struggle with their environment and themselves. Professor C, who put work above family before the pandemic, now takes a different tack. She began to stray from the university scene and return more to her old way of life. She discovered the beauty of poetry while sipping tea, decorated her room, and tended to her flowers. Changes in lifestyle and work habits allow scholars to establish some kind of connection with social reality beyond the pages of books, a connection that gives them a sense of reality and an immediate and visible sense of accomplishment. At the same time, however, Professor C has been careful not to take up too much time with daily chores and to avoid getting caught up in the minutiae of life.

DAILY LIFE IN MULTIPLE RELATIONSHIPS

The daily life and work of female scholars are in constant conflict. The conflict between family and work is the main problem, and the secondary problem is the conflict between women and men. The conflict between family and work is caused mainly by the rigid division of social roles. In reality, solving family problems requires the sharing of responsibilities between husband and wife and the construction of a strong family social-support system. The interviews revealed that five of the six female scholars had availed themselves of long-term help (for 3–15 years) from their parents or sisters for the completion of household chores; hiring a nanny in the market was almost always the last resort. Besides, they all chose to have only one child. In the workplace, gender conflicts persist. Most female scholars believe that University A still practices gender discrimination in the evaluation of titles, projects, and awards. “It is impossible for us to go drinking, play mahjong, basketball or other kinds of ball games with leaders,” said Professor S. “Men socialize differently, and it’s impossible for us to fit in,” complained Professor Y. The masculine nature of academic work forces women toward self-alienation (Miller, 1983). Chinese female scholars have to resort to a de-gendered consciousness and behavior to develop themselves. They must gain recognition by pursuing a gender-neutral image, believing that “there is no difference between women and men, and that female scholars can do as well as male scholars” and downplaying gender consciousness. Under the pressure of such de-gendering, individual female scholars have further internalized the stereotypes that men and mainstream society have about female scholars, believing that “women are strong in execution, but not as good as men in academic innovation and originality. As a PhD supervisor myself, I also prefer to recruit male PhDs” (Professor S). As a result, female academics are likely to become unconscious reproducers of unequal social gender structures.

More resistance comes in restoring interpersonal connections. The research evaluation system makes teachers emphasize research over teaching, yet for teachers, especially female teachers, harmonious interpersonal relationships are important for alleviating their stress. Partnerships with spouses, collaborative parenting and fulfilling family responsibilities, maintaining good parent-child relationships, being there for their children’s growth and becoming their friend, maintaining good

teacher-student relationships while guiding and growing with one's students, are all important in the daily life of female scholars. In addition, participation in professional groups and research synergy with colleagues prevent inertia and stagnation. Professor C, H and S, are affiliated with a professional community, while the other female scholars work more independently and in solitude.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND SELF-REFLECTION IN DAILY LIFE

The social structure, consisting of social activities and social relations, explains how citizens actually live as such. Its most important components are status, roles, groups, and institutions. The education system and the university, both of which are embodied in the social structure, provide the established institutional environment for the survival and development of each scholar. This environment is difficult to change and shake by the power of individuals alone. The institutionalization of higher education, ideological control, and rigidity of evaluation make this structure increasingly unfriendly to a scholar's autonomy. Hidden discrimination, social isolation, and stereotyping make the evolution of female scholars difficult.

Some studies have shown that each female teacher has her own fragmented coping strategies for loosening and reversing structural social, economic, and gender forces (Ding, 2014). For Chinese female scholars, self-reflection manifests mainly as self-perception, that is, not measuring the value of one's work by extrinsic criteria (e.g., honors or titles). Their work is driven primarily by an intrinsic achievement motive, "doing your own thing." They do not want to be the "big fish" in their own profession but are driven by their inner sense of responsibility and mission to keep striving. Professor S said that "The sense of responsibility to investigate and solve the problems in the economic and social development of China and the sense of reverence for the profession" are the underlying motivations that inspire her to keep devoting herself to her profession. Most of the six professors consider themselves to be scholars, with academic research as their vocation and use the ideal of "the scholar" to redefine themselves within the institutionalized structure and to dissolve the anonymity of women in the system.

Do you consider yourself a scholar? (interviewer)

I didn't think so before, but now I consider myself a scholar. A scholar is different from a college teacher, who is a professional. A scholar should have an independent mind, an internal drive to research freely, and be someone who enjoys the joy of research. (Professor S)

I consider myself a scholar. Scholars are different from experts. The latter has a lot of experience, while a scholar has to have systematic knowledge. (Professor Y)

I have secretly made up my mind to become a scholar in these years. Not to focus on the external environment, not to compete for honors, but to focus more on teaching and professional development. (Professor C)

At a deeper level, the conflict between family and work reflects the crisis that women encounter in dealing with the dilemma of self and others, body and mind, material and spiritual. It pushes women to criticize the simple labeling of “independent woman” and “good wife and mother,” and to reflect on “who am I?,” “what can I do?” and “what should I do?” Female scholars have to reflect on these questions, reshape the perception of themselves and their ideals, and rise up in unfavorable situations to achieve self-development. Female scholars must seek a middle ground between two contradictory goals and find a way out at the crossroad between them: intimacy and distance, rationality and emotion, individual and community interests, external institutions and spiritual growth. If, through sustained reflection and struggle, a balance can be struck between these contradictory goals; and alienation, bitterness, and the experience of sinking can be overcome: women can attain a more unique and powerful experience of self.

DAILY LIFE STRATEGIES TOWARD LIBERATION

It is clear from this study that the growth of female scholars requires both conformity to institutions and de-institutionalization, freeing themselves from the shackles of the objectification of women. The unexpected pandemic brought about a disruption of institutionalized life, allowing individuals to reflect on this

institutionalized life and offering the possibility of stepping away from the overwhelming power of the forces controlling it.

RESISTANCE THROUGH COOPERATION

After all, female scholars are not male scholars, and to require female scholars to be masculine creates a distraction and alienation from their own personal life. Further, if female scholars internalize male-dominated thinking, they further deprive themselves and their female students of development opportunities. Therefore, female scholars must strengthen their gender awareness, be wary of gender hegemony and gender violence, resist the false belief expressed by quite a few men that “Women don't achieve what men do, mainly because they do not work hard enough themselves.” They must enhance their critical thinking about society and culture, abandon the masculine view that objectifies women, and come to have a voice. But on the other hand, women need to work with the current system, not against it, in order to achieve further development.

AN INTERGRATED, WHOLE-PERSON PERSPECTIVE

Reconstructing a balanced, de-institutionalized life with an integrated, holistic perspective is an important way to achieve female emancipation. The de-institutionalized life of female scholars requires the support of relatively autonomous work schedules, space, and interpersonal relationships; it manifests in the balancing of multiple pairs of pursuits: daily life and spiritual freedom, professional development and family harmony, personal development and professional community, research and teaching.

Personal breakthroughs happen in women's daily life, repeatedly, and without the fervor generated by social support; little by little, women rip apart the structural barriers to a satisfying daily life. The perspective of the whole person should permeate the family life and professional life of women: The female scholar does not see students as machines for publishing papers, but sees their development in terms of lifelong achievements and happiness; she does not believe that the value of a person depends only on the social wealth that person creates, but she firmly believes in the

value of morality and dignity. Female scholars must look inward to seek their true self and live their life in a way that promotes inner wholeness.

CREATING MEANINGFUL COMMUNITIES

The efforts of individuals to construct a de-institutionalized life are still easily frustrated. Therefore, attaining such a life requires institutional support. It is still the ideal of scholars to practice education in a way that aligns with the concept of the modern university and to establish an educational system that promotes academic freedom and democratic governance. Along with the institutional change there should be cultural change, specifically, transformation of the culture of individualism and factionalism currently prevailing in universities into a culture of cooperation and symbiosis. The way female scholars can do this is to establish multiple meaningful communities among themselves, deepen the understanding of their own identities, and strengthen their professional ties.

In due course, female scholars should start to participate in public life. The scholar's family can be a force for her liberation; even though the fact that family life is usually the main social dynamic within a family limits the attention female scholars can pay to the broader social reality and restricts their opportunities for reflection. Disconnection from the public sphere can cause the female scholar to withdraw into herself and take away her appreciation of the meaningfulness of her research. In reality, female scholars should be highly involved in the development of the academic community. The experience of sharing the teamwork between female scholars and their male colleagues, and collaborative research with other schools are important. Most importantly, female scholars' team-leadership skills are vital to their academic influence and the sustainability of their professional community.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, this study confirms the conclusion of previous researchers, namely, that female scholars can gradually become important players in the social structure of their university only when they have available to them their own time, space, voice, relationships, and community collaborations. Undoubtedly, the few women who have struggled to become outstanding scholars can serve as role models for young female

teachers and are important inspirations for optimizing gender relations and improving higher education governance. Although this study has methodological limitations, it nevertheless offers some insights into the changing thinking and behavior of a small number of female academics at one specific point in time—the early stages of a pandemic. In this respect it makes a small but important contribution to recognition of the need for further research on the circumstances of female scholars in China and other countries.

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Chapter 3

Family–School Partnership as an Indispensable Avenue for Moral Education Stressing Pandemic Prevention and Control: A Case Study From Beijing, China

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ABSTRACT

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, schools in the Chinese mainland delayed opening until June, 2020. By describing a case study in Beijing, the authors explore how control of the pandemic has been affected by moral education delivered through family–school partnerships when students are taking their classes online at home. Following China's reforms and opening up in the 1990s, *deyu*, an educational domain in China, has addressed broad subjects such as character education, citizenship education, and mental health education using various formal and informal educational vehicles. Through analyzing data from 17 secondary schools and 27 primary schools in Beijing, the authors found that during the COVID-19 pandemic, humanistic and life-centered themes dominated the content of *deyu*. Social norms such as obeying regulations on pandemic control, showing empathy for fellow citizens, and caring for family members and peers were found to be strengthened through online activities in which families were included. The authors suggest that family–school partnerships in which all participants share responsibility and act in a unified way somehow promote pandemic control. However, degree of family participation in the partnerships need further research.

KEYWORDS: moral education, *deyu* in the Chinese mainland, family–school partnership, education during the pandemic

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

In February 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic began to pose challenges for school educators worldwide. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, schools in the Chinese mainland delayed opening for six months while classes were conducted online. Because students were studying at home, participation by parents in family–school partnerships was required for the online moral education (Pei et al., 2020; Wu, 2020; Zhu & Wang, 2020).

Deyu, the name of an educational domain in China, is usually translated into English simply as “moral education,” as it derives from two words: *de* meaning “morality” and *yu* meaning “education” (Li et al., 2004). Since China’s reforms and opening-up in the 1990s, the Ministry of Education has broadened the meaning of *deyu*, combining moral education and ideological education to incorporate themes such as citizenship education, character education, and mental health education (Li et al., 2004; Feng, 2018, pp. 174–178). The purpose of these inclusions was to cultivate the development of citizens suited for a socialist society with Chinese characteristics (Feng, 2018, pp. 174–178). In this study, we used a variety of formal and informal methods to examine the conduct of *deyu* in Beijing at the same time attempts were being made to control the Covid-19 pandemic.

When *deyu* was expanded in the 1990s, Chinese educators began discussing the importance of family participation in moral education, as described in the manual *Instructions on Strengthening Moral Education in Primary and Secondary Schools*, published by the State Education Commission (1990). In 2017, the Ministry of Education of the Chinese mainland, in its *Guide to Moral Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools*, proposed that in conducting *deyu*, schools should “try to have families and communities on board” and “strengthen guidance for family education” (Ministry of Education, 2017). The forms of family–school partnership mentioned in the existing Chinese literature can be divided into three categories: school–family communication, school guidance of family education, and parental participation (Gong, 2018; Wu, 2018). Since smartphones became prevalent in the Chinese mainland, online vehicles for family–school partnerships have become increasingly popular, and many classes have logged onto WeChat discussion groups and other online platforms to access more flexible forms of family–school communication

(Shen, 2020). These venues provide the partners with fundamental tools and skills particularly useful for controlling the pandemic.

Many scholars have discussed the significance and mechanisms of family–school partnerships in both theoretical and empirical terms. In the philosophy of education domain of caring ethics, Nel Noddings (1992) has proposed a new kind of interpersonal relationship that she calls the “caring relationship”; drawing upon philosophical reflections on feminism, she highlights the role of the family in moral education, noting that interpersonal communication in the provision of care provides ideal opportunities for moral behavior and moral learning in everyday life. Caring ethics has been widely cited in Chinese literature on family–school partnership as providing theory-based evidence for the importance of collaboration between schools and families in moral education.

In educational sociology, research based on social capital theory has found that when parents engage with their child’s school and create social networks used as information channels, collective social capital was enhanced and a normative environment was created for students in which social norms, such as learning norms and caring norms, were strengthened (Coleman, 1998; Brown, 1998). Systems-ecological theory emphasizes the function of family–school partnerships and explicates the reciprocal influences of family and school systems on children’s development (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). Epstein (2010) developed a framework to interpret the mechanism of family–school partnerships and their effects on students. The framework is based on the premise that only when (a) school, community, and family have overlapping spheres of influence with students at the center of the partnership, and (b) high-quality interactions among school, community, and family consistently provide support and care for students, do students receive common messages and develop a positive attitude towards school, learning, and participation in family and community activities (Epstein, 2010).

An increasing number of empirical studies have been reported on the consequences of family–school partnerships. For instance, meta-analyses suggest that family–school cooperation has had a positive impact on student’s academic achievement (Choi et al., 2015; Li & Lerner, 2011; Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014), mental health (Li & Lerner, 2011; Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014), and emotional and

social development (Thijs & Eilbracht, 2012). Results from quantitative research based in the Chinese mainland provide evidence that parent–teacher partnerships are related to students' academic performance, career planning, personal development, and social development (Deng et al., 2018). Some case studies of online family–school partnerships suggest that online information exchanges between teachers and parents are related primarily to students' academic performance, while lacking humanitarian concern for students' mental health and emotional experiences (Liang, 2019; Shen, 2020). Above all, there is still inadequate research focused on the role of family–school partnerships in moral education in the Chinese mainland. This has been especially true during the pandemic.

On the other hand, there has been much discussion in the Chinese educational literature on the responsibility of schools to provide moral education during the pandemic. The common conclusion is that schools need to pay more attention to the mental health, life experience, interpersonal communication, and emotional well-being of students at home, where the participation of parents and the cooperation of families in providing moral education are indispensable (Pei et al., 2020; Wu, 2020). Reflections by Chinese scholars during the pandemic of COVID-19 on the subject matter of moral education have brought to light certain themes and domains that may need more attention in the Chinese mainland, such as environmental literacy, a humanitarian spirit, honesty, international understanding, philanthropy, professionalism, and collective memory (Gao, 2020). Furthermore, the separation of students' learning space from teachers' teaching space while classes are being conducted online has provided valuable opportunities for the practice of life-centered education during the pandemic (Cui, 2020).

Based on this research, we decided to use a case study in Beijing to analyze how the content and structure of moral education in family–school partnerships have interacted with pandemic control efforts in Beijing, which have required students to study online at home.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Given that there are still limited data on moral education in the Chinese mainland and we wanted to answer exploratory questions in a real-life context (Babbie, 2014),

we chose the case study as the most appropriate research method. The case we chose involved moral education using family–school partnerships in Beijing schools during the Covid-19 pandemic. For convenience and feasibility, we selected 17 secondary schools and 27 elementary schools from all the districts and counties in the Beijing area as our sample.

DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS

Because of government policies aimed at controlling and preventing the spread of COVID-19, it was difficult for the researchers to enter the schools and conduct face-to-face interviews with teachers during the first half of 2020; thus, we chose text analysis as a makeshift method to collect and analyze the data. The information we collected on the conduct of moral education included notices, meeting agendas, event plans, reports, meeting minutes, and work journals created by the teachers during the pandemic, as well as selected texts related to our research question. Each school was an independent unit of analysis, such that a recurring coded item for a given school was counted only once.

Due to the wide usage of term *deyu* in the schools of the Chinese mainland, we referred to the Guide to Moral Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools (Ministry of Education, 2017) to design coding criteria expressed in localized terminology. This method gave us more valid descriptions of moral education practices in specific localities in the Chinese mainland. We adopted two levels of codes for the data analysis. For level one, we used codes from the *Guide*, but we modified their wording to better fit the content of the text segments we were coding, and we allowed ourselves the option of generating new codes; for level 2, we consolidated the level-one codes into five categories: mental health education, traditional virtue education, citizenship education, respect for life, and ecological education.

Table 1

Two Levels of Codes

Level-two Codes	Level-one Codes
1. Mental health education	interpersonal communication & emotional education; adaptation to learning and living under the pandemic
2. Traditional virtue education	caring for family members; love of home and nation; leading a well-paced life; maintaining self-discipline
3. Citizenship education	Obeying regulations for pandemic prevention as a social responsibility of citizens; maintaining pride in one's national identity; showing empathy for fellow citizens
4. Respect for life	respecting the life of oneself and others
5. Ecological education	reflecting on the relationship between human beings and nature

To assure the validity of our study, we employed multiple investigators to collect and interpret the data; to assure the reliability of the study, we conducted semi-structured interviews with four teachers and six parents to compare their understanding of family-school partnership with findings from the literature text as data in this study for triangulation. We chose head teachers as the interviewees, because in the Chinese mainland head teachers are primarily responsible for moral education in elementary schools and serve as a bridge for school–family partnerships in moral education. Parents' participation in the interviews was voluntary.

RESULTS

Information and Knowledge Spread Through Social Networks Among parents and Teachers

During the pandemic, the local government of Beijing required primary and secondary schools to fulfill their social responsibility in pandemic prevention and control; with the cooperation, support, and oversight of parents, the schools guided students in how to stay healthy mentally and physically at home. For example, parents needed to be aware of whether any students in their child's school had any

symptoms related to COVID-19; both teachers and parents needed to encourage students to do physical exercises at home.

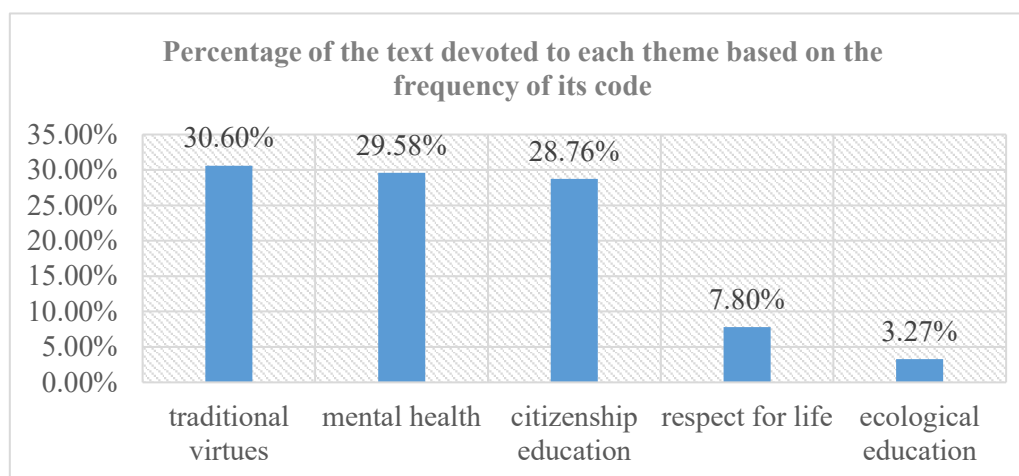
Furthermore, the sample schools have needed to concern themselves with what families were doing to educate themselves and their children during the pandemic. Some of the schools have offered parents various forms of professional support for this educational function through vehicles such as online meetings and lectures, brief letters, and handbooks, which imparted psychological and educational knowledge and reminded them to pay attention to how they were communicating with their children at home. In all the sample schools, teachers, especially head teachers, have been available for consultations with parents if they have any questions about family education or what to do if their children are encountering difficulties with home schooling.

Strengthening Social Norms Through Collaborative Activities

As an aid to the at-home learning required by the delays of in-person classes, the internet has not only allowed live broadcasting of lessons online, but also enabled teachers, parents, and students to communicate instantly with one another and undertake joint activities, even though they were physically separated; moreover, certain social norms relevant to coping with the pandemic have been strengthened through such communications and activities. Through text collection and analysis, researchers have found that these online moral education activities touch on multiple themes related to students' daily lives and home study during the pandemic.

Figure 1

Frequencies of Codes for Different Themes in the Collected Text



As shown Figure 1, the most frequently coded theme in the text was traditional virtues education; the schools have used family–school partnerships to conduct various collaborative activities aimed at teaching traditional virtues. Codes for mental health education also appear very frequently in the text; during the pandemic, the sample schools have attached great importance to mental health education delivered through family–school partnerships. Codes for citizenship education appeared third most frequently; in response to the need for pandemic control, the sample schools in Beijing have provided citizenship education through online lectures, seminars, and meetings attended by both students and parents. Regarding the themes of respect for life and ecological education, teachers have guided students to reflect on the relationship between human beings and nature as conditioned by the worldwide prevalence of COVID-19, and they have taught the students that human beings should respect the lives of others as well as their own life. Our findings on mental health education, traditional virtue education, and citizenship education are discussed in more details in the following sections.

Mental Health Education

The aim of mental health education through family–school partnerships during the pandemic is to guide students in adapting to the pandemic’s impact on their daily lives. For example, at-home learning has caused students to experience loneliness and

a sense of uncertainty about the future, leading in some cases to unhealthy moods such as anxiety and irritability. Head teachers in some of the sample schools have encouraged students to communicate with peers and teachers online at a set time each week. Moreover, the schools have encouraged teachers and students to offer emotional and spiritual support to students whose parents were volunteers or medical care workers during the pandemic, as the parents may not have had enough time to spend with their children and take care of them.

Traditional Virtue Education

According to traditional Chinese virtues, well self-cultured Chinese persons are expected to manifest a strong sense of responsibility for one's family and the society, to understand the unity of family and nation, and to lead a well-paced and balanced life informed by traditional Chinese culture (Ministry of Education, 2017). During the pandemic, teachers from the sample schools, with the support of the parents, have designed and conducted collaborative online activities. Scheduled for special days, these activities provide students with opportunities to care for family members as well as to empathize with their fellow citizens who are suffering from the pandemic. For example, during traditional festivals, schools designed online celebratory activities for students and their families, such as learning how to prepare traditional dishes from their parents at home and expressing good wishes to their parents and best friends. During the Qing Ming Festival, the Chinese tradition is for people to memorize the names of their family's ancestors; since the festival has continued to be held during the pandemic, the schools have designed activities for it in which students communicate with their peers online and memorize the names of health care workers who died from the pandemic.

There also have been collaborative online activities aimed at nurturing the students' spirituality by teaching them about traditional Chinese culture. Some of the sample schools have also invited parents to participate in online classes on the traditions inherited from the culture, such as classical Chinese poetry, Chinese calligraphy, tea culture, and traditional handicrafts.

Finally, the head teachers have encouraged students to live a well-planned life and develop self-discipline with the help of their parents at home. Two primary

schools in the sample have encouraged students to develop and share with classmates their own plans for learning and living at home, and the parents have supervised the execution of these plans as time allows.

Citizenship Education

Both the teachers and parents in the sample schools have pointed out to students that it is their social responsibility as citizens to obey the regulations on pandemic prevention, such as wearing a mask and maintaining social distance when outside the home.

Furthermore, teachers have encouraged parents who are health care workers or have volunteered in the community during the pandemic to share stories with students about how they assisted their fellow citizens who suffered from the pandemic, the purpose being to help students empathize with the sufferers. Some parents who happened to be health care workers volunteered to assist in the battle against the pandemic in Hubei province, the area most severely affected by the pandemic during the first half of 2020. After the parents completed this volunteer work, the head teachers invited them to share their experiences with the students. This story sharing was intended not only to help students appreciate their fellow citizens' commitment to pandemic prevention, but also to instill admiration of the perseverance and sense of responsibility they demonstrated through this high-risk, high-intensity work.

In most of the sample schools, the head teachers have led students and parents in discussions of current affairs or local news about the pandemic. These meetings or activities educate the students about the efficiency of pandemic control in the Chinese mainland, and they reinforce students' national identity by showing how the nation's strength has been mustered to effectively control the pandemic.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

How Moral Education During the Pandemic Required Life-Centered and Humanistic Content

At the same time China was reforming and opening-up to the outside world

through its development of a market economy, its education policies, including those for moral education, were also evolving. *Deyu* has gradually phased out the political platitudes and replaced them with more humanistic content (Du, 2007; Jiang, 2019). Inspired by Marxism's emphasis on knowledge from praxis and Dewey's theory of education, the Chinese scholar J. Lu (Lu & Wang, 2002) proposed the theory of "life-centered moral education," which suggests that moral education should be focused on students' real-life experiences as well as their immediate mental and physical conditions, and educators should guide students in pursuing a good, benevolent life. The wide prevalence and extensive discussions of Lu's theory in the 1990s led to a revision of *dēyu* in the Chinese mainland (Feng, 2018).

Our study's findings demonstrate that changes in the methods of instruction and quality of life during the pandemic have encouraged schools in Beijing to emphasize the life-centered and humanistic aspects of moral education. For example, the sample schools have stressed mental health education and the teaching of traditional virtues and have done so by incorporating various interesting collaborative activities in the courses; even citizenship education, which characterizes citizenship as a patriotic duty, has included stories about interactions between health care workers and patients during the pandemic to invoke students' empathy for their fellow citizens.

Family–School Partnerships Characterized by Shared Responsibility and Unity of Action Could Facilitate Pandemic Prevention and Control in Beijing

In this study, we found that families and schools, working together as partners, have shared social responsibility for pandemic control and reached consensus on a range of value standards for pandemic control and prevention. Through regular communication and collaborative activities, parents and head teachers have tried to construct a normative environment in which students coordinate their behavior with other students. Guided by their parents and teachers, these activities are designed to help students internalize social norms consistent with pandemic control.

Meanwhile, through the interviews we found that many parents who participated in the study appreciated the collaborative activities held by the schools that touch upon "sense of responsibility," "love," and "caring." For example, one parent

remarked, “I think the idea proposed by the homeroom teacher to ‘learn to cook a dish from parents’ is great; it helps the children learn to value the rewards of work and understand their responsibility toward the family” (S1P1). Parents can also identify with certain abstract educational concepts emphasized by the schools. One parent stated, “I very much agree with the humanist education promoted by the schools and am willing to work hard with the school” (S4P4).

Degree of Family Participation in the Partnerships Needs Further Research

While the pandemic has shifted the major learning space from school to home, as acknowledged by two of the teacher interviewees (S2T2, S4T4), the need for moral education during the pandemic prompted schools in Beijing to be more respectful of the critical role that families play in moral education. Thus, they have placed more emphasis on encouraging families to be creative in how they cooperate with others in morally educating students.

According to the texts we collected and analyzed for our study, the most common protocol followed by the family–school partnerships was as follows: First, the school administrators and teachers propose and decide which protocol(s) to implement; second, the families, in collaboration with the schools, implement the chosen protocols. In the interviews, parents equated “parents complementing schools” with “families cooperating with schools,” and the teachers equated “parents’ willingness to complement us” with “head teachers and parents maintaining a common goal for moral education through cooperation.”

Based on their study of the functioning of family–school partnerships in the USA, Epstein et al. (2010) proposed that schools should take into consideration a variety of factors in parental involvement, including the diversity of family backgrounds, whether parents can obtain accurate information about the schools, and how many members of the family could participate in the partnerships. Nevertheless, in the Chinese research, there is still limited data on the degree of participation of families in family–school partnerships. More research is needed to clarify this issue in the Chinese mainland.

As the city of Beijing is one of the largest metropolises in the Chinese mainland and its cultural and political center, it has abundant educational resources and capacities for innovation. The findings and implications of our research, based as it was on the experiences of primary and secondary schools in Beijing, do not necessarily represent the situations in other districts in China. The various issues concerning moral education and family–school partnerships in these other districts are fertile ground for additional researchers to explore.

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Chapter 4

How Do People Respond to COVID-19? A Set of Reflections

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this chapter is to provide an understanding of the daily micro-interactions that people have experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Drawing upon real-life stories and reflections collected from 24 people in Hong Kong during the early stages of the pandemic, the author explored people's daily interpersonal interactions, how they experienced COVID-19, and how they acted morally in the interest of the public good. She also explored daily experiences and reflections in response to the pandemic and the positive beliefs and values people expressed while fighting the crisis. She found that "face masks," "keeping social distance," "caring for people in need," and "worry, anxiety, and stress" were the four most common themes written about. Most entries expressed positive values such as caring, empathy, and responsibility. Despite the negative emotions and stress resulting from the pandemic, people still encouraged themselves to stay positive and act in the interest of people in need and other marginalized groups.

KEYWORDS: micro-interaction, real-life stories, dilemma, reflections

BACKGROUND

The preliminary idea for this chapter came about in the early weeks of the outbreak of coronavirus-2019 (COVID-19) disease in February 2020 and was followed by my unpublished social media post entitled *Sunshine in the Dark: Touching Moments During the COVID-19 Period* (Wong, 2020). In this short piece, accounts of moral behavior observed in daily life and seen on social media are shared with the readers to demonstrate positive human interactions in the community. This positive behavior was like sunshine illuminating the dark spaces of people's life, releasing them from their worries and relieving their stress at times when little was known about COVID-19. In these early stages of the pandemic, the COVID-19 vaccine had not yet been developed; wearing surgical masks, practicing good hygiene, and maintaining social distance were the only things people could do and knew to do in daily life. Below is the original piece of writing:

2019 ended with the start of COVID-19. The first diagnosed case in Hong Kong was found at the end of January 2020, and the virus really started spreading during the Lunar New Year celebrations. In such a tough moment, some people did not forget the needs of others.

We could see *care*, when a girl helped her younger sister wear her mask and wash her hands correctly.

We could see *love*, when a husband sent a few boxes of masks to his wife and son from overseas.

We could see *responsibility*, when a boss provided enough masks and supplements for his staff who regularly performed cleaning duties.

We could see *generosity*, when a passenger gave a mask to another passenger who did not have a mask to wear on the bus as all other people did.

We could see *integrity*, when a shop owner sold quality disinfection supplements at a reasonable price to elderly people.

We could see *kindness*, when a woman visited her neighbor who lived alone and sent greetings and essential hygiene products to him.

We could see *collaboration*, when a group of residents worked together with the staff to clean the corridors of their building.

We could see *compassion*, when a doctor nominated himself to join the front line and take care of infected patients.

We are proud of these caregivers who provide for people in need in these dark moments. I hope a new day will dawn soon and that the epidemic will be over. A sincere blessing to all. (Wong, 2020)

FACING THE GLOBAL COVID-19 CRISIS AND THE NEW NORMAL

A year has passed; it is February 2021. COVID-19 vaccines have been produced and people are being vaccinated. However, the pandemic is still not completely under control. According to the World Health Organization, as of February 9, 2021 the numbers of confirmed cases and deaths worldwide were 105.4 million and 2.3 million, respectively. At that time, the United States (871,365 cases), Brazil (328,652 cases), France (136,154 cases), the United Kingdom (133,747 cases), and Russia (116,842 cases) had the highest numbers of new cases (World Health Organization, 2021).

Confronted with this global crisis, people have employed various methods to simultaneously face the ensuing challenges and learn to live a new normal life. Confirmed cases of people who are currently infected or under examination require assistance from medical staff in order to receive the appropriate treatment. Everyone needs support to face the problems of daily living. For example, regarding public health everyone is very concerned about the latest details about the pandemic; they constantly take note of updates on health tips and guidance, the number of confirmed cases, and affected living areas and buildings. All relevant pandemic information can be obtained from the government website of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region,¹ as well as its daily press releases and live broadcasts. For information on the global situation, international organizations such as the World Health Organization² can provide detailed information. Medical experts and healthcare providers routinely release research findings and practical tips through the media. All these professionals help to protect everyone and prevent

¹ See <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/>

² See <https://www.who.int/>

the virus from spreading. Notably, as the pandemic has already lasted for a year, anxiety, worry, and stress seem to be unavoidable. Concerns about the negative effects of COVID-19 on mental and physical health are continually increasing (Lopes & Jaspal, 2020; Osofsky et al., 2020; Panchal et al., 2020). Psychologists, counsellors, and other professionals provide necessary services for people in need. Various governments worldwide have provided financial support to unemployed people, employees in affected businesses, and other disadvantaged groups. Online teaching and learning platforms have become the new normal at schools and universities (Amrane-Cooper, 2020; Chan, 2020; Cuevas, 2020; Xiong et al., 2020). In short, people have been learning to survive and manage their problems in every possible way during COVID-19.

THE UNKNOWN: DAILY EXPERIENCES AND MICRO-INTERACTIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF MORAL BEHAVIOR

The aforementioned references demonstrate some general observations across three domains. First, the COVID-19 pandemic is a global crisis. It brings to light not only health issues but also issues related to economics, social welfare, and education, and numerous others. Second, during the pandemic people have learned how to engage in a new type of normal life while facing daily problems as they wait for the pandemic to end. Third, experts and professionals in fields such as medicine, public health, economics, psychology, technology, and education have provided support and advice to help people solve or at least ease their problems.

From the macro perspective, all the latest news, reports, statistics, announcements, research, guidelines, and funding programs by governments, international organizations, and experts are undeniably helpful. These sources have provided the public with necessary information about the ongoing pandemic and the corresponding initiatives, which help them acquire the knowledge and skills required to survive during times of crisis. All such actions reflect the importance of professionals in the modern world; experts act in the interest of the public good by applying their knowledge, capabilities, and skills. Despite this, the micro-interactions that have occurred in communities during COVID-19 and their effects on people's daily life remain unknown. How do regular, everyday citizens feel, think, and react during the pandemic? How do regular people support others and act

together with them in the interest of the collective good? Accordingly, in the small-scale project described below I explored from the micro perspective what individuals experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic and how they coped with it by analyzing their real-life stories.

TWENTY-FOUR REAL-LIFE STORIES, DILEMMAS, AND REFLECTIONS

This project was not conducted exclusively for academic discussion purposes; instead, it was intended to shed light on the current social world through chronicling the micro-interactions of regular, everyday people. To initiate this project, invitations to participate were sent to members of the author's personal network in July 2020 after consideration of time and resource limitations. The invitations were intended to obtain the participants' consent and to obtain their help in extending the invitation to members of their own networks, creating a snowball effect. This snowball method is intended to help expand the network and recruit participants from different age demographics and varied backgrounds in the shortest possible time (Cohen & Arieli, 2011; Finkel & Sang, 2016).

Ultimately, 24 short written entries were collected from 13 female and 11 male participants. Seventeen participants were employed in various sectors such as education, travel, business, and nongovernmental organizations. Four participants were students enrolled in secondary (2) and tertiary education (2). The remaining three participants consisted of two homemakers and one unemployed person.

The 24 entries encompassing real-life stories, dilemmas, and reflections on COVID-19 were the primary data and were analyzed using NVivo 12 software for qualitative analysis and identification of common themes. In total, the entries were comprised of 7,614 words, including seven entries in Chinese totaling 2,873 words and 17 entries in English totaling 4,741 words. The length of the entries ranged from 44 to 648 words.

Sixteen of the 24 entries (67%) involved personal reflections on life during COVID-19 and 10 (42%) involved real-life dilemmas. In addition, six (25%) provided general observations about daily life during COVID-19, whereas five (21%) described specific incidents, including details of the experience and the corresponding reflections.

The entries cover topics in the individual, family, school, workplace, and community domains. Community (12 entries, 50%) and individual (11 entries, 46%) were the two primary domains; only the two secondary school students wrote about their real-life study experiences (two entries, 8%). Five entries (21%) were about the family and six (25%) were about the workplace. Table 1 presents excerpts from selected entries in each domain.³

Table 1

Domains and Sample Quotes from the 24 Written Entries

Domains (Number of entries)	Sample quotes
Individual (11)	“During COVID-19, I have learned a lot and valued my life more than ever before.” (Participant 8)
Family (5)	“Becoming a role model and teaching children how to face future challenges is the responsibility of parents.” (Participant 21; written in Chinese and translated into English)
School (2)	“Apart from learning, I watch YouTube videos about the universe, read books, and spend time running and weightlifting.” (Participant 4)
Workplace (6)	“As a new teacher, I found myself in a dilemma over how to deal with school suspensions due to the coronavirus.” (Participant 23)
Community (12)	“Quarantine, work from home, class suspensions... all methods of social distancing to avoid large crowds and gatherings are agreed on by all health experts and may help limit the spread of the novel coronavirus infection.” (Participant 15)

Selection of specific themes for analysis was based on the results of applying keyword searches to the entries. Four themes were identified as the most prevalent: “face masks” (21 entries), “keeping social distance” (18 entries), “caring for people in need” (14 entries), and “worry, anxiety, and stress” (13 entries). The six less common themes were “personal and social good” (nine entries), “cheering up” (seven entries), “flexibility and change” (six entries), “life and economic value” (six entries), “new things and habits” (five entries), and “valuing and treasuring” (five entries). Table 2 presents all 10 themes with excerpts of relevant entries for each.

³ All participant quotes were originally in English unless indicated otherwise.

Table 2

Themes and Sample Quotes from the 24 Written Entries

Themes (Number of entries)	Sample quotes
Face masks (21)	“Some people were willing to give their masks to less fortunate citizens, particularly working-class families. Buying masks is burdensome for such families because masks can be very expensive. We feel that these people are kind and care not only about the health of citizens but also about the health of society.” (Participant 10)
Keeping social distance (18)	“A real-life story in the COVID-19 period: I became a mushroom [grew without sunlight] because of the ‘Stay Home Stay Safe’ guidelines.” (Participant 1)
Caring for people in need (14)	“I found that some enthusiastic people and organizations provided timely support during the pandemic to people in need, for example, underprivileged groups, by donating prevention supplies and helping many working-class families with urgent needs.” (Participant 7)
Worry, anxiety, and stress (13)	“When Hong Kong students were dismissed from school, and workers in Australia were recommended to work from home, my girl still needed to study face-to-face without a mask. I became anxious.” (Participant 17)
Personal and social good (9)	“Being considerate to people in the community may not bring immediate betterment to ourselves, but contribution to the collective good by everyone in community is the only way to beat the pandemic and improve society.” (Participant 24)
Cheering up (7)	“I believe that as long as we help each other, care more about people in need, and work together to fight the epidemic, the epidemic will soon be controlled.” (Participant 7)
Flexibility and change (6)	“During times of crisis, we can do more than we think, particularly by caring more and acting quickly [flexibly]. Rules would have to be written in black and white to provide an appropriate response; however, in extraordinary times, understanding and flexibility is the most correct rule.” (Participant 2)
Life and economic value (6)	“I am concerned about the health of my family and colleagues, but my company is only concerned with costs and job efficiency.” (Participant 6; written in Chinese and translated into English)
New things and habits (5)	“I started sleeping and waking up early. I feel that my muscles are stronger. My cooking skills have improved. I can eat healthy, and my ability to think flexibly has been enhanced.

Unexpectedly, in facing a worsening situation, I came to see a new side of myself.” (Participant 16; written in Chinese and translated into English)

Valuing and
treasuring (5)

“This is a time for us to value our family and the people around us; we should be content with the moments we have, whether we are together or alone.” (Participant 8)

POSITIVE VALUES AND ACTIONS DURING COVID-19

Although people have felt stressed and worried during the pandemic, they have done good things for the people in their communities. To determine how people have done these good things, the expressions of positive values and caring actions identified in the entries were evaluated. In total, 19 of the 24 entries contained expressions of positive values (e.g., care, empathy, responsibility). More than half of the 24 (13 entries, 54%) described real-life experiences involving relationships between care givers and receivers (e.g., employers and employees, customers and me, citizens and me, and passengers and me).

The following examples illustrate micro-interactions reflecting the four most common themes (face masks; keeping social distance; caring for people in need; worry, anxiety, and stress) and the corresponding positive actions performed for both the individual and the public good by people fighting COVID-19.

Sharing Face Masks with People in Need

I had an interesting experience during the COVID-19 period. When everybody was searching for face masks and hand sanitizer, most people only considered whether they had enough masks. However, many organizations and volunteer groups started collecting face masks for distribution to marginalized communities such as struggling families, elderly people, low-income workers, and healthcare workers. The message of sharing with others was actively being promoted in society. I read lots of news about people who were willing to share virus prevention materials even if they didn't have enough for themselves. For me, I donated money to purchase virus prevention materials for people in need. Even now, I still keep some extra face masks in my bag if I need to share one with someone who

needs one. Sharing is vital in human life, and encouraging sharing in everyday life is essential. By sharing, we are sending a message that could completely change the way someone sees things, especially during something like COVID-19. All of us have the power to help people better their lives and understand the issues that we face in our overly complicated world today. (Participant 18, a female teacher)

Similar stories about sharing masks were related in other entries. For example, a young girl (Participant 13) gave her classmate a new mask when the classmate dropped hers on the floor. A homemaker (Participant 20) shared masks with people in high-risk situations, including a health care worker and a firefighter with a family. COVID-19 is a health and hygiene issue.

The sharing or donation of masks reflects a caring attitude towards others and generosity toward people in need. In particular, in the early stages of COVID-19, people did not fully grasp what was happening; they eventually learned that wearing face masks was the most effective method for protecting themselves and others. At that time, masks became as essential as property.

However, purchasing masks was not easy because of insufficient supplies and total buyouts. Thus, sharing masks with others in a time of crisis was highly appreciated and demonstrates what people did for people in need and those in their communities.

A Dilemma: Social Distancing or Personal Freedom?

As a committee member of a local community association, I was invited to participate in a meaningful activity in June [2020]. The activity aimed to recognize those in the general public who contributed to the community during COVID-19. More than 100 people from various sectors were invited. I was glad to attend the activity because it was a good opportunity to recognize members of the public who were fighting the coronavirus. Positive messages and values such as commitment, empathy, and courage were promoted during the ceremony. However, I wanted to act in consideration of those around me by reducing social contact to control the spread of

the virus. After consideration, I eventually rejected the invitation. From my perspective, the public health and safety are more important than individual freedom because a severe outbreak would seriously damage the society and the economy. Sacrificing our individual rights in this period is unavoidable because we have to learn how to protect and treasure our lives. We should avoid unnecessary high-risk events in this crucial period. (Participant 12, a male volunteer working for a nongovernmental organization)

In addition to wearing face masks, keeping social distance is another primary method for reducing the risk of infection. Keeping social distance to prevent the spread of the virus is the responsibility of each individual fighting COVID-19. During this period, people must be thoughtful and aware of other people whenever they plan to go outside. To protect others, the participants in this study gave up their personal desires and avoided unnecessary social events, such as joining a ceremony (Participant 12), going on a morning run (Participant 21), taking a pleasure trip (Participant 14), and joining a family reunion (Participants 9 and 17). These people sacrificed their personal interests in the interest of the collective good. The decisions of these people to reschedule, replan, and stay home demonstrate their wisdom, generosity, responsibility, and morality in the interest of protecting others and fighting the global COVID-19 crisis.

Caring Actions While Fighting COVID-19

COVID-19 has made a significant and negative impact on the travel and tourism industry. After first-round negotiations, the travel agency I work for allowed staff to choose whether they wanted to leave temporarily and look for other short-term jobs or stay in their current position but with a reduced salary. We knew that the company had started using their savings to maintain regular operations, and we knew our boss could have closed the company immediately to save money. However, our boss did not do so. We appreciated that we had a kind boss who was willing to face the challenge together with the staff. I also felt grateful to my customers; they also cared about our

situation. This is a society full of human interaction. We take care of people in need, and we support each other. (Participant 3, a man working for a travel agency; written in Chinese and translated into English)

COVID-19 not only puts people at risk of infection but also has compromised numerous industries, resulting in a severe economic recession. Thus, many people have been faced with the risk of losing their job and income. For example, Participant 9 worked for an international company; his company was restructured, and only the most valuable staff could remain. Although the government has special programs to support people who have experienced financial hardship during the pandemic, the collective support of individuals from the community is still required and should be continually encouraged. In Participant 3's entry above, the boss was kind; the story was quite encouraging. For employers, taking all risk and sustaining considerable monthly losses without terminating staff is not easy. The travel and tourism industry has been one of the most affected during this pandemic. The loss of a company is not insignificant. Despite this, the boss in the story decided to continue running the business and was willing to support the staff and fight the crisis together with them. This action demonstrates at the micro level how people help others during times of economic crisis, and at the macro level how the government and private organizations provide support.

Learning to Manage Stress

2020 is [a] really challenging year for me. During the pandemic, my plans have been disrupted, and I've been under a lot of pressure because of several issues. I think the biggest challenge is managing stress. [In] these six months I had to stay in Hong Kong, but because of the pandemic, I was afraid to go anywhere, so I stayed at home most of the time. The biggest pressure I faced in 2020 [was] to get a job after graduation, but many companies are cutting the budget. I have no intern[ship] experience, so I am less competitive with other graduates; this frustrates me because I don't want to be "NEET" [not in education, employment, or training]. [Luckily], I have friends who

are facing similar problems, so we [can commiserate]. I am so happy to have friends who are also “NEET”. I then met some friends who I hadn’t seen for a year, and I felt comfortable with them. When the pandemic is over, ask your friends to hang out. Another thing I learned during COVID-19 was a new skill. I spend too much time at home, so I tried to learn some new skills to increase my marketability. (Participant 14, a man who had recently graduated from university)

After a year of living during COVID-19, every participant experienced some type of worry or stress. Common sources of stress included risk of infection, job loss, salary cut, schedule delay, family reunion, work performance, study, and career planning (Participants 1, 3–6, 8–9, 12, 14–17, 19, 21, and 23, respectively). These people were simultaneously facing the crisis, solving various problems, and trying to live a normal life. In particular, Participant 14, a recent graduate student, had been trying to find a way to relieve stress and solve problems in his daily life. His solution was to commiserate with his friends who had similar problems and to learn new skills to increase his market value. Other concrete methods for releasing stress, reported by other participants, included exercising, helping other people, spending more time with family, cooking, and learning how to use new technologies. These activities helped people shift their focus to new experiences and adapt to the new normal during COVID-19.

Positive Thinking for Encouragement and Cheering Up

During COVID-19, I had a very bad experience with an unexpected result. I cannot stay with my family and face the virus with them. I feel bad about this, and nothing can replace the time spent with my beloved family. I’ve stayed overseas for half a year already because there are no flights back to Hong Kong. Business has been extremely poor, and most of the orders were cancelled, so my colleagues and I needed to take a month off with no pay. However, I started getting into cooking during my leisure time, which has made my life a bit more fun. My company was restructured, and only the most valuable staff were retained. Fortunately, I am among those who were able to

keep working. The virus has demonstrated my value. I believe that there are always chances in life; it all depends on how you act. Be well prepared, and good things will happen to you. (Participant 9, a male manager working overseas)

The pandemic is not a new experience for people. In 2003, the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic lasted 4 months in Hong Kong. Of the 1,755 cases in Hong Kong, 299 died (World Health Organization, 2020). Unfortunately, people have experienced a much longer and more serious global crisis—COVID-19. No one knows when the pandemic will be completely controlled, but life goes on. Thinking positively and reflecting on life is the ideal for everyone who must observe, feel, and sense every detail of the daily micro-interactions they experience during the pandemic. For example, Participant 9 retained his job after his company restructured; he felt valued and treasured, and he promised to continue working hard and look towards the future. Participant 8 learned a lot and valued her life more than ever before; she encouraged everyone to connect and value the people around them. Participant 16 reflected on life, hoping that people could fight COVID-19 and have an opportunity to see a new side of themselves. Learning to face challenges, think positively, reflect on life, and plan for the future would be very beneficial for everyone during this unexpected global pandemic.

CONCLUSION

This short chapter presents several general observations from the public as well as descriptions of specific interactions among individuals during the early stages of COVID-19 in Hong Kong. Drawing upon real-life stories written by 24 participants and macro-statistical data retrieved from public sources, this study explored life during COVID-19 through the macro and micro perspectives of these participants, particularly with respect to morality. First, the written entries of the participants helped elucidate their daily lives and provided authentic accounts of their experiences, as well as their feelings, reflections, and the lessons they learned during COVID-19. Their interactions with people in the community, and the interactions of these people with one another, were documented and explored. These analyzes of people's daily experiences reveal that people experienced negative emotions, felt

stressed, and encountered dilemmas. In addition, they encouraged themselves to cheer up, and they did not forget their families, people in need, and marginalized groups. Second, the study provides authentic accounts from participants that support the understanding of morality as a collective response to macro-social interactions. People in Hong Kong fought COVID-19, managed health and economic problems, and did good things for other people, demonstrating their caring attitudes, responsibility, patience, and generosity. In difficult moments, their moral actions helped encourage everyone else and gave them the power, energy, and spirit to go on fighting. Thus, the study teaches us that COVID-19 is a life lesson and an opportunity to wake up and taste the real world in which we are living. Facing an ever-changing world, learning to prepare for the worst, thinking positively, and being reflective can help everyone face COVID-19 as well as other unexpected problems in life. Still, nobody knows when the pandemic will be controlled. Hopefully, everyone can go on helping one another and face this global challenge together.

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Chapter 5

Spread of COVID-19 and Moral Issues in Japan

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the situation of COVID-19 infection in Japan and the moral issues that have arisen because of it. First, the author describes a case of infection at the university where he works. The spread of COVID-19 has turned in-person classes into online classes, hybrid classes, and high-flex classes, and it has been found that lessons can be conducted more effectively than expected with these alternative class structures. Second, the author addresses the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, which were actually held in 2021. Since they overlapped with the 5th wave of COVID 19, whether or not they should have been held became a major moral issue. Third, the author explains the problems with hosting the Olympics in a COVID-19 environment using the Japanese folklore terms *hare* (晴れ, celebration days) and *ke* (褻, ordinary days). Finally, the author considers the spread of COVID-19 from the perspective of moral education, concluding that given the special circumstances of the spread of COVID-19 there is a need for moral education that leads to moral action.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19, moral, education, Japan, Olympics

BACKGROUND OF PROBLEMS

The 2020 conference of the Asia-Pacific Network for Moral Education (APNME) was scheduled to be held at Joetsu University of Education in Japan in June 2020. However, after accepting the application from the conference presenters, the chairperson of the APNME committee asked me to postpone the conference due to the spread of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. The committee decided that the conference would be held at Joetsu in 2023.

Since the pandemic began, every country has been working on the treatment and prevention of COVID-19 infection. The response of each country has been unique, reflecting cultural differences. For example, in Wuhan, China, the functioning of the city was quickly blocked by a lockdown. In Japan, it is legally difficult to adopt such a procedure, so we Japanese were very surprised by Wuhan. But now, in many countries around the world, a lockdown is seen as one of the most effective ways to deal with a pandemic. Nevertheless, there is still no lockdown in Japan. It has been reported that the prevalence of mask wearing and social distancing also differs greatly depending on the culture (cf. Omuta et al., 2021). In Japan, there are many people who wear medical masks even when they catch a cold, so we haven't hesitated to wear masks in the case of COVID-19.

Therefore, in this chapter I decided to examine COVID-19 infection in Japan and the problems it has created that are unique to Japanese culture, focusing on moral issues. I will examine the problem from a philosophical perspective because it is difficult to confirm the facts of the pandemic response and quantitatively evaluate the effects of policies aimed at addressing the spread of COVID-19.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN JAPAN?

In Japan, the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed on January 16th, 2020 (Shirai et al., 2021). On February 3rd, it was revealed that an outbreak had occurred on the cruise ship Diamond Princess while it was anchored at Yokohama Port. This outbreak was reported worldwide by the press, partly because many foreigners were on board.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee announced the one-year postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. On April 3rd, it was reported that the number of infected people in Japan had exceeded 3,000.

At Joetsu University of Education, where I work, the first COVID-19 notice was issued on January 23rd in the name of the president of the university.¹ The notice included a warning about traveling abroad. On January 28th, we received an alert from the university's Crisis Management Office, but this notice consisted only of a document received from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). It cannot be said that the university had sufficient awareness of the magnitude of the crisis. On February 12th, faculty and staff were instructed on how to wear masks and disinfect their hands with alcohol while proctoring the entrance examination. On March 6th, we were notified that the graduation ceremony and diploma awarding ceremony would be canceled.²

On March 11th, the junior high school attached to our university put up the slogan "Don't stop learning!" To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, teachers engaged in remote learning using information and communication technology (ICT), even during the holidays.

After that, the university's 2020 entrance ceremony was canceled, and classes were canceled for the first two weeks due to health considerations. Students couldn't go anywhere, classes were online or on demand, and faculty members assigned more homework than ever before. Thus, the students were thrown into a very difficult situation.

The university was minimally aware of the crisis in its early stages, but I think it may have adopted an unnecessarily exaggerated response when the infection began to spread. This especially affected students who enrolled in 2020, as they missed the entrance ceremony, found that the lecture classes were mainly online and hurriedly prepared, and discovered that a lot of homework was being assigned. All this meant they didn't even have time to make friends on campus.

¹ The president at this time was not me.

² The Japanese academic year begins in April and ends in March. The graduation ceremony and the diploma awarding ceremony were held in March.

However, the circumstances differed between universities in the Tokyo metropolitan area and universities in rural areas, such as our university. In rural areas, the number of infected people was not as high as in the Tokyo area.

Through these experiences, we discovered that online lessons, hybrid lessons, and high-flex lessons, for which individual students get to choose the class type they want, were more effective than we had expected. Because Joetsu University of Education is a national university located in a rural area, I thought it might be less attractive to students than universities in the Tokyo metropolitan area. But if we can teach online, it doesn't really matter where students or professors are located. The question, even in normal times, is to what extent the government will accept deregulation and allow online lessons. In July 2021, there were no infected people at my university and we continued giving regular in-person lectures. However, in Tokyo, each day there were more infected people than ever before, and there were not enough hospital beds. Patients who were forced to receive treatment at home were beginning to die without adequate care and treatment.

COVID-19 was also talked about as a major problem in the elementary and junior high schools. In particular, voices from the schools expressed concern about their students being infected with COVID-19 by Joetsu students who were receiving educational training in the schools. In response, on August 11th, 2020, the MEXT issued a notice permitting alternative methods of educational training for university students. On April 13th, 2021, the MEXT issued a second notice that on the same day it would introduce a special policy granting teacher licenses to students who did not receive training in schools. However, it seems that COVID infections began to spread in the schools in early 2021, before they appeared at Joetsu. Perhaps this was due to the increasing dominance of the Delta variant of COVID-19, which is more infectious in children than the original Alpha variant.

MORAL ISSUES SURROUNDING THE OLMPICS

In Japan, the Olympic Games were originally planned to be held in 2020. However, due to COVID-19, it was decided to postpone them for one year. Thus they were held in 2021, despite strong protests from the Japanese public.

The Japanese government has never discussed the cancellation of the Olympics in 2020, and it seems that it not only decided but was quite determined to hold the Games in 2021. In late June 2021 the COVID infection rate reached a new high level. This explosive spread became known as the fifth wave, and many Japanese began to wonder if the government's decision was correct.

The Olympics were held in Tokyo after all, from July 24th to August 8th, 2021. And then, from August 24th to September 5th, the Paralympics were held. Whether we should have held the Olympics and the Paralympics during a pandemic in Tokyo will be historically evaluated in the future, but it is not easy to judge at this time.

In 2018, the formal subject of morality (commonly shortened to “moral”³) was added to the curriculum in the elementary schools, and a year later in the junior high schools. Before that, one class a week had been designated as "moral time," but it was not a formal subject in the curriculum.

A textbook on morality was written and certified by the government when morality became a formal subject. Prior to that, a policy for the content of moral textbooks was announced that required the inclusion of various stories about morality as well as those related to the Olympics. Thus, moral textbooks began to include not only stories of Olympians' great efforts to win in competition but also their demonstrations of sportsmanship. Many children presumably formed a favorable impression of the Olympics after reading these stories of the efforts of Olympic athletes in moral textbooks. But on the other hand, many children may have realized that commercial success of the Olympics had been the first priority, despite the contemporaneous presence of a medical crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even we adults noticed various contradictions such as the gap between the ideal of the Olympics per se and the quest for big sales and big profits. The commercialism of the Games, of course, became a hot political issue. However, people also talked about this contradiction between commercialism and the Olympic spirit, turning the holding of the Olympics during the COVID-19 pandemic into a big moral issue.

³ It must be kept in mind that moral education can mean, for example, that the topic of the class is morality, not that the instructor teaches the material in a moral way, which is how one would ordinarily interpret the term.

Teaching about moral values in a class on morality does not seem so difficult, but what if one must teach two conflicting values, or different ways to express a single value? And how do we solve the problem of people having different options to choose from?

I think it's the politician's job to make decisions about such matters, even in unpredictable circumstances. But if the main purpose of moral education is to improve students' moral and social abilities, is it reasonable for us to require children to do the same job as politicians? I do not think so.

When I watched the Olympics on TV, I found many moving scenes. Nonetheless, some argue that Japan should not host the Olympics in the future. I can't agree or disagree with this opinion, but I can say that there has not been enough debate in Japan about whether the 2020 Tokyo Olympics should have been held in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak. The government of Japan decided to hold the Olympic Games before there was sufficient discussion among the public. Two of the cultural characteristics of the Japanese is to take the attitude of waiting for the government's decision and to wait for the problem to be forgotten without discussing a clear solution. I think we need to change these characteristics.

JAPANESE CULTURE AND MORAL ISSUES

When COVID-19 became widespread, many countries began to take steps to control the infection. However, there was one thing that many Japanese found difficult to abide: the lockdown policy of the cities. Indeed, there is no law authorizing the government to take the mandatory measure of lockdowns. Even if lawmakers were to enact such a law, many Japanese would claim that it violated their individual rights and would not obey it.

Thus, in Japan, a state of emergency was declared instead of a lockdown. The Declaration of a State of Emergency was a request from the Prime Minister to the prefectural governors to take measures to protect the lives, health, and livelihoods of the people. Based on statutes such as the Law on Special Measures for a New Influenza, this Declaration simply asked the people to help prevent the spread of the new virus. The declaration was not enforceable and thus no one was penalized for ignoring it. On February 9th, 2021, the government replaced the Declaration of a State

of Emergency with the less effective Priority Measures to Prevent the Spread. In my opinion, the officials in charge created this new declaration just so they could say, “I declared it, but I couldn’t stop the infection because people didn’t obey it.”

The terms *hare* (晴れ) and *ke* (褻) represent concepts used in Japanese folklore and cultural anthropology.⁴ *Hare* means a day of celebration, and *ke* means an ordinary day. An example of a *hare* day is a wedding day, for which people dress up, have special meals, and offer congratulations to one another. A *hare* day suggests a day of celebration, whereas a *ke* day must really be an ordinary day.

In other words, according to this traditional Japanese cultural worldview, there is a clear distinction between *hare* days and *ke* days. The Olympics, a sports festival held once every four years, take place on *hare* days. The Tokyo 2020 Olympics were special in that the days on which they occurred were not only *hare* days, but also ordinary *ke* days, especially when a state of emergency was declared. While we were customarily allowed to dress up, eat special meals, and exchange special words for Olympics-related events, we were prohibited from doing these very things by the state of emergency; in other words, we Japanese were caught in a double bind during the Olympics.

I don’t want to denounce the politicians for creating this double-bind situation. *Hare* and *ke* are not as clearly distinguished in Japanese culture as they used to be, and in modern times we often eat special treats on ordinary days. Rather, my aim is to show that an ostensibly single truth can be interpreted in various ways. Especially in cultural matters, there really is no single truth, but only various facts that are socially constructed.⁵

The year 2021 is the 10th anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake. Therefore, Tokyo 2020 was initially called the Earthquake Reconstruction Memorial Olympics. The media guide prepared by the Tokyo Organizing Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games states: “We aim to disseminate the beautiful nature of the disaster area, rich and safe food, history, traditions, culture, etc., and to thank the people of the world for their support.” However, the ideal of the Tokyo 2020

⁴ The terms *hare* and *ke* are Japanese. Since they are difficult to translate into English, I write them in the paper as they are pronounced.

⁵ I want to take a social constructionist position (cf. Gergen, 2015).

Games seems to have disappeared before we knew it. It has rarely been mentioned on the television broadcasts in Japan. Instead, the Olympic vision that came to the fore consisted of diversity and harmony. Of course, this was only one of the visions of the Organizing Committee, but it was brought to the fore on various occasions during the Games by people protesting against discrimination.

This may just mean that the rationale for holding the Olympics to Tokyo changed during the Games themselves. However, it seems that the characteristics of Japanese culture can be seen here as well. It is typical in Japan that the nature of policy changes depends on the atmosphere of the social groups to which they apply.

In addition, at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake, a photo of Japanese people waiting in line for meals was distributed as news all over the world. Even in an emergency, lining up seems like a moral act, but you can also think of it as waiting for a government to provide support to the people in such circumstances. It is very much an act of dependency. In other words, the people in line have no autonomy.

CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MORAL EDUCATION

In Japan, moral education is thought of as a way to make children understand moral values. For that purpose, textbooks have been created to be used in teaching lessons on morality. However, moral education is considered to take place not only in classes, but in all activities of the school. Children learn morals not only from the teaching materials described in the textbooks, but also from various daily events. Thus, both the crisis of COVID-19 spread and holding the Olympics during this crisis provide a treasure trove of teaching materials through which children can learn morals. At the same time, we must not forget that many lives have been lost all over the world during the pandemic.

What moral values should be taught in these morality classes? In Japan, the government's choices are presented in a book called *the Course of Study* (MEXT, 2017).⁶ However, it is not clear why it lists only certain values. For example, self-esteem is not listed as a moral value, even though it is mentioned in many places in the government's commentary book, *Interpretation of the Course of Study*. I think that

⁶ *The Course of Study* is a kind of national curriculum established by the Japanese government and is revised about every 10 years.

self-esteem is the first block of the foundation needed to acquire morality. Unless you have a high level of self-esteem, you won't want to behave kindly toward others. The Japanese are said to have low self-esteem, and that suggests why cultivating self-esteem should be required as part of moral education in Japan.

Furthermore, in Japanese moral education, there is not enough guidance for taking concrete moral actions. The common opinion is that moral education concerns education for the inner heart, not for concrete action. However, does it deserve the name "moral education" if moral education only nurtures one's inner heart? It must lead to concrete actions. It is necessary not only to recognize and sympathize with the person seeking help, but also to actually reach out and help that person. To that end, we propose moral skills training (cf. Hayashi, 2013). This is not a common English term, so I want you to imagine social skills training applied to relevant moral situations. This training would help us act morally in an emergency. The current attitude about the goal of moral education is expected to change in Japan in the future, as evidenced by "the experiential learning about moral behaviors" being included as one of the teaching methods in the latest *Course of Study*.

It should be mentioned that "problem-solving learning" is one of the teaching methods used, as well as "experiential learning about moral behaviors." Surprisingly, it was not until recently that these teaching methods were introduced for moral education. In the past, discussions concerning moral education focused merely on the emotions and feelings of the characters in the moral narratives, and it was through these that moral values were learned. Of course, focusing on emotions and feelings is already well established as a teaching method. However, the teaching methods should also be required to have multiple characteristics.

Through the spread of COVID-19, we came to realize the powerlessness of humans. Medical experts may be able to talk about the effectiveness of vaccines and effective ways to prevent droplet infections. As I am not a medical expert, I can't do that; however, as a moral education expert, I can talk about the importance of caring for one another and working together, even in situations where I can't do anything medically. We can point out that it is possible to continue daily life without discriminating against others, even in difficult situations. We can also discuss how to improve moral education, so humans will be more willing to act kindly toward others

in the event of a similar pandemic in the future. As a result of living through the spread of COVID-19, we have become experts in it. This expertise has directed us to learn about moral education, and we can share what we have learned with many other people.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have discussed the spread of COVID-19 infection and the problems caused by it in Japan, focusing on moral education.

First of all, I described the situation at the university where I work as an example of the impact of the spread of COVID-19. Since it is a small national university located in a rural area, the situation is a little different from that in the Tokyo metropolitan area. There are not as many infected people at Joetsu as in Tokyo. In all the universities, the spread of COVID-19 has turned in-person classes into online classes, hybrid classes, and high-flex classes, but we found that these alternative teaching modalities were more successful than we had expected. In the future, we expect that the use of ICT will further improve these alternative modalities, even when the topic is morality.

Next, I discussed the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. Holding the Olympic and Paralympic Games during the COVID-19 pandemic will shed light on how considerations of moral consciousness can affect the political judgments made by Japan's government. As a matter of morality, it is not surprising that there have been criticisms about the commercialism of the Olympics and the exclusive pursuit of economic interests. In addition, it is not unreasonable to criticize the government for not even considering cancelation of the Olympics while ordering that during the Games people refrain from going out and that the restaurants be closed. However, as a matter of moral education, this is a difficult issue for people to take up and discuss, especially because everyone in Japan was invited to watch the Games, and schools were required not to penalize teachers or students who, watching the Games, failed to attend classes. From the standpoint of moral education, what was considered meaningful were the consistent effort, fairness, sportsmanship, and cultural diversity of the Olympians, and the activities of the staff who supported them behind the scenes.

Next, I tried to interpret the problems created by hosting the Olympics during the pandemic using the Japanese folklore terms “*hare*” and “*ke*,” which mean celebration days and ordinary days respectively. For us, the Olympic period were unusual days, that is, *hare* days, but it was also days when the COVID-19 pandemic continued, that is, *ke* days. The Japanese were placed in a double bind situation where these two types of days came at the same time.

Finally, I addressed the pandemic from the perspective of moral education. I explained that Japanese moral education emphasizes the teaching of moral values, and I pointed out that the special circumstances of the spread of COVID-19 infection required that moral education led people to take action to address the problem.

To summarize, in this chapter I have considered whether the moral education we have undertaken in Japan has been effective in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Olympic Games held under it. An indication that the education has not been effective are reports of discriminatory behavior in Japan against people infected with COVID-19 and the medical staff who treat them. Perhaps only a few people are guilty of this behavior, but why aren't we all moving in the direction of helping one another? The moral education we have provided in Japan seems to still be inadequate. In conclusion, I propose that Japan's moral education be revised so that it leads to moral action and behavior and social cooperation.

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Chapter 6

Moral Education and Post-COVID-19: Two New Normals

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ABSTRACT

A new normal is a state of being that an economy, society, or other social construction settles into following a crisis, when the circumstances are different than those that prevailed prior to the start of the crisis (World Economic Forum, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic can be considered such a crisis. The term “new normal” is being used today to reflect the uncertainty brought about by the coronavirus (Balakrishnan, 2022). I propose that there are actually two new normals: the first is the one we are living in now, created by the onset of the pandemic; the second is the future one that will take effect after the virus is well under control worldwide with the future availability of a cure and vaccine still a grey area, everyone from academics, politicians, media to families and individuals have found their thoughts and way of living to be continually under the influence of the first new normal. Many are hoping that one day we will all confidently just go back to our normal life, but people in countries such as Japan have already come to accept the fact that the coronavirus is here to stay to some degree and they must co-exist with it in the second new normal. In this chapter, I try to bring to light the new lifestyles that have been and will be adopted by people in Eastern societies because of these two new normals, and how the norms that define them may clash with the needs of the people in these societies at the time. I present and discuss two case studies to illustrate my points, and I end by discussing the challenges and opportunities for Moral Education in the second new-normal society. The chapter should help to shape and reinforce readers’ understanding of the world and the ways we choose to approach a new normal.

KEYWORDS: new normal, reality, idealism

INTRODUCTION

In late 2019, the COVID-19 virus was identified for the first time in Wuhan, China, where it affected many aspects of people's growth and development (Balakrishnan, 2022). The new normal of the current COVID-19 era is filled with uncertainty and challenges, yet it brings us hope and inspiration to go on with life in a possible second new normal once vaccines are widely available and all human beings are as safe from severe symptoms or death from the COVID-19 virus as they are from the common flu. According to Buheji and Buheji (2020), many components in life will change in the second new normal. It will likely be an era of agility, curiosity, risk mitigation, focus, learning by exploring, and learning by doing.

Before COVID-19 came into the global picture, there were other pandemics, specifically the 1918 Pandemic (H1N1 virus), the 1957-1958 Pandemic (H2N2 virus), the 1968 Pandemic (H3N2 virus), and the 2009 Pandemic (H1N pdm09virus). History has shown that after every one of these pandemics, all the affected societies returned to their normal state of being on earth. People might have lost their loved ones, their jobs, their wealth, and their health, but they slowly returned to the old way of life. In the case of COVID-19, only time will tell.

According to Popa (2020), in the future there will be a need to remember the unmanageable and overwhelming reality of the COVID-19 pandemic we are suffering through today. Unless we take urgent action now, more and more people will fall into poverty globally (Oxfam, 2020). Many school children will become dropouts and the poorest groups will be hit the hardest. The disparity between the rich and poor will become wider, leading to even more extreme levels of inequality.

Many individuals likely have experienced other types of pandemics in the past, such as other diseases and war. But for many people, COVID-19 is the first such crisis they have lived through. It came slowly at first and then spread like wildfire. Everyone was hoping that a vaccine would be found to wipe out the disease, and life would be the same as it was before, like in the "good old days." Since they became available in 2020, many pharmaceutical companies have promoted the various vaccines they developed, and many nations around the world have started to receive them, in the hope that it would allow their populations to lead a COVID-free life.

Since these vaccines came on the scene, signs of an emerging second “new normal” way of life have slowly begun to creep into every country and every nation, everywhere on the globe. This emergence has brought stress for some, hope for others, and uncertainty for most. The second new normal will be different from the first new normal we all lived through in the early stages of the pandemic, before the vaccines were discovered and distributed globally. Complete lockdowns, partial lockdowns, and social distancing were all parts of the first new normal as COVID-19 spread rapidly. Such preventive measures, policies, and actions are still being strictly adhered to in countries where the COVID-19 pandemic has not weakened substantially.

Other nations are slowly developing their own strategies, such as fining people who are not following the law, educating society through the media and the schools, and so on. All these actions and precautions serve one main purpose: to eradicate the COVID-19 virus from the entire demographic spectrum.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE OLD NORMAL BEFORE THE PANDEMIC, THE NEW NORMAL DURING THE PANDEMIC, AND THE NEW NORMAL AFTER THE PANDEMIC ENDS

During the normal times before the COVID-19 pandemic, people were free to go anywhere, travel abroad without much hassle, and organize any sort of event freely. They could have weddings and other celebrations with large groups and organize conferences with hundreds of participants interacting face-to-face—in a word, life was normal for everyone.

Then came the pandemic and life for everyone completely changed. People could not visit one another, and gatherings were not allowed. The worst scenario was when a person died of COVID-19: no one except for one or two family members was allowed to attend the burial. Social distancing was the law in most nations that were not otherwise adhering to the new SOPs (standard operating procedures).

The second new normal after the pandemic ends will require acceptance of the need to adapt to the circumstances at that time. Most people will have been vaccinated, but everyone will still have to follow the SOPs and the laws of their own country. If they have to go to another country to work or attend to family matters, they will need

to abide by the laws of that country. This new normal might go on for another few years.

The second new normal will be different for groups of people in different societies and nations. Not only will the ways of life change, but also the ways one embraces life. This will force us to face the difficult choice of becoming realistic or continuing to embrace the idealistic notions and unrealistic hopes that most of us have been slow to give up and adapt to the new norms.

REALISM VERSUS IDEALISM

The hope that everyone can go back to their old way of life is very well suited to the current moment. Realism is accepting the state of things as they exist now, as opposed to adopting the idealistic thoughts and emotions of being back in the “good old days.” “Idealism” is a term in philosophy that refers to the rejection of a physical reality. The conflict between realism and idealism plays out in the mind of every single individual who has an ounce of common sense.

Those in the realism camp confront the COVID-19 pandemic era with a sense of awe and responsibility. They are prepared to transform themselves into another person and adopt another way of life. They understand the need to do what is required of them, both in public and in private. This conduct is not only probable but easily achievable for such individuals, but only if they live in a society that has endured other pandemics or life crises in the past.

MORAL EDUCATION IN THE POST-COVID-19 ERA

Moral Education, whether a stand-alone subject or embedded among other subjects, has been gaining popularity in schools during the first new normal. Many see Moral Education as a subject that bridges the gap between real-life and how individuals think, feel, and act about things (Balakrishnan, 2020b). Moral Education is also compatible with UNESCO’s philosophy of education, which is focused on the inculcation of knowledge, skills, and values.

Moral Education will tend to support or encourage individuals and societies to be more sensitive to the norms of the second new normal after the COVID-19 pandemic. The tension between the norms dictated by COVID-19 and the traditional moral and

societal norms will be the “talk of the town.” In the days before COVID-19, cultural practices that include physical contact (e.g., handshakes, hugging) in social gatherings were prioritized in Eastern and even some Western cultures. Now the focus is on social distancing, hygiene, and health-related concerns. When societal norms clash with government laws and regulations, the law wins out. For example, in some Eastern cultures, for two individuals to *salam*, or physically embrace each other when they meet, used to be a common normative practice. But nowadays, such norms are not practiced due to the fear that one party or the other might be carrying the COVID-19 virus and transmit it to others.

THE ROLE OF MORAL EDUCATION

Moral Education, a subject that trains the mind to think, the heart to feel, and the body to act in moral ways, will be essential in the post-COVID-19- pandemic era. In each of the three eras (dominated by old norms, pandemic norms, and post-pandemic norms respectively), all dimensions of Moral Education have needed to be or will need to be learned and applied.

Educating the mind is important because individuals and society need to be provided comprehensive knowledge about the effects of COVID-19 and how they can avoid being infected by or avoid transmitting the virus.

Educating the heart is important to ensure that emotions are managed well, especially during challenging times like the COVID-19 pandemic. Emotions should be cultivated with concern and care. When the society or the nation introduces laws and regulations, in addition to using rational thinking, one needs to be emotionally stable in order to take care of oneself or help others take care of themselves.

Moral actions have been prominently displayed during the pandemic period. For example, individuals have reached out to those severely affected by the pandemic and helped provide them with material and moral support. Moreover, they have reached out to as many people as they could in as many ways as they could.

Our analyses of the case studies below illustrate how Moral Education can play a major role in ensuring that the new norms in society are managed skilfully.

Case 1

Japan experienced the COVID-19 pandemic just like any other nation. It underwent a lot of turmoil and challenges and had to make many *ad hoc* decisions regarding health and safety. As time went on, Japanese nationals—who were used to crises such as typhoons and earthquakes—came to terms with COVID-19. They knew that everyone has an important role to play in facing a pandemic.

Both individuals and institutions in Japan have generally accepted the fact that COVID-19 might be on earth to stay for a long time. Japanese industry has offered guidance on how to co-exist with COVID-19 in the future. Meanwhile, the government has continued to enforce strict hygiene protocols and has enacted even more stringent social distancing policies. This move is not surprising, because as other Asian countries were eagerly moving towards the Fourth Industrial Revolution, also called Industry 4.0—a new phase of the Industrial Revolution that focuses heavily on interconnectivity, automation, machine learning, and collection of real-time data—Japan was already looking forward to Smart Society 5.0, in which advanced technologies will be developed to achieve convergence between cyberspace and physical space, enabling AI-based applications on large databases and robots to perform or support new tasks and adjustments to existing tasks that humans have been unable to perform up to now.

As Japan underwent rapid industrial development after World War II, most Japanese nationals understood the negative effects of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: therefore, they are intelligent enough and wise enough to keep an open mind before making judgments when any future pandemic or other crisis occurs.

Industry groups in Japan have been collaborating with one another, and on 15 May 2020 jointly issued a summary of guidelines for the functioning of Japanese society (Osaki, 2020). It includes:

Individuals/Agencies/Places	Industry guidelines
<i>Keidanren</i> (Japanese Business Federation)	Introduction of new work styles and policies such as teleworking and a three-day work week
Restaurants	Seats moved farther apart and facing in the same direction
<i>Pachinko</i> (a mixture of slot machine and pinball parlors)	Distributing tickets for parlor entry, keeping every other seat vacant, and turning down music volume
Movie theaters	Keeping every other seat vacant including those directly behind and in front of another viewer
Cram schools	Establishing online classes for students unable to attend classes in person
Retailers	assigning store hours exclusively for high-risk shoppers such as elderly people and expectant mothers
Airlines	Limiting in-flight beverages to fruit juices
Railway operations	Keeping windows open, keeping ventilation systems on, and requiring passengers to wear a mask
Hotels	Limiting face-to-face encounters at the reception desk and not escorting guests to their room in person
Sporting events	Asking attendees to wear a mask and conducting a health check two weeks prior to each event

While most other nations were panicking about facing the new norms, Japan was already thinking ahead and enforcing adoption of practical lifestyles for some aspects of daily living. Thus, co-existence with COVID-19 has become a norm for Japanese individuals and the society at large. It is no wonder that while every other nation was adopting and getting excited about Industry 4.0, Japan was already educating its citizens about Smart Society 5.0.

Although the post-pandemic era has not yet begun, it is being reported that some individuals in Japanese society nonetheless have been observed crowding into public transport areas, even though they had been reminded by the local authorities that the COVID-19 SOPs are still in effect.

Case 2

Malaysia and Indonesia are two nations where the belief systems of Islam and many other religions play an important role in the life of their citizens. Before the emergence of COVID-19, there was much focus on praying together, celebrating holidays *en masse* with family and friends, and even attending huge celebrations organized by the state.

Individuals from different faiths and with different belief systems get together on certain days to pray together or practice communal ways of life. Before COVID-19, these communal norms included physical interactions such as handshaking, hugging, and embracing. These gestures mean a lot to each individual, family, and community, whether they occur at worship services, social get-togethers, or even funerals. These traditions all have their own structured rituals and norms that must be followed strictly.

Young children in Islamic families in Malaysia are taught to greet their elders by *cium tangan* (hand-kissing, where the child reaches out with both hands, takes holds of the right hand of the elderly person, and then kisses it). It is an action that communicates respect, politeness, and admiration for the other. In such societies, when people of the same sex meet they hug and kiss one another on the cheek as a sign of friendship, as an acknowledgement of a family relationship, or just as a greeting.

In several other Eastern cultures, physical touching is not a norm, and people are more likely to greet one another with just a *vanakam*, or handshake (which reflects a Western influence). These societies have less of a problem creating this new norm than those whose members are already accustomed to interacting with one another physically.

Thus, the new social norm of keeping social distance from each other while not allowing close physical contact and strictly forbidding attending celebrations that are expected to attract massive numbers of people, is not easily accepted. Such conduct goes against the norms and traditions these societies have been practicing for generations and can cause members of certain groups in these societies to feel sad and isolated.

Social distancing is a new norm. Although it is practiced worldwide, it is seen as incompatible with Eastern societies, which embrace the opposite of this norm. In many closely knit societies that are strongly identified with a certain religion, hugging and shaking hands has been a cultural and social practice for generations. The type and extent of change in the second new normal will depend on the type and the number of activities challenged by some emergency or a threat to the social stability of the community (Buheji and Buheji, 2020).

DISCUSSION

In Cases 1 and 2, several key issues can be identified. In both cases the societies face similar situations: the spread of COVID-19, the state or national government initiating and implementing various strategies to control the spread of COVID-19, and local communities cooperating with the local council and state government in fighting the pandemic, hoping that the hardship will lessen. The differences can be seen in how individuals and the society as a whole embrace the new norms.

In Case 1, it was easier to accept the new norms than in Case 2, partly because Japanese culture tends to be non-physical. Respecting one's elders is expressed by nodding the head and bowing. The younger one is, the lower he or she bows. Moreover, Japanese individuals, regardless of gender, are used to dining on their own and traveling by public transport on their own—even senior citizens are used to living on their own and are very self-sufficient.

But the situation is very different in Case 2. In a society where people embrace one another physically, the new norm that embodies the expectation that everyone practice social distancing and avoid physical contact can be very challenging to conform to. This conformance requires a totally new way of life, and individuals struggle to follow the new norms. During the major holiday seasons in Malaysia and Indonesia, both governments have chosen to restrict the movement of people from city to village and vice versa. This was to ensure that the COVID-19 virus would not spread to vulnerable individuals such as the elderly and young children.

Naturally when people in these societies went back to their hometown and met up with family members and friends, the first reaction was to *salam*, to embrace and physically hug to show their appreciation for one another. The new normal society

will require people to refrain from and even ignore the values associated with the traditional norms. These situations will create many new opportunities but also many challenges at both the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels.

Hence, in most nations—including Japan, Indonesia and Malaysia—that have a philosophy of Moral Education that focuses on moral reasoning, moral emotions, and moral action, there is a serious need to take another look at Moral Education. There is a need to make it more user-friendly and to further explore the relevant opportunities and challenges available at both the micro and macro levels.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

During the coming era of the second new normal, many sorts of challenges will be expected to arise in different sectors of society. This might be the time for us to get inspired by the opportunities that come with new challenges and to develop the resilience and tolerance needed to survive during these times of transformation.

At an intrapersonal level, we need to learn to appreciate ourselves as complete individuals, happy with ourselves and our peaceful lives. Young children and seniors naturally feel complete with no outside help. It is the adolescents and young adults who must learn to embrace this new norm gracefully as they become used to being with their friends and socializing with their other peers in new ways.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, adolescents who isolated themselves from others were called “anti-social.” But with the new normal, to isolate oneself, keep a distance from others, and avoid speaking unless necessary began to be considered good form. If people wanted to go to the bank or any other public place, they had to wear a face mask and follow other regulations before entering, e.g., scan a QR code or take one’s own temperature.

The advantages to society of such new norms is that they will incentivize people to follow rules and regulations, be respectful of others and sensitive to their needs, while learning to appreciate the positive side of having to spend more time alone.

On the interpersonal plane, individuals will have to learn to discipline themselves in public places, but even more importantly in non-public places. Virtues such as self-discipline, integrity, and honesty must be cultivated. For example,

individuals who are asked to isolate themselves for various reasons must have great integrity and a sense of social responsibility if they are to be seen as following the rules.

All in all, the second new normal society will be a society that requires us to be civilized and disciplined, to be resilient, and to have the competence to successfully overcome any challenges we face. We need to see challenges not as impediments, but as opportunities to transform the situation into something more positive if we can learn to approach the challenge with confidence and embrace it.

The global lockdown of educational institutions became the new normal during the COVID-19 pandemic. Interruptions to students' learning and teachers' teaching, as well as disruptions in internal and external evaluations of summative and formative assessments, posed real challenges. But these challenges also compelled us to design innovative ways to combine teaching with learning and different kinds of learning with each other, and to design alternative online evaluation methods. Now that Industry 4.0 has come fully into existence, many are enjoying the fruits of technology and the different uses of apps as well as online platforms.

In higher education, many universities and colleges are replacing traditional exams with online assessment tools. We are entering a new area for both teachers and students, and the new assessment tools at first will likely have more measurement errors than the old ones. Research shows that employers now use educational credentials such as academic degrees and grade point averages to sort applicants for acceptance into colleges and universities (Piopiunik et al., 2020). Thus, the second new normal society is likely to be more innovative in creating more new ways to measure university students' achievement, and the tools are likely to be more holistic, comprehensive, and transparent than those we have now.

The second new normal society will need efficient solutions that leverage and develop innovative strategies and mechanisms on multiple new fronts. As we enter this transformational era, ways to deal with new devastating pandemics need to be invested in, recognized, and amplified. Therefore, it will be a time for inspiration and resilience that enhance trust in the people and give them opportunities to create change. This process should start with young children and go all the way up to senior citizens. According to Buheji and Sisk (2020), the unprecedented chaos that the

COVID-19 pandemic created brought with it hybrid opportunities that can now be seen manifested in healthcare, social development, and untapped economic potential.

There also will be hidden opportunities that come with the rise of these challenges and risks. For example, during the early stages of the pandemic, lockdowns encouraged people to work from home, and a new norm was created that forced many to learn how to balance work and home in a more constructive manner. On the other hand, people started to suffer anxiety or stress due to worry about their future prospects because of the turbulence and instability affecting their careers, educational plans, and life journeys. Balance between the two will be much needed in the post-COVID-19 era.

Therefore, health and economic authorities and other national and state policy makers will need to bring in more impactful programs to ensure that every society has some sort of support system that helps it manage the consequences of COVID-19.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us to appreciate the simple things in life, such as valuing our time, learning to be silent, and staying positive. If we must reprimand someone, we must do it constructively. Many a time we think that only adults go through stress in their life, having to juggle work, home, and social responsibilities. However, even a young child may undergo stress at home, but quite often that stress is not addressed.

For a start, the teaching of humanities subjects such as Moral Education in schools should no longer be focused on exams and grades, at least until the COVID-19 pandemic ends, but schools should concentrate rather on the well-being of their students (Balakrishnan, 2020a).

Social media platforms should focus on humor and joyful living rather than just on the economy and finance. Yes, money is important, but it cannot buy happiness, take away stress, or bring back a lost life. Teachers and parents play a key role in ensuring that children and students are always happy and cheerful.

Many simple yet effective activities can be carried out together as a family or as a school class, while still adhering to physical distancing. The COVID-19 pandemic

has taught the world a great deal about resilience, having hope, and accepting the challenges of a new normal. In the meantime, let us educate ourselves, our children, and our students to stay joyful and happy. This is the most important part of the journey toward becoming the next new normal society.

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Chapter 7

Chinese and British Virtues in the Time of the Coronavirus: Reflections on Virtue Language From a Cross-Cultural Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This paper elaborates upon and develops further a keynote speech by Professor Kristján Kristjánsson given at the Online Dialogue on Education in an Age of Uncertainty (2020), in which Kristjánsson identified the kind of virtue language used by the British Queen Elizabeth II in her speech on the 5th of April 2020, a use which coincides substantially with neo-Aristotelian virtue-ethical language. The authors advance the discussion further through a virtue-language lens to identify what are the key virtues used in Chinese President Xi Jinping's speech addressing the same challenge. While Kristjánsson only discusses the implications of Queen Elizabeth II's virtue language in a British character-education context, this paper, through establishing cross-cultural comparisons and reflections on virtue languages from both leaders, expands it towards an international view. The current study found the following virtues: a sense of duty or responsibility when facing challenges, a sense of compassion towards others, a willingness to offer help to others, a sense of appreciation and the resolution of the challenges and winning the coronavirus battle. These are virtues highly consistent in the two leaders' speeches despite being spoken in different languages and to different audiences.

KEYWORDS: virtue, virtue language, Queen Elizabeth II's speech, President Xi Jinping's speech, cross-cultural comparison

BACKGROUND

This paper offers as its entry point a keynote speech by Professor Kristján Kristjánsson given at the *Online Dialogue on Education in an Age of Uncertainty* in 2020, in which Kristján identified the kind of virtue language used by the British Queen Elizabeth II¹ (hereafter “the Queen”) in her speech delivered on the 5th of April 2020, a language use which coincides substantially with neo-Aristotelian virtue-ethical language, for instance referring to the virtues of selflessness, appreciation, duty, resolution, pride, humor, helping others, and compassion (The Queen’s Coronavirus broadcast, 2020, cited by Kristjánsson, 2020). Kristjánsson’s keynote speech is timely and important, as it highlights the importance of virtue language in English and the implications of Queen’s virtue languages in a British character-education context, for instance, by focusing on the need for “virtue literacy” as part of character education. However, in the context of the worldwide coronavirus crisis, what are the implications of virtue language for non-English speaking countries, such as those in the Asia-Pacific region? There is an urgent need to explore the usage of virtue language in different cultural and linguistic contexts. Therefore, this study has chosen China, the largest non-English speaking country in Asia, as a case in point, to help contribute to a fuller understanding of the salience of virtue language in an international context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Virtue Language

There has been a growing recognition of the relevance and importance of “virtue language” in character education, especially its acquisition through “virtue literacy”. Virtue language, that is, the use of the vocabularies of the virtues is closely connected to the context of moral education (Vasalou, 2012). Virtue language is often associated with moral language in the context of moral education, yet there are salient differences between the two and it is helpful to distinguish them. In moral language, the use of words representing moral notions, concepts, and standards is considered important; moral language is closely related to the practice and description of various moral acts, the evaluation of moral actions, and the

¹ Elizabeth II (Elizabeth Alexandra Mary; 21 April 1926 – 8 September 2022).

depiction of various moral phenomena (Sichel, 1991). While these may all be understood as subsets of moral language, not all moral language is virtue language. Recently, concerns have been raised that, because of the decline in the use of virtue language in Western literature (Kesebir & Kesebir, 2012), lay people's understanding and appreciation of virtue may also be declining. In other words, there is a close relationship between the command of language as a vehicle of thought and as a means of forming normative commitments to ideals which such thought expresses.

Concern with virtue language is not a recent invention, as shown by an historical analysis of it (Creyghton et al., 2016) based upon three European case studies—those of the German historian Georg Waitz (1813–86), his French pupil Gabriel Monod (1844–1912), and the Belgian historian Henri Pirenne (1862–1935). In this general context, three objects of virtue language were proposed: (1) epistemic virtues, (2) moral virtues, and (3) political virtues (Creyghton et al., 2016). The authors agree with Creyghton et al. (2016) that these objects cannot be separated in a strong sense (e.g., only epistemic or only moral), but only in a weak one (with “epistemic” as one layer of meaning along with “moral” and/or “political”). Such an analysis helps us to appreciate the complexity of virtue language and to refrain from limiting our understanding of virtue as just a character trait, or personal disposition, or behavior that is deemed to be “good” in a given situation. We thus need to understand virtues as bundles of normativity (e.g. epistemic, moral and political); one example would be that of loyalty (*Treue*)—a virtue that had epistemic aspects, but distinct political connotations as well.

From a contemporary perspective, virtue language has been recognized as an important component in moral education. For example, it has been identified and included in the Character Education Framework by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, an important research center dedicated to character education (2017). In the Framework, virtue language is considered to be an important contributor to the development of “virtue literacy,” an important notion in the character-education framework as it includes three inter-related components: (1) virtue perception, (2) virtue knowledge and understanding, and (3) virtue reasoning. Thus schools are encouraged to provide opportunities for children to be exposed to a rich discourse of virtue language, understanding and reasoning (Jubilee Centre, 2017). The

application of virtue language involves its use through familiarity with virtue terms such as selflessness, appreciation, duty, resolution, pride, humor, helping others, and compassion, as demonstrated by the Queen's speech on the 5th of April 2020, which is featured in Kristjánsson's presentation (2020).

Moral language is thought to be embedded within a given form of life. However, there are ways of building bridges between different moral languages and various moral dialects across time and space, as Sichel (1991) suggests. Such an understanding of bridge-building lays the foundation for the current study, one that compares and bridges Chinese virtue language and British virtue language in the era of the coronavirus. The present study, therefore, expands our cross-cultural understanding of virtue language by comparing the virtue language used in two speeches: one by the Queen (cited by Kristjánsson, 2020) and the other by President Xi Jinping.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study utilized a comparative research approach. Our starting point was to utilize Kristjánsson's (2020) list of eight virtues identified in the Queen's speech as a sample source of virtue language, representing the British perspective. We then searched for a speech or address that would need to meet three criteria: (1) a speech equivalent to the coronavirus speech on the 5th of April 2020, but given in a Chinese context; (2) a speech with the same purpose of meeting the challenges of COVID-19; (3) a speech given by the primary leader of China, namely President Xi Jinping (hereafter President Xi). A key speech then selected is a speech given by President Xi on the COVID-19 prevention and control work in Hubei on 31st March 2020. This speech was transcribed and posted on the Chinese media (e.g., Xinhua News, 2020).

This speech, and its focus on virtues, was explored via a thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clark, 2006). We first familiarized ourselves with its contents, and made notes of any vocabulary words and phrases that conveyed a sense of "virtue" based upon the following virtue-language references: (1) the eight virtues identified by Kristjánsson (2020); (2) a list of virtues provided by the character education framework (Jubilee Centre, 2017); and (3) the "Values in Action

Inventory” (VIA) classification of character strengths (VIA Institute, 2020). We then made notes that highlighted each of the vocabulary terms and idioms of this virtue language, and this process was repeated three times at different junctures.

During this process, we also used a “key word query” for searching specific virtues. For example, humor was identified in the Queen’s speech, but did not appear in President Xi’s speech. In the latter, “persistence” (in Chinese, 坚持) was directly mentioned five times, and in idioms at least twice (in Chinese, 顽强不屈, 再接再厉). As is typical in situations like this, all these words were grouped together under the heading “virtue of persistence”. Through reviewing and revisiting the speech, moving back and forth from the specific vocabulary to the overall speech, we identified a list of virtues that it expressed. Table 1 presents in both English and Chinese the virtue words extracted from President Xi’s speech.

Almost all these virtues were mentioned at least once in the speech; for example, “persistence”, “responsibility”, “heroic spirit”, “bravery”, and “help”. However, the list also included virtues that were implicitly embedded in the speech and summarized or extracted by the authors; for example, “self-regulation” (which was extracted from the three sub-virtue terms “self-obedience”, “self-protection”, and “self-service”). While the virtue “hope” was not directly mentioned in the speech, based strictly on the definition of virtue language, “hope” is a better example of moral language than of virtue language, but the authors decided to include it in the virtues list because the line from the speech that led to its inclusion conveys such an extremely strong message of hope: “... the heroic people of Wuhan will be able to completely overcome the epidemic situation, revive themselves from the flames, and create more brilliant achievements in the new era” (Xi, 2020). This shows a sense of optimism and future-mindedness, and so the virtue of “hope” was included in the list (as an exception). This analysis required the authors not only to be equipped with language skills, such as translating Chinese into English and *vice versa*, it also required the researchers to establish a solid understanding of virtue concepts, as well as a cross-cultural understanding of virtues in Chinese and Western contexts.

FINDINGS

There were 37 virtues extracted from the speech by President Xi: Perspective, Bravery, Persistence, Striving spirit, Sacrifice, Dedication, Teamwork, National spirit, Heroic spirit, Respect, Appreciation, Compassion, Leadership, Confidence, Scientific spirit, Accuracy, Effectiveness, Alertness, Prudence, Care, Love, Protection, Self-regulation, High-spiritedness, Civilized spirit, Environmental concern, Service, Awareness, Resolution, Responsibility, Humanness, Wisdom, Help, Tolerance, Law-abidingness, Hope, Purpose.

From these findings, we can observe that the Chinese speech given by President Xi was also rich in virtue language. Among those virtues, some were mentioned and repeated several times throughout the speech, such as the virtue of “persistence”, while others were only mentioned once, such as “humanness”. The frequency of mentioned virtues does not imply the importance of the virtue, and similarly, the order of the virtues does not indicate the importance of the virtues.

Table 1

Extracted Virtues in President Xi’s Speech on the 31st of March 2020

No.	English Translation	Original Text
1	Perspective (taking the big picture)	识大体，顾大局
2	Bravery	不畏，不惧，英勇
3	Persistence	坚持，顽强不屈，坚忍不拔，再接再厉
4	Striving spirit	努力，奋斗
5	Sacrifice	牺牲
6	Dedication	奉献
7	Teamwork	同舟共济，众志成城
8	National spirit	中国力量，中国精神
9	Heroic spirit	英雄精神
10	Respect	敬意，敬畏
11	Appreciation	感谢
12	Compassion	慰问，哀悼（同情）
13	Leadership	领导力
14	Confidence	信心
15	Scientific spirit	科学
16	Accuracy	精准
17	Effectiveness	有效

18	Alertness	头脑清醒
19	Prudence	慎终如殆，谨慎
20	Care	关心
21	Love	关爱
22	Protection	保护
23	Self-regulation	自觉服从，自我保护，自我服务
24	High-spiritedness	昂扬斗志
25	Civilized spirit	文明
26	Environmental concern	绿色环保，善待城市
27	Service	服务
28	Awareness	意识
29	Resolution	必胜之心
30	Responsibility	责任
31	Humanness	仁爱
32	Wisdom	科学防控之智
33	Help	帮助
34	Tolerance	宽容
35	Law-abidingness	坚持依法
36	Hope	英雄的武汉人民一定能够彻底战胜疫情，一定能够浴火重生，一定能够创造新时代更加辉煌的业绩
37	Purpose	不忘初心

During the process of extracting the virtue terms, we also identified three strong sub-themes from the speech, that is “People-centered”, “Party²-centered” and “Nation-centred.” “People” was referred 27 times, “Party” was referred 23 times and “Nation” was mentioned 18 times; these three sub-themes were closely bonded together as a coherent big theme, indicating that the destiny of the people of the nation and the party are closely tied together rather than being separate. This is illustrated by the line: “Wuhan is worthy of being a heroic city. The people of Wuhan are worthy of being heroes. The whole Party, the whole nation and the people of all ethnic groups in China are moved and praise you!” (Xi, 2020)

“Heart” is the magic word that combines the virtues together. In this public speech, “heart” was mentioned over 10 times, such as in “warm people’s hearts and gather people’s “hearts” (Xi, 2020); and “we should strengthen our sense of victory in heart, responsibility in heart, humanness spirit in heart, prudence in heart... (Xi,

² Referring to the Communist Party of the People’s Republic of China.

2020).” And in addition, “remain true to our original heart,” this original heart repeated twice towards the end of the speech, conveying a strong sense of mission and purpose. In a way, “heart” here seems to function as a master virtue or a meta-virtue, synthesizing the core element of the individual virtues

DISCUSSION

Comparing our findings with the virtues identified in the Queen’s speech (Kristjánsson, 2020), it appears that President Xi’s speech contains a rather long list of virtue terms. However, this is not suggesting that the quantity of virtue language mirrors the importance of virtue language in the two speeches since the length of the addresses was not the same, and the public speaking tradition/style may not be the same in the United Kingdom and China.

It is still meaningful to compare the two lists of virtues. First, five out of the eight virtues in the Queen’s speech also occurred in President Xi’s speech: (1) a sense of duty or responsibility when facing the challenge, (2) a sense of compassion towards others, (3) a willingness to offer help to others, (4) a sense of appreciation and (5) the resolution of the challenge and winning the battle. These virtues are highly consistent in the two leaders’ speeches despite being spoken in different languages and delivered to different audiences.

As “selflessness” was mentioned in the Queen’s speech directly, it shows a shift from self-centered to others-centered virtues, which actually shares features with President Xi’s “People-centered” speech, which also included virtues such as service, sacrifice and dedication and so on to describe a clearer picture of a sense of selflessness. However, there are two virtues in the Queen’s speech which did not appear in President Xi’s speech: “pride” and “humor”. This may call for some cultural and historical explanations. For example, Chinese traditional culture encourages virtues such as “modesty” rather than “pride.” Moreover, “humor” (especially of the self-deprecating kind) is often considered a national characteristic of British people. These findings thus reflect both the universality and the locality of virtue.

Table 2

A Comparison of Virtue Terms Between the Queen's Speech and President Xi's Speech in Addressing the Challenge of COVID-19, 2020

President Xi's speech	Queen's speech
On the 31st of March 2020	On the 5th of April 2020
Perspective, Bravery, Persistence, Striving spirit, Sacrifice, Dedication, Teamwork, National spirit, Heroic spirit, Respect, Appreciation, Compassion , Leadership, Confidence, Scientific spirit, Accuracy, Effectiveness, Alertness, Prudence, Care, Love, Protection, Self-regulation, High-spiritedness, Civilized spirit, Environmental concern, Service, Awareness, Resolution, Duty/Responsibility , Humanness, Wisdom, Help , Tolerance, Law-abidingness, Hope, Purpose.	Selflessness, Appreciation, Duty Resolution, Pride, Humor, Helping others, Compassion

Note. Virtues in bold are shared virtues in the two speeches.

Beyond the sameness and differences of the virtue language in the two speeches, it appears that virtue language contains multiple aspects, as Creyghton et al. (2016) suggested regarding the characteristics of virtues, the epistemic virtues, moral virtues and political virtues. For instance, in the virtue language used in President Xi's speech, the virtue of "teamwork" has epistemic aspects and at the same time distinct political connotations as well. As the findings revealed, the destiny of the Chinese people, the nation and the Party are closely related and cannot be separated. This is also true in the Queen's speech, for when the virtue of "pride" was included, it was not just about personal pride but also about a higher-level pride, British national pride. So once again we see how the universality of virtue is complemented by local features.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Virtue language, throughout history, has been seen as being highly significant; it remains relevant and vital in our contemporary societies, especially under the current challenges the world is facing. The language of virtue, then, was both

vibrant and powerful in these two speeches given by the two primary leaders of these two countries, Britain and China. We can conclude that there are shared virtues across languages and cultures, such as appreciation, responsibility/duty, resolution, helping others, and compassion. Future research should also investigate the virtue languages of other linguistic and cultural traditions, in order to give the existing findings a wider framework.

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Chapter 8

An Ethical View of Globalization in the Post-Epidemic Era: Reflections on Multiculturalism and Patriotism

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 epidemic first struck (and infected) several countries around the world in 2020, and greatly impeded global exchanges. In this paper, the author re-examines the discussions of liberalism in the context of western political philosophy in the 1980s from the economic and political disputes in the wake of the pandemic. As we know, in the 1980s the Western world began to reflect more deeply upon liberalism, communitarianism, and multiculturalism. The collective consciousness was revived and patriotism was once again valued. On the other hand, the disadvantages of the gap between the rich and the poor under neoliberal globalization was also being criticized. Here I will try to show that multiculturalism and patriotism, if not carefully watched and nurtured, may hinder globalization, and will provide some philosophical reflections on the possible directions of globalization in the post-epidemic era. I argue that globalization in the post-epidemic era will have an important ethical dimension, replacing the earlier wave of globalization which only focused on economic expansion. I use the wave of Western stigmatization of Asian people wearing masks as an example to show that multiculturalism in the future should still be based upon concrete medical and scientific knowledge, thus denouncing the prejudices brought by relativism. I also invoke Primoratz's ethical patriotism as a theoretical basis for global civic education in the post-epidemic era. In a nutshell, through the dramatic changes brought about by COVID-19, we can rethink the vision of a global ethics in order to promote world cooperation.

KEYWORDS: Covid-19, global ethics, multiculturalism, patriotism, sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, Covid-19 began to ravage the world, and it so far has infected more than 482,237,066 people and killed more than 6,126,226. In the United States alone, as of March 29, 2022 more than 79,995,485 people have been infected and more than 977,687 have died. This article was conceived and written in July of 2020, and the number of infections and deaths is increasing almost every day, which is really alarming. With the exception of very few places, including Taiwan, in-person classes were eliminated in most countries. Of course, new environmental policies may be an important strategy in bringing this epidemic under control; along with virus transmission, the symbiosis between human beings and other species are clearly crucial issues. This paper focuses on the reconstruction of the global order in the post-pandemic era.

During the trade war between China and the United States, the epidemic also involved complex international political conflicts. For example, the frequently accused China, in particular the WHO Secretary-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, and withdrew from the WHO during the Trump presidency. Wuhan, the “birthplace” of the pandemic, also an inland city of China where the revolution initiated by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen overthrew the Qing dynasty in 1911, launched the first COVID lockdown, isolating itself off from the outside on the 23rd of January in 2020. Some western countries accused the Chinese government of violating human rights, but many of them had to take similar measures to prevent the pandemic from getting worse in their countries.

What was worse, global traffic became also paralyzed, with the airports of many countries remaining almost completely closed. Suddenly, people began to realize that the process of globalization we had taken for granted in the past could be suspended at any time. The wave of globalization driven by British and American neo-liberalism after the 1980s had already raised academic doubts since 2000. Many scholars believe that numerous injustices resulted from the worldwide failure to give due importance to the issue of equality. But no man is an island, and no country can afford the economic shock of fragmentation. Even the U.K. and the U.S., which advertise themselves as

liberal countries, have taken drastic measures to block China's Huawei recently. In July 2020, President Trump publicly expressed the desire to force China to sell TikTok to the U.S. Western countries have accused China of state capitalism and thus of violating the spirit of liberalism, while the U.S. has been violating the spirit of free trade in a wave of trade wars. Given this complicated international political and economic situations, I wonder whether we should choose to continue with these regional confrontations and bring an end to post-pandemic globalization or, rather, to establish a new global ethics that goes beyond the globalization that once was dominated by neo-liberalism.

Since 2000, liberalism in British educational philosophy has led to debates between J. White and other scholars (White, 2003), while criticism of neoliberalism in educational policy has become common (Marshall, 1996; Olssen et al., 2004). Since the 1980s, critiques of Western liberalism from the perspectives of Communitarianism and Multiculturalism have become prominent even in political philosophy. Multiculturalists highlight the peculiarity of individual cultures, and hold that a universal culture should not be allowed to suppress or stifle any specific culture. Furthermore, the communitarian scholar A. MacIntyre regards the tradition of Kant's universal laws of morality as making these laws too abstract and isolated. He believes that the morality based on the virtues of cultural practices, rather than the morality of rule, should be at the root of human ethics and happiness. MacIntyre (1984) also re-authenticates the necessity of patriotism as a virtue in civic education. However, traditional Western liberals have always been concerned that patriotism will encourage national chauvinism abroad and hide the abuse of power by leaders who are engaged in domestic affairs. Thus, liberal countries do not advocate placing too much emphasis on patriotism in civic education.

Of course, it is noteworthy that Donald Trump adopted Ronald Reagan's 1980s campaign slogan "Let's Make America Great Again" when he ran for president in 2016. The difference is that Reagan supported the neo-liberal spirit of globalization in dealing with the Soviet Union, whereas Trump's blatant right-wing patriotism violated the free trade spirit that both the United States in the past and China recently were trying to

maintain. After China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, it launched the “Silk Road Economic Belt” and the “21st Century Maritime Silk Road” in 2013, thus reflecting the need for integrating free trade and globalization. Paradoxically, both the East and the West have blamed each other’s political acts undertaken in the name of patriotism. Moreover, in the U.S., a white policeman killed an innocent black man in the line of duty, leading to large-scale black-white racial conflicts. Then in January of 2021, Trump’s supporters stormed Capitol Hill after his defeat. This event has become a test for the U.S. with regard to the issue of how to resolve racial conflicts by implementing patriotic and democratic policies.

I majored in Philosophy of Education, and so I am not the most qualified person to speak on these international economic and political issues. However, in this paper I re-examine the discussion of liberalism in Western political philosophy in the 1980s in the context of international political and economic disputes. Also, I provide some philosophical reflections on the direction(s) taken by globalization in the post-epidemic era.

THE SPIRIT OF LIBERALISM AND ITS CHALLENGES

Challenges From Multiculturalism and Communitarianism: Recovery of Collective Rights and Patriotism

Western liberalism manifests itself in politics primarily as a distrust of state power. Its advocates believe that collective power suppresses individual freedom; in other words, Western liberalism focuses on moderating the potential evil of collective power. R. Dworkin (1978) stresses the neutrality thesis: a country or group should accept the variety in values and treat them equally, rather than favor any specific value or lifestyle. Thus governments should recognize individual differences and treat each value fairly. Liberals value diversity and focus on respect for individual autonomy or choice, whereas communitarianists or multiculturalists reject this atomistic view of the self, and it holds that individuals make value choices or decisions in the context of their culture.

The collective rights of ethnic minorities are recognized by multicultural theorists. In their view, the individual diversity proposed by traditional liberalism fails to really

respect the cultures of minority groups. A good example of this is the case of *Wisconsin vs. Yoder*, where we see the Amish minority guarding its religious lifestyle, refusing the last two years of compulsory education so as to protect their future and prevent it from sinking into oblivion due to the influence of mainstream American values. Here we also see the impact of multiculturalism on liberalism after the 1980s in the West. However, even the liberal pluralist W. Galston, who appreciates multiculturalism, also agrees that society's minimum requirements should include protection of human life (via a ban on human sacrifice), guaranteeing the normal development of basic capacities of individuals (via a ban on impeding physical growth of baby or children), and promoting social rationality (the kind of understanding need to participate in the society, economy, and polity). Moreover, if any groups neglect these requirements, the state has a right to intervene (Galston, 1995, pp. 524–525). W. Kymlicka advocated for external protection of minority groups to prevent them from being assimilated or controlled by more powerful majority groups. But internal restrictions are still absolutely necessary; that is, ethnic minorities cannot restrict the civic rights of their own people (Kymlicka, 1996, pp. 34–48). In my view, the reason why these scholars wish to revise liberalism and emphasize collective rights is not to deny personal autonomy, but to highlight the pluralistic spirit of respecting “difference.”

Throughout human history, patriotism has always been regarded as a commendable virtue, while nationalism leads to the sordid history of xenophobia among countries. Since the Second World War ended in the mid-1940s, individual freedom and the rule of law have secured the foundation of Western liberal-democratic countries, lest the power of the state encroach upon individual liberty. However, in Western countries in the 1980s, under the influence of the aforementioned policy of collective rights, there was also a revival of patriotism. MacIntyre (1984) emphasizes that patriotism was and is a virtue with intrinsic value. Although Miller (1988), Tamir (1993), Viroli (1997) and others all agree on the importance of patriotism, they are also committed to harmonizing nationalism (patriotism) and liberalism. On the other hand, there arise certain doubts on the part of traditional liberals. Nussbaum (1996) worries that a narrow form of patriotism in some countries may ultimately be harmful to world peace. Starting from Tagore's novel and the Stoics in ancient Greece, Nussbaum rebrands cosmopolitanism. That Keller (2005) takes patriotism as a form of bad faith is

another typical example. In the context of civic education, this has attracted the attention of scholars in the philosophy of education.

Interestingly, J. White (2005), who stands for the liberal tradition in the Anglo-Saxon philosophy of education, argues that states (or countries) should emphasize on cultivation of their national identities, while the liberal feminist Enslin (1999) still doubts that national consciousness is conducive to democracy. Stevens (1999) and Archard (1999) also disapprove of White's argument and restate their concerns about patriotism, insisting that patriotic education should be carried out carefully. Given the context of international politics in today's post-epidemic era, these debates are worth rethinking in the West.

Deficiencies of Neo-liberalism

Classical liberalism seeks to establish institutions that can mediate power and guarantee individual freedoms through the separation of powers, checks and balances, a multi-party system, and freedom of speech and of the press. The libertarian thinking of F. A. Hayek and M. Friedman even promotes the minimization of state power in order to prevent inappropriate economic interventions. Perhaps influenced by Keynes, who emphasized the positive role of public construction during the Great Depression of the 1930s, and stimulated by classical Marxism, the U.K. and the U.S. pursued the ideal of egalitarianism as far as possible after the Second World War, though not to the extent of completely adopting Hayek's approach.

However, after U.S. President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher began to advocate neo-liberalism in the 1980s, the operation of international finance became more conducive to the accumulation of transnational capital due to the improvement of technology. Governments took measures such as tax reduction and other schemes favorable to enterprises, resulting in the growth of GDP and wealth. However, these measures eventually benefit only a few people, and most people cannot enjoy the results. The free flow of capital also makes it easier for transnational corporations to avoid taxes, so that it becomes more difficult for governments to achieve a reasonable level of social welfare protection.

Briefly, with the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor, Hayek's minimal government policy has caused governments to shirk their responsibilities. On

the other hand, due to the electoral mechanisms of democracy, governments are apt to become linked with consortiums whose effects are much broader and farther away from Hayek's ideal of restricting state power. What is worse, in recent years, Western parliamentarianism has become disabled and populism has been increasingly manipulated by politicians. However, the original democratic competitions among political parties has descended into wrangles among classes, religions, ethnic groups, and even advocates of various immigration and refugee policies, thus increasingly corrupting the spirit of democratic politics.

Gewirtz (2002, p.32) reminds that from the welfare state to the post-welfare state, the quality assurance and consumerism driven by neo-liberalism also reduced the original purpose of education to the accountability under the new-managerialism. Countries tend to emphasize so-called accountability and an evidence-based orientation that focuses on educational output, even going so far as to distort educational subjectivity. Biesta (2010), in criticizing the educational indicators coming from the European Union, OECD, and PISA, contends that the widespread use of the measurement of educational outcomes has actually displaced the true purpose of education. The point is that an educational system that stressing "learnification" tends to depersonalize education, so that teachers begin to lose their capacity for making wise judgments (Biesta, 2016). Not just education and student performance, but the whole practice of government by bureaucratic management has become shackled by technocracy (Marshall, 1996). In one word, the globalization of neo-liberalism has weakened the ideal of the welfare state, resulting in the evils of capitalism. Thus education is becoming reduced to a technocracy that merely serves as the commercial logic of capitalism, and the ideal of equal educational opportunity becomes a slogan.

Overcoming the above-mentioned deficiencies certainly requires the reflections of intellectuals, professional managers, and statesmen. The point of these reflections is not the pursuit of greater profit, but the co-existence and co-prosperity of all human beings. In any serious attempt on the part of many countries to get back to a global-ethical vision, education will clearly still play an active role.

ETHICS AND GLOBALIZATION IN THE POST-EPIDEMIC ERA

Here I concentrate on the question of how communitarianism and multiculturalism challenge liberalism and the debates concerning patriotism. First, I try to show that the central idea of “respect” from multiculturalism, while respect should be based on the certainty of values or of facts, by looking at the issue of “masks or no masks” during the epidemic. Then, in the context of the debates of Western scholars regarding patriotism, I argue that the ethical patriotism of I. Primoratz can become the middle ground, and thus can be conducive to international cooperation in the post-epidemic era.

RECONSTRUCTING THE MULTICULTURAL IDEAL BASED ON THE CERTAINTY OF VALUES AND FACTS

Since the SARS outbreak in 2002, wearing masks to protect oneself from the disease in Asian countries (at least in Taiwan) has come to be seen as something that benefits both oneself and others. However, we also have seen that during the COVID-19 pandemic, Westerners have tended to discriminate against Asian-Europeans or Asian-Americans who wear masks, and even to discriminate against Asian students. Along with the ongoing trade war between China and the U.S., the stigmatizing of China has become more serious. President Trump even publicly referred to COVID-19 as the Chinese (or “China”) virus. In addition, we have continued to hear about the many protest marchers in the West who refuse the mask mandate in public places. This is indeed an interesting phenomenon as it involves the point of liberalism and multiculturalism, and it deserves to be taken seriously. Liberalism itself attaches great importance to the ideal of having respect for people, as Peters regards Kant’s respect for people as a procedural principle (Peters, 1966, Ch.8).

The cultural collective rights to which multiculturalists attach importance also call for the identification of different cultures. According to multiculturalism, there is no single definitive value, and the cultures of different countries should be respected. If the cultures of different countries were respected, there would be no cases of Westerners beating Asians wearing masks on the subway. I believe that some people in the West still discriminate against Asian people who wear masks, a practice still be based on an incorrect perception of the facts.

Perhaps we need not insist, as Siegel (1997, p. 151) claims, that all forms of multiculturalism and of universal “respect” for social class as well as gender and ethnicity can be demonstrated in the epistemology of the Enlightenment or the ethics of Kant. But Siegel also reminds us that respect has both moral and epistemological meanings. When we regard respect only as a moral term, we may miss its epistemological significance. Rachels (1998, pp. 21–22) also points out that cultural relativism leads to three consequences: we can no longer say that the customs of other societies are morally inferior to our own, we cannot decide whether actions are right or wrong just by consulting the standards of our society, and we will be forced to realize that the ideal of moral progress has been called into doubt. Rachels thus reminds us that different cultures act out their different values, and that there is less disagreement than it seems. The value of cultural relativity is to keep an open mind and be able to recognize that the customs of different societies may be specific products of their cultures, and not strictly right or wrong. However, it cannot be concluded as a measure or policy without right and wrong.

This brings us to the epistemological dimension of “respect.” We may find it inconvenient to wear masks. I illustrate the syllogism of reasoning in the context of mask-wearing as follows:

(a.1)

Everyone must take responsibility for his/her own life.

Wearing masks can efficiently prevent oneself from being infected.

I should wear a mask outside. (My right)

Everyone should have the right to wear a mask outside and not be discriminated against.

(a.2)

We are responsible for others' lives.

Wearing masks can efficiently prevent us from infecting others.

I should wear a mask outside. (My obligation)

Everyone should (or has an obligation to) wear a mask outside.

(b.1)

When it comes to not hindering others, the government should not be allowed to restrain individual freedom.

There is no clear relationship between wearing masks and preventing this disease.

The government should not force people to wear masks outside.

(b.2)

We are responsible for others' lives.

People who wear masks may still get infected.

Those who suffer from infectious diseases should stay at home.

All people who do not wear masks outside are healthy.

The government should not force people to wear masks outside.

(a.1) and (a.2) give general reasons for wearing a mask. (b.1) and (b.2) provide reasons to oppose the government's mandate that citizens wear masks. (a.1) states that an individual has the right to wear a mask, whereas (a.2) states the obligation to wear a mask to protect others. Whether or not (a.2) can justify successfully that everyone has an obligation to wear a mask outside, as well as whether or not (b.1) is correct in that the government should not force people to wear masks outside, both conclusions depend on whether the minor premise is objective or not—wearing a mask prevents infection of others efficiently. In my opinion, it is (b.2) that touches upon the difference between Eastern and Western cultures. I suppose lots of Westerners believe that it is necessary to wear masks only when people are sick. The vast majority of people do not wear masks when they are not sick. However, even if we accept the reason of (b.2) that the western idea of not wearing a mask until you are sick, it is a remarkable fact that it does not work to not wear masks outside when faced with so many asymptomatic infections of COVID-19.

In this post-modern era, many multiculturalists and feminists invoke the perspective of the relativism of knowledge.¹ They claim that mainstream social absolutism might oppress others, and thus that post-Enlightenment rationalism should

¹ Postmodernists criticize the Western tradition of rationality and tend to assume a relativist position in their epistemology. Siegel (1987) combats this relativistic epistemology with all his might, and he also extensively discusses the errors of the relativism of postmodernism, multiculturalism, and feminism (Siegel, 1997). However, the limit of the article prevents me from going into greater detail here.

be subverted. Is multiculturalism really a form of relativism? Siegel (1987, pp.112–114) suggests that a weak sense of relativism means that knowledge is fallible. However, if there are no absolute standards of knowledge, as we see with the in-commensurability of Kuhn's different paradigms, Siegel reminds us that it has been absolutism in their own paradigm when we adhere to different paradigms and have no objective standards. What is worse, absolutism actually encourages a sense of self-righteousness with regard to each paradigm, and that leads to dogmatism. Siegel (1997, p. 183) emphasizes that respect for diversity does not necessarily presuppose the relativity of knowledge, nor does a belief in the absoluteness or certainty of knowledge necessarily hinder diversity. Postmodernism and multiculturalism need not negate the universal standard of knowledge in order to highlight marginalized and disadvantaged voices. Inclusion is not necessarily the patent of post-modernism.

In a word, given the dispute between East and West regarding the epidemic, the issue of “masks or no masks” in both the East and the West makes it clear that a respect for multiculturalism should be based on medical facts and the certainty of medical knowledge. It is clear to suggest that post-modernity and multiculturalism, with their emphasis on the relativity of knowledge and values, bear the positive spirit of inclusion and tolerance. But the spirit of inclusion and tolerance may betray the spirit that post-modernity and multiculturalism brightly boast. The journal *Scientific American* (October 1, 2020) had not explicitly expressed its position in the presidential elections in its 175 years of the U.S. history. However, unprecedentedly, this journal explicitly endorsed Joe Biden and denounced Donald Trump because the latter has done and said many things that betray the spirit of fact and science. Thus, we can suggest that the future international cooperation in the post-epidemic times will, too, depend more on professional but not arbitrary knowledge.

AN ETHICAL UNDERTAKING OF GLOBALIZATION: ETHICAL PATRIOTISM

If it is widely agreed that a respect for multiculturalism cannot be contrary to the basic facts, then this still applies equally to the discussion of patriotism. I can agree with MacIntyre's view that patriotism has intrinsic value. According to MacIntyre's critiques, traditional liberalism looks at the relationship between individual and state in terms of contract theory, focusing on instrumental values based on reciprocity, which cannot explain the spontaneous feelings of individuals for or against their state. But

even MacIntyre (1984, pp. 13–14) uses the case of Adam von Trott against Hitler to show that citizens of a country they love may not be loyal to a particular politician or government. A. Gutmann (1996) believes that the spirit of cosmopolitanism promoted by the democratic humanism of Nussbaum is very similar to the democratic citizenship we associate with liberalism, since democratic civic education is based on individual rights, equality, and justice, which may not serve the purpose of being or remaining loyal to a particular community.

However, Gutmann (1996) reminds us that constructing a global community in the name of cosmopolitanism might be arbitrary. The international-cooperation organizations of the United Nations must also act effectively within individual countries to achieve the best results of cooperation. We can agree with the cosmopolitan ideal that it is difficult to operate at the state level, for as White (2005, p. 184) observes, “A large part of the social, cultural, economic and political framework of our lives is the national community. Around the world we find health and welfare systems. Mass media, whether public or private, operate largely within national frontiers, keeping each part of the nation in touch with all the others.” Nussbaum’s idea/ideal of cosmopolitanism which encompasses common humanity is moving,² the cosmopolitanism at the state level may face the struggling between community and nationalism. In addition to perpetuating the Cold War conflict between the West and Russia, nationalism or patriotism also played an important role in Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

I would hold that the view of citizenship cultivated by I. Primoratz’s (2015) ethical patriotism embodies the reconciliation of patriotism and cosmopolitanism. The focus of ethical patriotism is not on achieving national glory, but on the hope that our fellow countrymen can reflect on themselves, care about the ethical performance of their country, and have a clear sense of collective responsibility. This kind of ethical responsibility makes patriotism something that is not arbitrarily exclusive. Primoratz (2015) defines patriotism as love for and identification with one’s country, which means showing concern for the welfare of one’s country and compatriots, and he also emphasizes the importance of collective responsibility; i.e., what the state does should correspond to its moral requirements and promote moral values both domestically and

² The position of Nussbaum (1996) is still inclined toward cosmopolitanism and disparages patriotism. Later, she also reconciled patriotism and cosmopolitanism (Nussbaum, 2008).

abroad. Each nation must strive for a just and humane world and strive to extend itself beyond its borders to show its support of common human solidarity. The state can also face up to its past history and then admit, apologize, and make amends for past injustices so as to avoid making the same mistakes in the future. Thus, the real point of ethical patriotism is not national glory but a profound reflection and caring about the current state of our compatriots, that is, assuming collective responsibility for all of us.

How is ethical patriotism possible? Primoratz (2015, pp. 94–100) offers three proposals: Firstly, citizens are in the optimal position in their countries. They can compare and make judgments regarding the moral conduct of other countries, while also caring about and promoting their own country. Secondly, citizens are responsible for examining their own conduct, which might be unjust, while they are also benefitting from their country. Thirdly, citizens in democratic countries who participate in the process of legislation and policy formation can also take charge of their own country's policies.

Primoratz thus attempts to show that ethical patriotism is positive and possible if citizens have this consciousness, that is, they feel guilty if they do not become ethical patriots. Primoratz declares that if people think about and deeply feel for their country and compatriots, then they have the duty to show a special concern for their own and others' moral well-being.

I am significantly moved by Primoratz's ethical patriotism, as my birthplace, which values patriotism, fails to criticize the patriotism education itself. At the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, Taiwan exported masks extensively and won worldwide acclaim. At the same time, however, the government banned exports to mainland China. Political realities have also prevented Taiwan from assisting the Mainland Chinese people in a timely manner. Thus I am deeply moved by Primoratz's ethical patriotism. I have no intention of making any judgments about Trump personally. Taylor (2017) has pointed out that the emergence of atypical political figures in various countries, critical thinking, autonomy and open minds are more important. M. Peters, a critic of neoliberal globalization, also points out that Trumpian patriotism is hardly the right way to block globalization. He worries that patriotism will replace globalism as an even greater disaster in the future (Peters, 2020). Even with President Trump out of the White House, we still cannot ignore the impact of Trumpism.

During the period of the spread of COVID-19, international communication has come close to being suspended. It is reasonable that countries impose quarantine measures. However, it is a pity that some countries inhibit each other from collaborating for their own interest. In the first year of the COVID-19 outbreak, I called in my class for countries in the northern hemisphere to work together to prevent the spread of the epidemic to countries in the southern hemisphere. It is regrettable that the countries of the northern hemisphere are too busy to assist the countries of the southern hemisphere. The problem now is that rich countries in the northern hemisphere have mastered the technology for developing vaccines, and yet they have been unable to commit themselves to an equitable distribution of vaccines in the countries of the southern hemisphere. In this post-epidemic era, I sincerely hope that ethical patriotism will finally mean a new level of globalization for citizens of the world.³

ETHICAL PATRIOTISM AND CIVIC EDUCATION

Citizenship education in this paper generally refers to the development of appropriate levels of individual responsibility and commitment, embodying the support of individuals and communities for the shared values of the communities they live in. School curriculum subjects such as ethics, social studies, and history all play an important role. Primoratz's ethical patriotism has shown that the individual has to reinforce the ethical mission of the state in order for the state to show greater ethical responsibility. Curren and Dorn (2017) also discuss the emphasis on patriotic education in the era of globalization.⁴ They present the virtues of morality, while also stressing that civic duties should not be confined to the countryside. By framing virtuous patriotism within this wider context of civic virtue and responsibility. Curren and Dorn

³ Another example may help the rationale of my argument: Taiwan's area of forests account for more than two-thirds of the island. During the period of Japanese rule (1895-1945), it witnessed a period of heavy logging. In 1991, deforestation was completely banned in Taiwan. However, statistics show that Taiwan's timber production rate is only 1.02%, which is much lower than Japan's 36.6% and Korea's 15.2% in 2020. The ethical predicament thus emerges: On the one hand, we protect Taiwan's own forests, but on the other hand, we exploit other countries' forests. Scholars point out the objective fact that banning deforestation without making effective use of forest thinnings can also exert a harmful impact on the forest conservation. In recent years, Taiwan has gradually increased the timber self-sufficiency rate. Our ethical principle of banning deforestation must always rely not only on objective professional knowledge, but also on a global ethical vision of co-existence and co-prosperity.

⁴ I would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for recommending the work of Curren and Dorn (2018).

(2017, p. 102) recognize that a virtuous form of patriotic sentiment could play a limited if significant role in motivating acts of civic responsibility.

Curren and Dorn define civic intelligence, civic friendship, and civic competence as components of civic virtue. Civic intelligence reflects the tradition of liberalism (such as Rawls' public reason), and it is necessary to cultivate students' ability to use reason and knowledge to pursue the interests and well-being of the community. Civic friendship represents a sense of belonging of the individual to the group. Schools must also adopt a cooperative learning approach to foster a just community consisting of students from different regions or cultures. And by the teaching of history, geography, and literature, students can go beyond the level of face-to-face friendship to promote the common friendship of mankind. Furthermore, civic education is not just about ideas. It is about action. Participation in public affairs, community service, problem-solving skills, and engagement in international cooperation are all highlights of civic education in schools.

In the previous section, I mentioned that neo-liberalism has created a lack of wealth equality both domestically and internationally. At the beginning of the epidemic in the U.S., M. Sandel, a communitarian who emphasizes virtues, proposed the questions, "Are we all in this together?" and "What do we owe one another as citizens?" in order to illustrate how the unity of Americans is hindered by the inequality between the rich and the poor. He hopes that after this COVID-19 outbreak, the U.S. will rethink the economic measures of the past 40 decades, which have divided the people but also revived American unity. He says that "We need to ask whether reopening the economy means going back to a system that, over the past four decades, pulled us apart, or whether we can emerge from this crisis with an economy that enables us to say, and to believe, that we are all in this together" (Sandel, 2020).

Sandel's call applies not just to the U.S. but to all countries in the world. Although Primoratz, Curren and Dorn do not oppose patriotism, they all face up to the urgent need for a global ethics and emphasize the global need for a patriotic ethics and international cooperation. Let patriotism serve its positive function and avoid any negative side effects. Sandel does not use patriotic words, but he points out that economic injustice can hinder the unity of our citizens. If we agree with this view, then we must agree that patriotism should be endowed with an ethical mission in the realms

of history, geography, social studies, ethics or morality, and other school subjects. Internally an emphasis should be placed on the equal well-being of subgroups, and externally on international mutual understanding in civic education. Even scientific subjects—such as physics, chemistry, and the earth sciences—should bear greater global responsibility (e.g., the greenhouse effect, climate change mitigation). Indeed, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) formulated by the United Nations should be the focus of citizenship education in every country at present.⁵

CONCLUSION: RECONSTRUCTING THE PROSPECTS OF GLOBALIZATION IN THE POST-EPIDEMIC ERA

At the end of the last century, globalization based on neo-liberalism led to the evils of capitalism, which has long been criticized by scholars. COVID-19 is raging, forcing us to slow down as much as possible the forces of globalization. The stagnation of our global economy also shows that we cannot completely deny the economic value of the interactions between countries shared each other by globalization. We really should take this opportunity to reconstruct a new political and economic order. Regrettably, the performance of the U.S. and other Western countries at the beginning of COVID-19 not only reflects domestic epidemic-management problems, but also seems to hinder the possibility of international cooperation due to the facts of the China-U.S. trade war and the U.S. presidential election. The Russia-Ukraine war seems to have led to more serious conflicts and confrontations between the East and the West. It would be a pity if after the epidemic the value of globalization is completely denied and international interactions are impeded.

Global ethics is not new. Peter Singer (2003) looks at global ethics from the perspective of climate change. Singer (2016) devotes himself to the ethical issues concerning animal rights, global poverty, and biotechnology from the perspective of utilitarianism. The challenges of the post-pandemic era force us to think about the ethical mission of globalization. After all, no man is an island. We have only one earth.

⁵ Of course, SDGs cannot be implemented in a manner of instrumental reason without truly understanding the spirit of it. For example, some schools simply use the top-down education policy and then avidly compete to obtain and implement the resources of the policy, such as the improving of university rankings. This can, however, easily lead to disadvantages.

If we place the controversies of political philosophy in the Western world after the 1980s—including the challenges of multiculturalism to liberalism and the revival of patriotism by communitarianism—in the context of the post-epidemic situation, we can provide a new perspective for the interpretation of globalization. First, in the last wave of globalization, science and technology promoted financial circulation, promoted industrial upgrading, and created the accumulation of overall human wealth. However, what we sacrifice is social equity and our responsibility to the disadvantaged, which means a lack of consideration of ethics. The spread of COVID-19 has broken down barriers between countries and reminded people of the importance of our ethical commitments to each other. Moreover, the mutual respect between different countries and cultures should not become mere lip service. The example of mask prevention shows the importance of having an ethical consensus. This applies not only to domestic governance, but also to international cooperation.

Finally, strengthening the literacy and responsibility of world citizens through ethical patriotism should also be the focus of our citizenship education in the future. On the other hand, if countries take advantage of the epidemic to block the development of globalization by a narrow nationalism and create alliances or confrontations among regions, they will truly miss the opportunity given us by the epidemic to test the co-existence and prosperity of all mankind. At the beginning of the outbreak, more than half of the world's school terms or classes were suspended. During this tough time, China took the lead at first, chanting the slogan “classes suspended but learning continues” and made full use of networking and other measures to develop teaching plans, including those for replacing face-to-face teaching. The futures of video technology and net-teaching are also bound to change the whole landscape of school education. New technological advances will also accelerate in the future. How to commit digital technology more to the promotion of global ethics is worth thinking about, although this matter is beyond the scope of the present article. All this comes to the fore as the conflict between Russia and Ukraine remains unresolved. Determining how nationalism and patriotism can strengthen domestic unity without triggering international conflicts remains a difficult challenge. Let us, at this critical juncture, learn from the past, embrace hope, and renew the ethical mission of globalization in the post-epidemic era.

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Chapter 9

Contribution of Online Tools to Thinking and Deliberating about Morality in Japanese Schools: A Preliminary Experiment with Student-Teachers

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ABSTRACT

In 2018, the emphasis of conventional teaching methods for compulsory education classes on morality in Japanese schools shifted from reading emotions to thinking and deliberating. The latter better needs meaningful communication with others. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency declarations were issued on several occasions, which rendered conducting classroom discussions difficult. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has also made it possible for one to acquire a virtual communication experience by employing online tools. Accordingly, this study was conducted to examine whether or not moral discussions that employ online tools improve the communication skills and morality of student-teachers. The impact and applicability of online tools in future educational situations in morality classes are discussed in relation to the findings.

KEYWORDS: online discussion, face-to-face discussion, student-teachers, morality classes, systems thinking

Recently, the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (2015) recently pointed out the importance of cognitive and non-cognitive abilities, which include social abilities (e.g., grit, cooperation, and communication skills), in influencing the quality of our daily life. Moral education in each country¹ can be considered one of the methods for developing non-cognitive abilities. How is moral education, which is considered to be important all over the world, positioned and functioning in Japan? Moreover, what has been the influence of the COVID-19 on Japanese moral education?

First, this study provides an overview of the history of moral education in Japan and highlight current issues of moral education in Japan, including the impact of the COVID-19. Second, it reports a preliminary experiment on the educational effects of online moral discussions during the COVID-19 crisis on student-teachers. Third, this study discusses the implications of the results for the future application of online teaching styles and communication methods with a focus on Japanese moral education.

THE HISTORY OF MORAL EDUCATION IN JAPAN

Immediately following World War II (WWII), morality classes in public schools were cancelled by the government. In 1958, a course called *Research on Moral Education*, the subject matter of which was a particular method to teach morality was established as part of teacher training universities. These institutions have started to re-examine and revise the *Research on Moral Education* course. Since then, student-teachers have learned the method for teaching “morality classes” (*dotoku-no-jikan* in Japanese)², through the *Research on Moral Education* course. However, no national textbooks on morality classes had been published, which denoted that the teaching method never became universally established. Therefore, the content of the *Research on Moral Education* course varied widely according to the expertise in charge of the course; moral philosophy, moral psychology, and moral education, among others

¹ In this paper, the term “moral education” is used to refer to all activities related to the teaching of morality in schools.

² Schools in Japan have a class system, and all teachers, apart from managers, are in charge of the class. It is a rule that the class teacher is in charge of the morality classes of their class. Therefore, all teachers require the skills to carry out morality classes from the time they become in-service teachers.

(Nagata & Fujisawa, 2010). Therefore, moral education was not being taught in a biased manner similar to that prior to WWII in the *Research on Moral Education* course. Conversely, from the standpoint of student-teachers, opportunities for comprehensively learning how to conduct morality classes were insufficient in this course.³ Moreover, after becoming in-service teachers, morality classes were held only once per week at 35 times a year, which made it more difficult for in-service teachers to acquire teaching skills for morality classes than for classes covering other lessons (Araki, 2021).⁴ Although many in-service teachers could not sufficiently learn the basic skills for teaching morality classes, they had to continue with the acquisition of positive educational practices. As a result, it became difficult for both student-teachers and in-service teachers to learn how to teach morality classes.

CURRENT MORAL EDUCATION IN JAPAN

In 2018, in Japanese moral education, the teaching methodology for morality classes changed its emphasis on reading emotions to an emphasis on thinking and deliberating. In addition, all teachers have to grade their students in morality classes. Since then, the stakeholders involved in moral education at the schools have been urgently required to consider how to conduct morality classes that allow students to think and deliberate in morality classes. Veteran in-service teachers who were adept at conducting morality classes before 2018 (at a time when moral education emphasized reading emotions) lacked experience in implementing the new thinking-and-deliberating approach in morality classes. Teachers who completed the teacher training course during the transition period to the new curriculum did not learn the new teaching methodology at the time. In other words, given the differences in teachers' experience and proficiency in teaching morality classes, we, the stakeholders in moral education, have to enable all in-service teachers to conduct thinking-and-deliberating morality classes and evaluate their students' performance in these classes. Moreover, Fujisawa (2020, in press) noted that despite the great need

³ By contrast, Kaizuka (2015) noted that because of historical factors, there was a nationwide shortage of moral education courses and majors, making it impossible to train specialists in moral education. This accounts for the current situation, in which few morality classes are held in schools.

⁴ In classes on other subjects besides morality, in-service teacher training in the first year of service has been shown to lead to improvement in the acquisition of teaching skills in subsequent years (Breux & Wong, 2003). Therefore, the lack of adequate support for skills training in moral education for both student-teachers and in-service teachers is a big loss.

to improve moral education and to guide teachers in implementing the new methodology, the current in-service teachers are in a difficult position in regard to performing thinking and deliberating morality classes. Therefore, when she explained why it is difficult for in-service teachers to apply new methodologies, Fujisawa referred to Stoh's (2015) systems thinking approach and explained why it was difficult to learn teaching methods in Japanese morality classes. To overcome this aspect, Fujisawa (2020) argued that it is necessary for the stakeholders in moral education, to work together to examine the content of both training for in-service teachers and teacher training courses for student-teachers.

In one region of Japan, an experiment to test the effectiveness of using the moral dilemma discussion (hereafter "MDD") method, which is based on Fujisawa (2020), was proposed.⁵ However, when she planned to conduct this experiment in the spring of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, and the Japanese government declared a state of emergency and closed the schools. Since then, the schools have reopened; however, every time there has been a new uptick in the number of the COVID-19 cases, the state of emergency has been reinstated and the schools closed again. Thus, difficulties remained in implementing the face-to-face discussion-based methodology. What could the stakeholders in moral education do about this situation?

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON MORAL DILEMMA DISCUSSION

In Japan, MDD has long been proposed as one of the methods for conducting morality classes that encourage students to think and deliberate. Researchers and teachers have collaborated for more than 40 years to comprehensively accumulate knowledge on MDD (Araki, 2014). An interesting feature of MDD is that students are free to discuss cases of moral dilemmas involving multiple conflicting values for which no resolution has been established. In general, using stories that present moral dilemmas as discussion materials enhances not only morality (Araki, 2014; Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975) but also social ability related to morality, such as cooperation and perspective-taking (Araki, 2014; Fujisawa, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c).⁶

⁵ This research has been ongoing since 2019 with the support of the Hakuodo Foundation (grants 2019-025 and 2019-01). Please see <https://www.hakuhodofoundation.or.jp/>

⁶ On the other hand, Fujisawa (2018b) noted that some social abilities enhanced by MDD decrease after approximately one month unless the discussion is continued to be practiced.

A limitation of the above mentioned studies is that they examined only face-to-face discussions. Therefore, there has been little examination of online discussions on moral dilemma that have been made possible by the development of science and technology. The emergence of COVID-19, however, has pushed the Japanese government to promote the Global and Innovation Gateway for All (GIGA) school concept to support online education in schools. This policy includes the distribution of tablet devices to all students in Japan, which are particularly helpful for online morality classes that emphasize thinking and deliberation. Therefore, this policy enables teachers to conduct thinking-and-deliberating morality classes using online tools, with MDD as an option. To conduct such classes, Fujisawa (2020) states that it is necessary for student-teachers in the *Research on Moral Education* course to acquire experience in using MDD in online classes.

With regard to online moral education in Japan, thus far, there has been practical research on connecting classrooms of different schools. However, few studies have examined moral discussions using online tools by individual students. Moreover, previous studies have mainly recruited university students as participants. These studies have revealed that although university students adapt to online discussions, they prefer face-to-face discussion. They regard online discussions as a supplement to face-to-face discussion (Tiene, 2000). Hedayati-Mehdiabadi et al. (2020) showed that college students can gain new insights through ethical education using online discussion. Cain and Smith (2009) compared online moral dilemma discussion (OMDD) with face-to-face moral dilemma discussion (FMDD) among pharmacy students. It was found that OMDD helped students to think and deliberate, and online discussion generally enhances morality as much as other kinds of discussion. However, it was also clarified that OMDD hinders constructive discussion because of its anonymous nature. These results suggest a possibility that online discussions will be accepted by college students in emergencies in social contexts such as the COVID-19 pandemic. If the discussions are among acquaintances, there is a possibility that they will be constructive.⁷

As a follow-up to the study of Cain and Smith (2009), this study examines

⁷ Lu et al. (2018) also examined the educational effect of combining online and face-to-face discussion. However, as the authors fail to examine the non-cognitive abilities, which has been discussed in this paper, their study will not be further considered here.

potential differences in the effects of OMDD and FMDD on morality and communication skills in university students studying to become professional teachers in Japan. Following this report on this research, the study discusses the applicability of online tools in future educational contexts.

METHOD

Participants

This study recruited 100 undergraduate female students from the first year to the fourth year.

Design and Procedure

Prior to the study, the Institutional Review Board of Kamakura Women's University reviewed and accepted the protocol. Informed consent was obtained from all participants at the start of their session.

The participants were divided into the FMDD⁸ group and the OMDD group. Both groups filled in the same questionnaire before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the discussion task. In the FMDD, discussions were conducted after filling in the pre-test questionnaires. In the OMDD condition, the students participated in the discussion in private rooms, mostly at home, using Zoom and filled in the same questionnaire using Microsoft Forms on their own personal computers or tablets. The participants conducted OMDD with individual Zoom screens turned on. In both conditions, Heinz dilemmas (1) and (2) were the discussion materials.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of two scales presented in the following order.

Standards for Public Space Scale

The standards for public space (SPS) scale consist of 25 total items in 5 subscales. Its aim is to evaluate how much importance the respondent attaches to each of the five standards (or norms) regarding behavior in public spaces (Nagafusa et al.,

⁸ The experimental data for FMDD used in this study were those obtained before COVID-19.

2012). Being *Egocentric* means to pursue one's own profit and freedom without concern for the effect of this pursuit on others. Conforming to a *Peer Standard* is to align one's behavior with that of one's peers. Conforming to a *Regional Standard* is to seek approval from the local community. To *Care for Others* is to manifest concern about people one is not related to. To express *Public Values* is to manifest concern for the public interest and fairness for society as a whole. Responses were recorded on a 5-point scale, with response alternatives ranging from "Does not describe me at all" (1) to "Describes me very well" (5). The score for each subscale was calculated by summing the scores for each item on the subscale, as described in the paper (Nagafusa et al., 2012). The higher the score, the more important the standard is considered to be. The reliabilities (Cronbach's α) of the five subscales computed from the data in this study were .77, .84, .78, .71, and .69 for the Egocentric, Peer Standard, Regional Standard, Care for Others, and Public Values subscales, respectively. Previous studies (Fujisawa et al., 2006; Nagafusa et al., 2012) have confirmed the reliability and validity of the scale. The five subscales correlate with the corresponding five stages of the Defining Issues Test in the manner (Fujisawa et al., 2006).

Communication Skills Scale

The Communication Skills (CS) scale was developed by Ueno and Okada (2006). It consists of four subscales: *listening/speaking*, *nonverbal skills*, *assertion* and *discussion*. Listening/speaking measures the ability to listen to the other person and to express one's own opinion to the other person. Nonverbal skills refer specifically to nonverbal skills in discussions. Assertion measures the ability to build better relationships with others by openly expressing one's opinion while respecting the other person, rather than by unilaterally imposing one's own opinion on the other person or simply putting up with the other person's opinion. Discussion measures the skills in the discussion context. Each item is responded to on a 0 to 3 scale, with 3 meaning a high level of the corresponding skill. According to the manual of Ueno and Okada (2006), the scores for each subscale were calculated.

RESULTS

Tables 1 and 2 show the basic statistics for the SPS and CS scales. An analysis

of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted for each subscale (Egocentric, Peer Standard, Regional Standard, Care for Others, and Public Values) of the SPS and for the subscale (Listening/Speaking, Non-Verbal Skills, Assertion, and Discussion) of the CS Scales with Condition (FMDD/OMDD) as the independent variable, post-test subscale scores as the dependent variable, and pre-test subscale scores as the covariate. Satisfactory results on the slope and parallelism tests for each subscale and statistical independence among the pre-test and among the post-test subscale scores justified performing ANCOVA.

The only significant effect in any of the ANCOVAs was a main effect of condition on the post-test scores for Public Values, ($F(1,96) = 6.5, p < .05$; biased $\eta^2 = .1$), with pre-test scores on Public Values controlled for. The mean post-test score on Public Values was higher in the OMDD condition than in the FMDD condition.

DISCUSSION

This study investigated whether the changes in the scores of student-teachers on measures of the various standards of behavior in public spaces (SPS) and on measures of various communication skills (CS) before (pre-test) and after (post-test) participation in a discussion of moral dilemmas differed as a function of whether the discussion took place face-to-face (FMDD condition) or online (OMDD condition). In this section, this study discusses the results of the experiment and the applicability and potential impact of the online tools used in the experiment in future educational settings.

Differences Between OMDD and FMDD

The pre-test scores on each subscale of the SPS (Table 1) and CS (Table 2) of the pre-test were controlled for and compared with the corresponding post-test scores, because the pre-test scores for the FMDD and OMDD conditions are different. As a result, the score of OMDD is higher than the score of FMDD in terms of Public Values. Public Values concern a behavioral standard, conformance to which requires concern for the public interest and fairness for society as a whole. It may have been easier for participants to think about the interests of others in the OMDD condition, where they were physically separated from one another, than in the FMDD condition. Meanwhile,

when the OMDD was implemented, the whole world was suffering from the COVID-19. Therefore, when this study was conducted, they may have been able to easily understand the public interest and the feelings of others as their own. It remains necessary to examine OMDD even in normal situations. In contrast, there were no significant differences between the two conditions for any of the post-test subscale scores, which suggests that the perceived importance of the various behavioral standards and communication skills generally remained the same regardless of whether the discussion was online or face-to-face. These results support those of Cain and Smith (2009). In this study, the participants in the discussions were acquaintances. Therefore, these results suggest that the effects of participation in an MDD with regard to behavioral standards and communication skills is not be influenced by the anonymity of holding the discussions online. Thus, I conclude from this study that it is feasible to conduct effective discussions online in educational situations where having face-to-face discussions is difficult.

Table 1

Means (M) and Standard Deviations (SD) of Pre- and Post-Tests Scores on Subscales of the Standards for Public Space Scale

Condition			Subscales				
			Egocentric	Peer Standard	Regional Standard	Care for Others	Public Values
Pre-test	OMDD	<i>M</i>	9.8	12.1	20.3	21.2	22.2
		<i>SD</i>	3.1	4.1	2.9	2.1	2.2
	FMDD	<i>M</i>	10	11.3	17.9	19.4	21.4
		<i>SD</i>	3.6	4.3	4.0	2.9	2.3
Post-test	OMDD	<i>M</i>	9.7	11.3	20.2	21.2	22
		<i>SD</i>	3.5	4.2	3.4	2.5	2.5
	FMDD	<i>M</i>	9.5	10.9	18	20.3	19.8
		<i>SD</i>	3.7	4.6	4.4	2.8	4.1

Note. OMDD = Online Moral Dilemma Discussion. FMDD = Face-to-Face Moral Dilemma Discussion

Table 2

Means (M) and Standard Deviations (SD) of Pre- and Post-Tests Scores on Subscales of the Communication Skills Scale

Condition			Subscales			
			Listening/ Speaking	Nonverbal skills	Assertion	Discussion
Pre-test	OMDD	<i>M</i>	1.8	1.9	12.9	4.0
		<i>SD</i>	0.5	0.7	2.5	0.9
	FMDD	<i>M</i>	1.6	2.0	14.3	3.6
		<i>SD</i>	0.7	0.8	3.1	1.1
Post-test	OMDD	<i>M</i>	1.7	1.9	13.3	4.0
		<i>SD</i>	0.5	0.7	2.4	1.0
	FMDD	<i>M</i>	1.7	2.1	14.6	3.9
		<i>SD</i>	0.8	0.7	3.7	1.2

Note. OMDD = Online Moral Dilemma Discussion. FMDD = Face-to-Face Moral Dilemma Discussion

IMPACT AND APPLICABILITY OF ONLINE TOOLS IN FUTURE EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS in MORALITY CLASSES

This study, which focused on student-teachers, found no significant differences in the educational effectiveness of online and face-to-face discussions in terms of improving morality as measured by the CS scale. This finding suggests that online discussions make no difference in the development of thinking and discussion skills, even in situations where face-to-face discussions are difficult to conduct. In other words, online thinking and deliberating morality classes can be conducted in much the same way as face-to-face discussions. Specifically, we can take advantage of the Breakout Room feature in Zoom to implement thinking and deliberating morality classes online. This allows a small number of students to discuss online. Also, face-to-face discussions in multiple small groups in a large room generate a lot of distracting noise, while discussions in the Breakout Room are independent and quiet for each group. Therefore, students can focus on their own discussions. Further, online tools make it easier for students from different schools to deliberate not only with other students of their own country but also with students living abroad. Given that Japanese morality classes have been influenced by Japan's past, being able to easily create an environment where students can deliberate with other people from diverse backgrounds is more meaningful for morality classes than for classes on other subjects.

The finding of little difference between the OMDD and FMDD conditions in terms of the SPS and CS scales is inconsistent with results from previous studies (Fujisawa, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c). Whether this inconsistency is a function of the features of online education or because this study was conducted within the environmental constraints of the COVID-19 could not be determined. Therefore, future researchers should compare the educational effects of OMDD and FMDD discussions under normal conditions. Furthermore, in this study online classes were significantly more effective than face-to-face classes only in the social context of Public Values. In brief, there do seem to be educational benefits to proactively incorporating online tools in discussions among students who are older and can think about morality in a broad perspective.

Finally, the COVID-19 has taken an enormous toll on all of us worldwide. However, if without COVID-19, the GIGA school concept would not have been

pushed forward, and tablets would not have been distributed to all students soon. Bearing this in mind, it is concluded that the COVID-19 has made us realize the potential of online tools to significantly change education in schools. Schools in Japan will be able to restart the FMDD in thinking and deliberating morality classes in the near future. However, this study hopes that online moral discussions will continue as one of the options because online moral discussions allow us to overcome the problem of physical distance in a globalized society and connect with people of different values, both non-face-to-face and face-to-face.

Future Tasks

There are still some issues that have not been clarified by this study. First, differences in the educational effects of continuing with OMDD versus FMDD have not been clarified, although efforts to do so are currently underway. Second, because of this lack of clarity, care must be taken in applying the results of this study to students. Online tools, including Zoom, which it was used in this study, have multiple functions. Thus, in addition to Zoom's Breakout Room features, we can also use features such as chat, conversation subtitles, and whiteboards to drive online discussions. It is possible that online learning tools can be more effective if they are used according to students' developmental stages and educational needs. Examples of areas where such tools can be effective are online discussions with teachers acting as facilitators in the lower grades, small-group discussions held in a Breakout Room in some grades, and chats in adolescent-equivalent grades, where the amount of speech decreases to a level depending on the developmental age of the students. There remains the possibility in conducting thinking and deliberating morality classes that online tools can be used effectively depending on individual students' needs. In short, though this study has some educational benefits of using online learning tools, many tasks remain for future consideration and research.

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Chapter 10

Moral Dilemmas for Teachers and Students in the Covid-19 Era

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 situation has affected not only our daily life, but also our way of life at work and school. The purpose of this paper is to examine the moral dilemmas that teachers and students may have encountered in online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic and to explore educational implications. These dilemmas concern the teacher's appropriate role, the right of students not to show their face, the sense of participation in the class, and the temptation to cheat on online exams. The discussion of the four main dilemmas addressed in this paper can be an effective resource for teachers' training and the cultivation of their professional ethics.

KEYWORDS: moral dilemma, COVID-19, teacher education, professional ethics

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON OUR DAILY LIFE

When the first coronavirus patient in Korea was discovered on January 20, 2020, the openings of kindergartens and elementary, middle, and high schools throughout the country were postponed to April 2020, and graduation ceremonies and freshman orientation were canceled at many universities, and the start of classes was postponed 2-3 weeks.

There are processes that appear frequently in COVID-19 situations, such as social distancing and self-quarantine. Both involve physically distancing ourselves from others to prevent the spread of infection, but they do not apply just to our physical environment. Because physical isolation often leads to psychological isolation, people have reported a lot of depression during the COVID-19 pandemic (Bueno-Notivol et al., 2021). Especially in adolescents, COVID-19 can also cause other psychological symptoms such as distress and anxiety (Cao et al., 2020; Chi et al., 2021; Huang & Zhao, 2020) As such, the pandemic of COVID-19 affects not only people's daily life but also their mental health.

By early 2020, when COVID-19 began to spread in earnest in Korea, people thought that if they waited a little longer, they would be able to return to everyday life as it was before COVID-19. However, for those who promised to meet up soon with friends or planned to go on a trip that month, it became difficult to say when they actually would be able to do so. In this regard, on July 13, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) made an official announcement that “There will be no return to normal in the ‘foreseeable future’” (Smith-Schoenwalder, 2020). Therefore, instead of yearning for the pre-Corona situation, we need to be more active in improving the quality of our lives in the corona era.

Coronavirus has given us a daily life that we have never experienced before, and this change can be discussed in both positive and negative terms.

Let us think about some situations that we have confronted in our life during the coronavirus era. First, during the pandemic, people have spent more time at home than they used to. For example, working from home we live in a confined space all day long. Having more time at home has the positive effect of increasing the activities we can share with our families, thereby strengthening the family relationship, but it can have the negative effect of intensifying family conflicts if family functions are not properly

performed. For example, quarrels may increase between couples or between parents and children.

Second, people have more time to think about their life. Before COVID-19 people worked hard looking forward, but since the onset of the pandemic they have had time to examine their life and recharge. This is a kind of “forced rest.” Even before the Corona era, many scholars were pointing out that work-leisure or work-life harmony is important for people's life balance (Guest, 2002; Pathak et al., 2019). It is difficult to get adequate rest or enjoy the true meaning of “rest” in a busy life, but it has become much easier in the COVID-19 situation. Of course, because the rest period is not a voluntary break, some people's lives have become so depressing that the term “corona blue” has been coined to label it. In Korea, a new disease classification code is being considered for corona depression. In the United States, a study of the effect of COVID-19 on the mental health of adults found that 28% of participants experienced a sense of helplessness and decreased motivation during COVID-19, more than triple the 8.5% before the pandemic (Ettman et al., 2020). This result demonstrates that the corona situation has had a significant impact on human mental health.

Third, people have an opportunity to think about their role as global citizens living together during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. People have come to think about what COVID-19 means for their life, and in the end, they have come to recognize that this is not a problem that can be solved by one individual or one country, but that all humanity must work together to solve it. COVID-19 is not a personal problem, but a problem that must be solved by combining the wisdom of many people, just as forest fires are effectively extinguished not by the efforts of one or two people but by the cooperation of many people. Thus, COVID-19 provides an opportunity to increase one's awareness of being a global citizen. On the other hand, of course, concerns about the transmission of the virus can sometimes lead to hatred and distrust, not only among individuals but also across countries. In each country, as the incidence of COVID-19 in people infected by overseas entrants increases, policies such as the prohibition of foreigners' entry into the country or their quarantine for multiple days after entering the country have been implemented.

What effects are such situations actually having on people? A study exploring how Italian adolescents felt about their experience during COVID-19 uncovered four

experiences they considered positive and four they considered negative (Fioretti et al., 2020, p. 1). The negative experiences were “staying home as a limitation of autonomy,” “school as an educational not relational environment,” “new life routine,” and feelings of “anguish and loss.” The positive experiences were “being part of an extraordinary experience,” “discovering oneself,” “re-discovering family,” and “sharing life at a distance.”

In summary, during the COVID-19 period, the most positive aspect of human life has been that people have had more time to reflect on themselves and society and to think about what kind of life or what kind of society there should be. Of course, if we go beyond the individual level and think about changes at the societal and national levels, we can see that COVID-19 has affected many other domains, including education and economics. The remainder of this paper focuses on education during COVID-19.

EDUCATION IN THE CORONA VIRUS ERA

During the COVID-19 epidemic, non-face-to-face classes in Korea have been held in the universities. Non-face-to-face classes are mostly video classes and real-time online classes. In the universities, sometimes classes with pre-recorded videos are used, but some of them instead use programs such as ZOOM or Webinars to give lessons to students online in real time. Of course, classes that require laboratory practice have to be face-to-face, and in these classes quarantine rules are strictly followed.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, there were educational institutions where online classes were sometimes taught, and there were cyber universities that offered mostly online classes. However, in the past, face-to-face was considered the basic format, and online classes were often considered complementary (Yuan & Kim, 2014). This is quite different from the current situation in which there is no choice but to take non-face-to-face classes because of COVID-19.

With COVID-19 spreading in earnest, real-time online classes have become the main teaching method that most students and teachers must adapt to. When COVID-19 first arrived, no one expected that non-face-to-face classes would continue for so long. In Korea, most universities required non-face-to-face classes in the spring semester of 2020, but just before the fall semester COVID-19 suddenly re-emerged as a pandemic, so the policy of just non-face-to-face classes was continued. Since the fall semester of

2020, many universities have been offering real-time online classes, a new experience for both instructors and students, and students' relationships with other students and their teachers are formed mainly online.

In educational settings, COVID-19 has had a profound influence on teacher-student and student-student relationships including teachers' teaching methods, student counseling, and peer interaction in cyberspace. The coronavirus situation has confronted teachers and students with a new kind of moral dilemma. Decision-making ability is regarded as an important factor in solving these dilemmas.

Therefore, I decided to conduct this research and write this paper for the purpose of exploring the moral dilemmas faced by teachers and students in the educational field for the first time in the era of COVID-19, and what values should be reflected by the educational decisions made in this circumstance.

A STUDY ON THE MORAL DILEMMAS EXPERIENCED BY TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN THE ERA OF COVID-19

Participants

The participants were 48 students, mostly freshmen, taking an education class at a Korean university in the spring semester of 2020. There were 22 males (46%) and 26 females (54%). Due to the corona virus situation, course content consisted of a combination of pre-recorded videos and instruction presented online in real time using ZOOM. All classes throughout the entire semester were non face-to-face.

Data Collection and Analysis

In this study, data analysis was performed on the assignments in the class, and the purpose of this study is to improve the class by utilizing the moral dilemmas derived from data analysis in the class. As a class assignment, students were asked to submit an up to 3-page essay (A4 paper) on the topic of the moral dilemmas experienced by teachers and students in online classes in the era of COVID-19. They were to write about their own experiences during the classes and their perceptions of the moral dilemmas that teachers and students generally experience in such classes. They were not to include the video portions of the classes in their evaluations. These segments

were generally not relevant to the moral dilemmas of interest in the study, because student-teacher or student-student interactions are generally not appropriate while a video is being played.

I employed content analysis to evaluate essays on moral dilemmas written by the students. As I read the essays repeatedly, I assigned similar units of content to the same category. This process led to the identification of four distinct categories of moral dilemmas.

RESULTS

The four major dilemmas uncovered as a result of the analysis are as follows. The first was labelled “the teacher’s appropriate role.” It concerns what the teacher’s response should be to students who do not maintain focus on the instruction during online classes. The second was labelled “the right of students not to show their face.” Specifically, how desirable is it for teachers to ask students to turn on their computer’s or cellphone’s camera during the class? The third was labelled “the sense of participation in the class.” Specifically, how can students and teachers in real-time online classes be made to feel that they are participating in the class together, particularly with respect to the interactions between teacher-student and student-student? The fourth was labelled “the temptation to cheat on online exams.” Specifically, how do students choose between following their conscience and cheating to get a good score. Students complain that when they take an online exam they often are tempted to cheat or secretly refer to other sources.

In the following sections, each dilemma will be explained in more detail and representative student responses to the dilemma will be presented.

1. Teachers’ Appropriate Role

Teachers have a duty to help students immerse themselves in learning the course material and to participate fully in class activities. The latter can help students successfully achieve the former (Skinner et al., 1990). Class participation can be categorized as behavioral, emotional, or cognitive. According to Skinner et al. (1990), each of these forms of participation is represented by certain specific processes. Examples of behavioral participation are completing assignments, studying,

participating in class discussions, and attending class. Examples of emotional participation are expressing anxiety, boredom, or enthusiasm, and showing interest in working on a task. Examples of cognitive participation are using cognitive learning strategies, paying attention, learning how to perform a task, and engaging in tasks that are challenging.

In real-time online classes, teachers need to continually monitor whether students' class participation is going well. By observing students' facial expressions or responses, the teacher can see if the students have a good understanding of the course material, a form of cognitive participation. It is possible to gauge the degree of emotional and behavioral participation in learning by seeing whether students are actively participating in discussions or exercises and are having fun studying. In fact, teachers are obligated to encourage students to maintain focus and participate in the class.

However, teachers find it especially difficult to fulfill these obligations in real-time online classes. For example, the students who participated in this study found that trying to decide how to get students who are not focusing well in class to become more focused can present teachers with a moral dilemma. The teacher must choose between (a) scolding the students who misbehave and instructing them to participate in the class, and (b) simply ignoring the situation so as not to interfere with other students' right to learn (unless the unfocused students' misbehavior significantly disrupts the class atmosphere). Here is a typical response from one participant.

In real-time online classes, teachers face many difficulties and embarrassing situations. In this situation, teachers face the following moral dilemma. As a teacher who must take responsibility for correcting students' wrong behavior, even if the flow of the class is interrupted a little, should I make sure that students who are not focusing on the class have the proper attitude toward learning? Or, as a teacher, must I ignore a few students in order not to disrupt the flow for the other students who are focused? This is the moral dilemma teachers face (student 27)

In both online and offline classroom situations, teachers can intervene appropriately when some students are not focused on the class. It is more difficult to keep students' attention in the online situation, so it is necessary for teachers to skillfully intervene

with the unfocused students without interrupting the flow of the whole class. If teachers value their responsibilities and roles as teachers, they should guide students properly so that the right of all students to learn is respected.

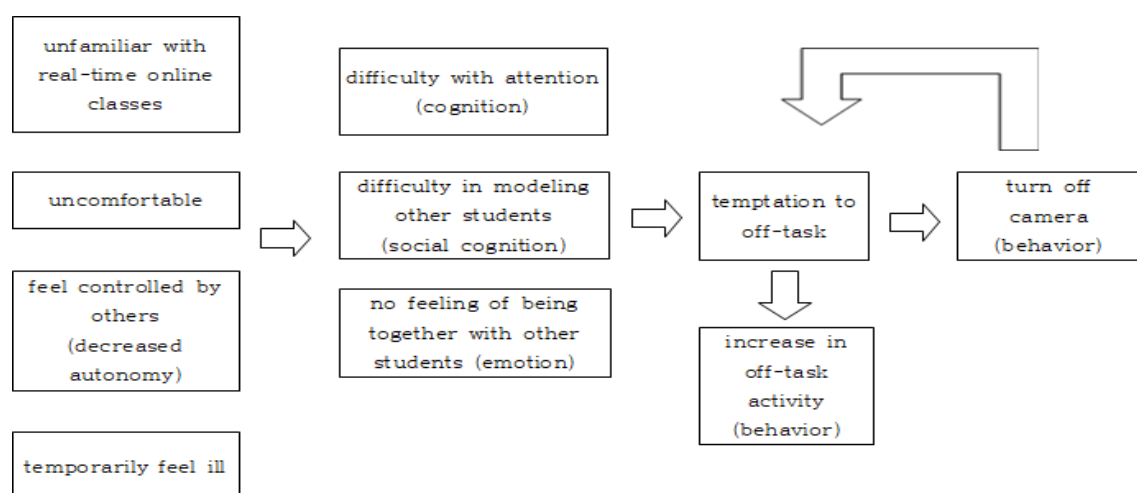
2. Right of Students Not to Show Their Face

In offline classes, students can interact with the teacher and other students directly. In online classes, they must interact with the teacher and other students by observing them on the screen. If they cannot see the others' images on the screen (because the camera is turned off), they can communicate only verbally. The behavior of the students can change depending on how kindly the teacher explains to the students why it is educationally important to turn on the camera in online classes. Students may turn on the camera because the teacher requested it, or they may refuse to turn it on because they feel a compulsion to oppose the teacher's request. On the other hand, I found that some students did not turn on the camera because they were not familiar with real-time online classes and were uncomfortable seeing their own face on the screen.

A schematic diagram of how the behavior of students who turn their camera off progresses during the class is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Flow Chart of the Behavior, Cognitions, and Feelings of Students Who Turn Their Camera off During an Online Class¹



¹ As used here, behaving “off-task” means playing games or chatting with friends without focusing on the class, turning off the camera but leaving the computer on while doing other things that have nothing to do with the class at all.

Teachers face a dilemma as they ponder two questions: (a) is it appropriate for teachers to encourage students to turn on their camera to communicate with other students and to continuously monitor students' understanding of the course content? (b) is it appropriate for teachers to give students the option of not showing their face by turning off their camera?

The students who participated in the study understood why teachers make students turn on the camera, as illustrated by the following response.

Educators usually give a lesson by looking at students' non-verbal elements (expressions, gestures, etc.) when teaching subject matter. This is because it is an important factor in deciding whether students understand what the teacher explained or whether it is necessary to explain some content repeatedly to the students. However, if students take a class with their cameras and microphones turned off, the educator may make an error, such as proceeding to a class on the next topic, even if some students do not fully understand the first topic (student 20).

In real-time online classes, it is important for students and teachers to interact, but it is often difficult for teachers to conduct classes smoothly if the students' faces are not visible. However, some students are reluctant to turn on the camera and expose their face during online classes. In this study, the students gave several reasons for not turning on their camera. For example, “the computer does not have a camera or is broken,” “they just hate to show their faces to other people,” “they don't want to display their unclean appearance to friends and teachers,” or “they cannot concentrate on the class.” Here are two more examples.

Students prefer to not show their face on the screen. However, from a teacher's point of view, it is not easy to teach with a black screen. If the face is not visible in the interactive class, the teacher's enthusiasm to teach decreases, which leads to a decrease in class quality and a decrease in the concentration of students. In addition, it is more difficult for teachers to teach students because they do not meet actual students in person, so they do not have a psychological rapport with students. In this regard, turning on the camera in the online class is morally right because

it is a courtesy to each other, but students avoid it because they are self-conscious about exposing their face. (student 35).

In face-to-face lectures, the general structure is that all students look at one professor. However, it is difficult to adapt to the ZOOM situation because it is a special situation where the environment I am in on the screen and my image are all revealed in real-time. Timid and introverted students refuse to turn on the camera, and sometimes take part in a class by turning off the camera while they are lying about the reason why they cannot turn on the camera (student 23)

3. Sense of Participation in the Class

There is a difference between simply attending a class and actively participating in a class. For example, just because you can see a student on the screen, it is difficult to be sure that the student is participating in the class *actively*. Therefore, in online classes it is especially important for the teacher to recognize the difference between attending the class and actively participating in the class and to guide the students toward active participation.

In general, students in offline classes feel that they participate together because they are physically sitting together in the same space. On the other hand, in online classes students can only see other students' images on the screen, so it is not easy to interact with them or to grasp the meaning of their gestures, except in more dynamic contexts such as discussions.

The result of this study revealed that participants did not feel like they were taking the class together with the other students if the class was online. Compared to offline classes, in online classes there is less interaction between teacher-student and student-student, so students do not feel that they are together even if they are taking the same class at the same time.

It has been pointed out that we need to find a way to increase caring about others or improving empathy skills, since expressions of empathy are a form of communication (Errasti et al., 2017). It is not easy to interact with other students in an online situation. Therefore, there is a need to develop educational activities to facilitate online

interaction and various activities which presence can be experienced (Lehman & Conceicao, 2010).

Here are some typical responses from the participants.

In offline classes, even if I do not try to participate actively, the professor is in front of me and the classmates who study with me are also present, so I become actively involved in the class. However, in online classes, it seems to be true that students listen to the class alone in their own space and they think “Even if it is not me, somebody will answer the professor’s question...” (student 16).

With online classes, it is difficult to identify individual characteristics and dispositions, and communication difficulties may arise because there is no opportunity to form a rapport, or psychological bond, between teacher and students. Also, it is difficult for students to grasp the characteristics and dispositions of their classmates, so real-time online discussions can cause difficulties in communication (student 10).

4. Temptation to Cheat on Online Exams

The students who participated in this study wrote an essay claiming that many students are tempted to cheat in online exams. In non-face-to-face classes, exams are often taken in a non-face-to-face manner, which has raised ethical issues. In March 2020, a nationwide mock test was presented in an online, non-face-to-face manner to high school students in Korea. It turns out that many students searched for terms that appeared in the test on the Internet; one such term, “fan width formula” became the most searched term on a relevant portal site (Lee, 2020).

Such behavior has also become a hot issue in universities, where students have misbehaved by sharing the correct answers on a major exam with other students through online message platforms such as KakaoTalk or by meeting with them to solve problems together in the same place (Shin, 2020).

What is the best way to prevent cheating on online exams? There are several possible ways, such as external monitoring of the exam by teachers or closed circuit TV, autonomous control by students’ own internal monitoring, and making it clear to the

students beforehand that cheating is not allowed. It would be of great value for students themselves to express clearly and repeatedly to their classmates before every test why cheating is wrong, that the university does not allow it, and what the sanctions would be if they are caught. Here are two representative responses.

In the case of non-face-to-face, it can escape the risk of transmission of COVID-19, but problems arise with the test method. Various measures must be considered to prevent cheating. There are several options, such as deducting the score when the mouse is out of a certain range, giving the students a shorter test time to prevent the student from seeing others' handouts, and assessing the movement of the student's eyes. However, whether these kinds of solutions are really effective is another question (student 25).

One of the dilemmas students face is a dilemma related to "evaluation" [of student learning]. There is a risk of group infection among students who attend classes [in person] if they conduct the evaluation face-to-face in the current situation. Therefore, evaluation by non-face-to-face methods is drawing attention now. However, when assessing non-face-to-face, students confront a moral dilemma. Since there is no entity to oversee student cheating, students may face the dilemma of "Will I keep my conscience even if I can't guarantee a good score?" or "Will I get a better score from cheating and ignore my conscience?" (student 11)

CONCLUSION

In the era of the COVID-19 pandemic, the "new normal" has begun. It is important to adapt to this changing world with new social norms and values different from those of the previous generation. Even after the end of COVID-19, it will be difficult to return to the pre-COVID-19 situation, and it is time to shift from the new normal to the "new future" (Kasai, 2020). All this applies to education as well.

In order for real-time online classes to be more meaningful and effective in the COVID-19 era, it is important in the education field that teaching for teachers and learning for students be joyful experiences and that we return to an understanding of

the original meaning of education. Teachers are not only subject matter experts, but they also have the roles of character educators and guidance counselors.

The applicability of moral education goes beyond certain specific subjects; it can be applied to any situation in which education occurs. If interest in and consideration for others are present, moral education helps students experience the joy of studying in a learning community, and school becomes a place where it is fun to learn.

Here I have reviewed the moral implications of the four dilemmas I derived from my research. The first dilemma concerns the appropriate role of teachers in online classes. Teachers, of course, must apply appropriate educational interventions for students who behave differently in real-time online classes than in face-to-face classes or do not focus on the instruction in class. The interventions are necessary, first of all, because teachers are obligated to provide students guidance from the perspective of professional ethics (Beijaard et al., 2000; Rest & Navaez, 1994). In Korea, in the past there was a tendency to think of teachers as professionals with a calling, but in recent years there has been a strong tendency to think of them as professionals with expertise (Choi, 2010). Therefore, considering that the role of teacher is defined by professional ethics, teachers are responsible for actively engaging students in real-time online classes. Another reason why these interventions are needed by teachers in online classes is the necessity to minimize the achievement gap between students with different learning styles and abilities. For example, whereas active learners ask questions on their own and actively participate in class, passive learners need more teacher intervention. In this regard, Dabbagh (2007) identified the following traits as critical to success in online learning: strong academic self-concept, adeptness in the use of online learning technologies, good interpersonal/communication skills, and good self-directed learning skills. In online classes, not intervening properly is the same as neglecting the role of teacher.

The second dilemma concerns the right of students not to show their face in real-time online classes. This study has shown that it is difficult for teachers to determine whether it is appropriate for instructors to ask students to turn on their computer's camera during the class. Those students who do not turn it on are unable to focus on the class because their lack of familiarity with online classes makes them uncomfortable in the class and they feel their autonomy is being violated. In addition, they are not

interested in seeing what the other students are doing during the class. They develop a desire to do something unrelated to the class, so they end up turning off the camera. In the end, it is necessary to create a method for teaching students to immerse themselves in the class instruction because if that happens they will not care about their own appearance on the screen.

Also, many teachers think that if they observe the students' facial expressions on the screen, they will be able to tell how much the students are participating in the class. However, just because the face is visible on the screen does not mean that the student is eagerly attending to the class process and material. For example, some students still will use a messenger app to communicate with their friends online or play a mouse-only game on the side. Therefore, even if teachers ask students to turn on the camera during the class so they can monitor the students' involvement with the class, it is necessary to develop additional ways to check for that involvement other than simply observing their face on the screen. If a teacher asks students in a Zoom class to turn on their camera but does not encourage them to actively participate in the class, the class will be no different than a video class.

The third dilemma is about how to encourage student participation in a real-time online class. In such classes, it is necessary to develop educational activities that make students feel like they are in class together with the teacher and other students. Teachers can change the behavior of students who are not participating actively in the class by using educational activities and interventions to create a sense of community in the class. If students are not familiar with real-time online classes, they increase their familiarity and comfort through educational activities. However, arbitrarily guiding or instructing students about what they should do in the class violates their autonomy and thus reduces their motivation to learn.

Fourth, with respect to evaluating or grading student test performance in online classes, students may be tempted to ask another person to answer the test questions for them or to steal another person's answers to the questions. Two questions can be raised in this regard. One question is "What kind of test method will the teacher use?" and the other question is "What exactly will the teacher evaluate on the test?" It is especially important to take steps to ensure that the assigned grades are fair. For example, it is necessary to call out any cheating that is detected, make it clear that cheating is not to

be tolerated, and create a class atmosphere that discourages cheating. In addition, the grades should reflect whether students know how to apply the knowledge they have acquired, not just acquire knowledge that is superficial.

It is important to give pre-service teachers and serving teachers directions for implementing moral education based on the results of this study. First, it is important for teachers to develop and implement novel moral learning/teaching practices for online classes. It is necessary for teachers and students to discuss how to run online classes together. For example, for good teaching practices to be mastered, it is necessary to share the goals of the class with the students at the beginning of the semester and to make sure that the students and the instructor agree on the rules that must be followed in teaching the class and administering online exams.

If online classroom rules and practices are developed not by the teacher alone but with input from students, the students will be more likely to accept and follow them. Moreover, they will be more interested in the subject matter and more engaged in the class. At the beginning of the class, the teacher should show the students how to keep their attention focused on the class exclusively and exchange opinions with them on the requirement to turn on the camera and to take the tests without cheating. Through the process of cultivating these desirable learning practices together, instructors and students create a kind of “just community” in the class as suggested by Kohlberg.

Second, in online classes it is important to promote student-student and teacher-student interactions of various kinds. Students who work on group projects together, review one another’s papers, or contribute to a discussion forum on a particular topic are likely to feel more engaged in the course. “Simply offering, for example, an open discussion forum in which students can (but are not required to) participate is probably not enough” (Dixson, 2010. p. 8).

To facilitate interaction of students with the teacher and one another, it is desirable to use a method that not only encourages questions but also provides students the opportunity to give and receive feedback on the work process and outcomes of other students. This is important for developing the positive social interdependence of cooperative learning (Choi et al., 2011). This experience enables not only individual learning but also the experience of being in a community of teachers and learners through which consideration of and empathy with others can be enhanced. In online

classes, teachers need to know how they can teach “the language of emotions” and “how to make students interact in compassionate and intelligent ways” (Escotet, 2020, p. 75).

Third, it is necessary to reflect on the meaning of school education and good teachers. In Korea, before COVID-19, online classes were popular in private education. Videotaped lectures that clearly convey the course content to students improved their motivation for learning and had a positive effect on academic achievement. At the same time, however, in video lectures two-way interaction is difficult; although it is possible to acquire and understand information, it is difficult to develop an in-depth understanding of it and think creatively about it because there is no dynamic interaction. Since we should not think of teaching as content delivery, we need to consider how to generate interaction in online classes.

Generally speaking, schools have multiple roles in society. Basically, school is the place where knowledge transfer occurs. However, it is not sufficient to cite just this one role, because schools make students’ holistic growth possible. In addition to classes, extracurricular activities such as athletic competitions, academic festivals, and volunteer activities are also offered to the students. Students constantly communicate with their peers and grow through these various activities. However, in the COVID-19 era, what students can do at school is limited. Since these limitations are an inevitable consequence of efforts to contain COVID-19, the values of student growth in school and of taking safety measures against the spread of prevent COVID-19 have been in conflict during the pandemic. We need to think about how we can harmonize these two important values in the COVID-19 era. Even in the context of prioritizing the value of coronavirus prevention, there is a need to consider how to keep educational values from being sidelined.

Fourth, in the era of COVID-19, it is necessary to strive to improve the competency of teachers in conducting online classes. In online classes, the monitoring of students’ class activities and the teacher’s interventions must be conducted differently than in offline classes.

For example, in an offline class, if a teacher finds out that a student is doing something unrelated to the class, the teacher can continue teaching while observing the student, approaching the student, or sending a signal to the student to focus on the class. On the other hand, in online classes, the teacher cannot interact face-to-face with the

students, so the teacher must think of a way to send personalized messages to specific students through a chat window, etc.

Therefore, teachers need to familiarize themselves with computer programs that work effectively in online classes and improve their ability to use IT. It is not the purpose to improve teachers' ability to use IT for its own sake, but for them to use it as a tool to fulfill their role in online classes. In other words, in the non-face-to-face era, teachers need the ability to use IT to effectively solve the dilemmas that occur in education. For example, if a teacher is using ZOOM, which currently is widely employed in real-time online classes, it is necessary to use its various subroutines that make it easier to identify students who are doing things not related to the class and to send messages to these students individually. This is how teachers can encourage inattentive students to participate in the class without interfering with other students' right to learn.

Therefore, IT technology related to education needs to be further developed, and teachers and pre-service teachers need to develop the ability to effectively utilize these technologies. It is important to guide teachers so that they can communicate class content to students effectively while being faithful to professional ethics. In the COVID-19 situation, no matter what type of class is conducted, the important thing is to ensure that no one feels alienated from education.

Fifth, while training pre-service teachers or retraining in-service teachers, it is possible to improve their ethical consciousness as experts in their field by having them think about and discuss with their colleagues the moral conflicts that may arise in online classes. In this regard, the four main dilemmas addressed in this paper can be an effective source for teachers' training and the cultivation of their professional ethics.

Finally, since the teacher-student relationships discussed in this chapter are not limited to a specific academic level, the chapter includes examples from elementary, middle, and high school as well as college. In the follow-up study, where I intend to examine in greater detail the moral dilemmas that can appear at each academic level, I expect to identify those that have the strongest educational implications at that level.

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Chapter 11

Moral Dilemmas During the Global Pandemic and Implications for Moral Education in Current and Post-Pandemic Times

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ABSTRACT

Since the beginning of 2020, COVID-19 has been gradually invading the health of human beings, the economic systems of societies, and the various dimensions of human activities. In this article, the author first attempts to analyze the moral dilemmas we must face at individual, organizational, and societal or national levels during this period from a macro-sociological perspective, and the concerns about the values we need to base our moral decisions on. The source documents include published academic articles that describe the moral dilemmas we face at various levels of society and in various regions of the world. The author further addresses how these dilemmas and related issues are challenging our current practice of moral education in a global society. Finally, the author provides further suggestions about how to continue improving moral education in both the current and post-COVID-19 eras.

KEYWORDS: moral dilemmas, moral decisions, moral education, global pandemic, COVID-19

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEMS: MORAL DILEMMAS AND MORAL EDUCATION IN AN UNCERTAIN AGE

At the beginning of 2020, an unpredictable corona virus began to gradually circulate and destroy the health of many human beings and societies around the world. Following the rapid development of international and local transportation, which has accelerated the dissemination of diseases generally, the challenges of this new epidemic are much more complicated than those that we've faced before, and many controversial issues related to different types of moral dilemmas have emerged (Chan et al., 2020). However, lives need to be saved in time, solutions need to be found very quickly, and many decisions must be made as soon as possible. Therefore, various struggles regarding COVID-19 in different countries and/or cultural settings have been challenging people's decisions (Borges et al., 2020; Chan, 2020) and their capacity to sustain moral self-cultivation.

Looking back at the history of human epidemics and pandemics, we find that lethal epidemics have become more globalized in the last century.¹ Except for the 1918 Flu Pandemic (or Spanish Flu), COVID-19 is the most threatening disease in the last 100 years in terms of infection and death rates. Even though several good vaccines have been developed for COVID-19, it is becoming increasingly likely that this influenza virus will continue to take many people's lives. Meanwhile, many new challenges and moral dilemmas have appeared during this pandemic period. Thus, it is necessary to investigate and discuss the very important potential role of moral education in the context of this terrible pandemic.

In this paper, I review academic papers that may help to clarify the moral dilemmas we have been forced to face during this terrible pandemic. I analyze them from societal, individual, institutional or organizational, and national/international perspectives, and I point out creative approaches and solutions to the dilemmas, along with their potential advantages and disadvantages. Finally, I propose some approaches

¹ Even in the case of the Black Death, a pandemic in Europe in the 14th Century during which many people died, the disease remained localized in Europe and did not become globalized. However, in the 20th century, during which our global transportation systems continued to advance, our epidemics became increasingly globalized. For example, the 1918 Flu Pandemic (the Spanish Flu) took millions of lives around the globe.

in which we might strengthen our moral education during this global pandemic and (potentially) post-pandemic eras.

MORAL DILEMMAS AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

At the beginning of 2020, COVID-19 began to silently permeate our human societies. Too quickly it spread not just through China and the rest of Asia but also through many other countries and societies around the world. This disaster has challenged humanity and forced us to quickly make moral decisions while facing dilemmas in multiple social and cultural contexts. These dilemmas at the individual level may be briefly divided into two types: There are the dilemmas which each person faces as he/she plays his/her different social roles, but we also see people's different social roles, and the larger problem of how to play them, pose dilemmas on a larger scale. Multiple authors have proposed many creative solutions to resolving these different kinds of dilemmas.

With the invasion of COVID-19, people naturally have wanted to minimize the risks to their health; on the other hand, they also have wanted, indeed needed, to fulfill their social responsibilities and to keep their jobs, as well as maintain their personal rights. Such dilemmas manifest in various ways: for example, should parents stay home with their children or send them to daycare centers and go to work? Another example is this: Many hospital healthcare workers suffered from mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, but they still had to stay at the hospital to do their jobs (Agarwal et al., 2021; Delgado et al., 2021; Jia et al., 2021). Some of them developed a kind of aerosol box in order to reduce the personal risk of infection when working on such risky procedures as intubation (Babu et al., 2020). Moreover, many people are still facing the moral dilemma of whether to put their family's health first or to put their family's economic security first. Should they continue their jobs as restaurant servers, travel agents, transport workers, healthcare workers, etc., to support their families, or should they stay at home to prevent bringing COVID-19 to their older family members?

Another type of dilemma manifests in the individual's role in society. For example, when healthcare workers face limited healthcare resources, they have to decide who gets needed medical resources (e.g., a respirator or medical bed) first and who must wait for a longer time (Carroll IV et al., 2020; Chan, 2020; Chan et al., 2020). If we take a closer look at situation, we find that different individuals apply different moral standards in making their decisions when facing these sorts of dilemmas, and they are more likely to adopt utilitarianism than some other ethical doctrine (Everett et al., 2021).

In addition to these dilemmas arising from the different social roles of each individual, there are also dilemmas related to the social roles of different groups of individuals, for example, the human rights of healthcare workers vs patients, older vs younger people, and teachers vs students. This kind of dilemma springs from different personal needs that can only be met by balancing decisions that support each of the social roles involved (Byrd & Białek, 2021). For example, a balance may need to be struck between maintaining the human rights of healthcare workers and preserving the human rights of their patients (Sperling, 2021). On the one hand, healthcare workers may want to avoid some potentially dangerous surgical procedures; on the other hand, patients may want more treatment options. Such circumstances can raise controversial issues such as whether doctors and nurses may choose to see certain patients but not others if they do not have enough protective medical equipment to see each patient (Swazo et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2021).

A similar dilemma may appear when two people have different beliefs or come from different generations. Some people regard attending their religious prayer meetings or engaging in certain political, social, or economic activities as more important than caring for those who may be vulnerable to the life-threatening symptoms of COVID-19 (Byrd & Białek, 2021; Carroll IV et al., 2020). Similar dilemmas involve teachers and students. Say that to protect both parties from COVID-19 it is determined that they should not be present at the same physical location at the same time. The question then arises what to do with students who need social support from their teachers and other students who can only be supplied in the classroom. Should the distancing requirement only apply when the teacher lives in a

high-risk area for COVID-19 and the students live in a low-risk area (Bailey & Schurz, 2020)?

Generally speaking, the above dilemmas raise the problem of the “order of values” in the context of different social roles. That is, a person has to learn how to judge which values should be considered most important and which ones least important. For example, how does a person decide whether love of family members or professional integrity should take priority? Should the human rights of patients be considered more important than those of healthcare workers? Should students’ rights be considered more important than teachers’ health?

The need to make moral decisions in a short time during the global pandemic has forced individuals to experience considerable distress, mainly due to limited information and resources (Borges et al., 2020). A clear value system is required for making proper ethical decisions quickly. Therefore, the ethical dilemmas that have often appeared during the global pandemic have led us to recognize the true significance of moral education, which really means training students to make proper moral decisions at a time of great urgency.

MORAL DILEMMAS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The dilemmas that have appeared at various levels of the social hierarchy during the global pandemic since 2020 have either weakened or strengthened organizations’ unique or specialized functions, and it has forced many countries to suddenly shut down their institutions. During this period, we found that not only schools but also catering services and other such businesses had confronted the dilemma of “shutting down or re-opening” (Bokde et al., 2020). This difficulty forced them to develop different strategies in order to maintain their social functions, as otherwise their organizations might become weakened or forced to downsize. For example, many public and private organization’s activities have been eliminated or reduced, and some economic, religious, and social functions have been weakened. Evidence for such responses to the pandemic can be found in the rising unemployment rates in many countries hit by the pandemic.

Despite the facts that the pandemic has been severe and greatly influenced most people's everyday lives, many institutions have developed relevant response strategies. For example, the aviation industry changed airliners into cargo aircraft to serve the new social needs of its customers, and restaurants began to offer drive-thru meal boxes instead of serving meals inside. Similar changes were made in schools too. For example, online lessons and working from home have become much more common (Toquero, 2021). However, it is also true that the functioning of these institutions has been greatly challenged and/or weakened during the pandemic.

In contrast, given the pressure to release many patients, the capacities of the hospitals and other healthcare organizations have been forced to expand much more rapidly, in spite of the challenges. Confronted by these dilemmas, medical care systems chose to expand and accelerate their functioning by adopting temporary expedients such as mobile home hospitals and drive-through testing facilities. Moreover, to curb and, if possible, to control the endless spread of infections and deaths, abundant resources were allotted to the biomedical industry to promote the production of more medical equipment and vaccines, as well as therapeutic medications (Broockman et al., 2021). At this historic moment, medical departments have thus undergone rapid expansion and made numerous adjustments.

In addition, many schools and businesses have used digital devices (e.g., virtual event platforms such as Zoom, Webex, and Meet) to overcome some of the above dilemmas (Akporehe & Asiyai, 2020). This trend has also led to the digital technology being greatly expanded and the corresponding industries continually strengthened (Ishmaev et al., 2021; Miller, 2021; Subbian et al. 2021). The dilemmas faced by organizations have also challenged such ideals as equal educational opportunities for all children, the right to life, and the right to work.

Suddenly faced with these new dilemmas and challenges during the terrible global pandemic, organizations at every level of society have shown their creativity and resilience. For moral education, a key issue that has appeared during these periods of adjustment is social justice. Many of these adjustments have led to dilemmas of equal vs unequal distribution. For example, many disadvantaged people have become unemployed and thus now have fewer opportunities to obtain such vital resources as high-grade digital and other technical equipment. These problems also have

influenced our educational systems. Students from disadvantaged groups have lacked needed material resources, and their below-standard living environments have lowered their sense of security in the spiritual domain (Sabates et al., 2021). Moreover, the underfunding of schools and other educational organizations has prevented some students from receiving online lessons or digital equipment, as well as helpful knowledge from information technology devices.

MORAL DILEMMAS AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

COVID-19 has not only impacted many individuals and organizations, but it also has created many problems for governments at the national and international levels (Baum & Žok, 2020). Moreover, certain dilemmas with regard to national policies on a variety of issues have appeared in many societies. For example, the dilemma of healthcare (or life) security vs economic suffering in the lower classes and minority groups has destroyed vulnerable communities (Sharma & Mahendru, 2020). Politicians have been forced to make decisions in a short time, and unfortunately their rescue policies have often been announced too late. In addition, the inevitable interruptions in global industrial supply chains during the pandemic have caused food systems to become unstable and made the vulnerable people in the poorest countries suffer from famine (Chakrobarty et al., 2020). In other words, some of the decisions on national policies designed to prevent the spread of the epidemic have led to other life-threatening health problems, not only in East and Southeast Asia but throughout the international community.

Nonetheless, most countries have made good decisions with regard to the dilemma of healthcare (or life) security vs economic risk, basing their decisions mainly on their own national situations rather than on the global threat. Another understandably prominent issue is the unequal distribution of vaccines and other healthcare resources among various countries in the world (Osama et al., 2021). On the one hand, politicians should first address the urgent needs of their own citizens; on the other hand, they need to provide humanitarian aid to high-risk countries and regions with limited resources of their own. Finding proper balances in the face of these dilemmas has remained a challenge.

In addition, such dilemmas have challenged the need for international political cooperation. When COVID-19 first emerged, to keep people calm, some government officials made the bad decision to forbid the release of alarming information about the pandemic, which only reinforced its break-out in many countries (Burkle, 2020). Moreover, relevant information about COVID-19 from professionals was provided too late given the speed of its spread, leading to a series of catastrophes worldwide. This delay has tended to erode trust between nations, thus further inhibiting international cooperation. This erosion of trust has led many nations to pay more attention to their own situations rather than the need to rebuild a global healthcare or medical care system.

Although some controversies have been focused on the question of whether the policies of autocratic or democratic governments will manage the pandemic more successfully, the answer still remains unclear. However, from the global or international perspective, it is essential that national leaders, regardless of whether their governments are autocratic or democratic, take on the responsibility to make ethical decisions not only to protect the health of their own citizens at both the national and local levels, but also to continue to conduct surveys to assess the status of the pandemic and the success of efforts to control it both nationally and worldwide. Obviously, in doing so, adherence to such basic ethical principles as honesty, trust or transparency among individuals and nations, and the democratic principles of freedom and self-management, will be necessary for both individual nations and the larger world order.

HOW CAN PRACTITIONERS OF MORAL EDUCATION LEARN FROM THIS GLOBAL PANDEMIC?

Since the appearance of COVID-19, various moral dilemmas have challenged not only our human ideals and value systems but also the reliability of international cooperation in promoting public health. How can we rebuild a trustworthy, reliable, and safe society? Obviously, moral education will play a crucial role in meeting this greatest challenge of the century. Clearly everyone needs to solidly support the principles of “moral education for all” and “moral education at every level of society.” Making clear the order of priority of various values or virtues at the individual,

organizational, and societal levels remains a challenge. For example, our right to live and our right to work are clearly important, as are the need to avoid medical risks and to save as many lives as possible, the need for continuing professional development and economic efficiency at all levels of society, as well as the values of freedom, democracy, transparency and national security at both the international and national levels.

Individuals, organizations, and societies may differ in how they rank the importance of such values or virtues as courage, patience, caring and sympathy, benevolence, fairness and justice, honesty, and respect. Of course, we may find in assigning these ranks that paradoxes and conflicts appear. Therefore, dialogues, debates, and reflections about the relative importance of different values and virtues in different situations, or social contexts, will remain very important in moral education (Klenk & Van de Poel, 2021).

At the individual level, it is always a great challenge when one has to make value or ethical decisions in a short time or at emergent moments. Making good decisions may require extensive education about morality or values, as well as a deep self-understanding and a clear awareness of self-other relationships. In other words, people should learn to recognize the order of priority of their own value choices. It will take time to continually or repeatedly rank our values in terms of preference, especially when confronted with cases that require our urgent attention. Consideration of ethical doctrines could also help people understand which value applications are most helpful for them, for example, in making their lives flourish (according to Aristotle's ethics), their consciences and minds at peace (according to Kantian or Confucian ethics), and their relationships with others harmoniously (according to the ethics of caring or *ren*-benevolence ethics) (Benko, 2020; Branicki, 2020; Bustan et al., 2021). Of course, sometimes these considerations may lead us into dilemmas or conflict situations. Moral education in our schools, with an emphasis on traditional ethical principles, may further enable us to pursue the path of self-cultivation.

How can organizations face and overcome emerging dilemmas in a changing society? For example, decisions to downsize or expand organizations inevitably raise issues or problems of equality/inequality, which often result in certain disadvantaged people or groups being ignored (Kooli, 2021). How can organizations best perform

what they see as their most important social and ethical duties? The tradition in various societies around the world has often been to adopt utilitarian ethics (Carroll IV et al., 2020). However, during this present period of a (potentially global) pandemic, some disadvantaged and thus vulnerable people have often been ignored. Therefore, to achieve a highly productive level of professional and ethical decision-making, freedom of discussion will remain very important. Here Kantian ethical doctrines or John Rawls' theory of justice could be adopted to support our decision-making, because these ideas are concerned with the true meaning and universal importance of human rights.

Finally, we must always keep in mind the crucial role of national governments and international organizations. Their policies will broadly influence individuals and organizations on matters such as the distribution of healthcare resources and vaccines, the spread of the virus, and economic risks. Obviously, policy makers will need more than a few professional groups to help them evaluate and predict potential trends. In addition, to avoid the influences exerted from the local or national propagandas, and then to engage in rational ethical decisions will become a necessity for leaders to make wiser and more proper decisions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly tested the global effectiveness of moral education. It has challenged individuals, as well as national and international organizations and polities to quickly make important ethical decisions, where making such decisions depends not only on personal and communal values but also on having sufficient professional information. This exigency has led to the adoption of various strategies for making better moral decisions during the pandemic. For example, the ethics of caring and of *ren*-benevolence, as well as utilitarian ethics, have been adopted to deal with the serious and complex dilemmas we've been facing at the individual and community levels. However, at the organizational and governmental levels, utilitarianism has been more effective than other approaches in guiding good decision-making with respect to the most urgent and threatening events.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 has been a terrible burden but also has potentially provided an important lesson for people around the world, as it has led to many utterly challenging moral dilemmas. During this global epidemic, many ethical decisions have been made in a short time at the individual, organizational, national, international, and societal levels. Inevitably, many tragic events have had to be endured. Therefore, the long-term cultivation of moral education, especially the capacity to make wise moral decisions in the face of every major dilemma that might confront at either the individual or institutional level, is always necessary for all human societies. Proper ethical decision-making depends on sufficient professional competence and knowledge, which often require effective teamwork.

To reach the goal of rebuilding a moral society, of course, the daily practice of self-cultivation and thoughtful value judgment, as well as making wise ethical decisions on a daily basis based on sufficient professional information, will always be very helpful. Adopting traditional and contemporary ethical doctrines (*ren-benevolence* or caring ethics, utilitarian discrimination, Aristotle's thoughts on *eudiamonia* (happiness, well-being or flourishing), Kantian ethics) should help decision-makers expand and deepen their understanding of the problem at hand.

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