A Six-Factor Model of Ethical Decision-Making

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Introduction

- In 2024 our lab published a study that validated a 5-Factor model of ethical decision-making (Diegel et al., 2024)
- After publication, the source of the initial inspiration for the framework revised their model to add a sixth factor: ***Care***
- These studies systematically explore the validity of the inclusion of Care into our current ethical framework of ***Utilitarianism, Rights, Justice/Fairness, Common Good*** and ***Virtue.***

Ethical Perspectives

- UTILITARIAN
  The Ends Justify the Means
  The Pros vs The Cons
- RIGHTS
  Respect the Individual
  Everyone Deserves Dignity
- JUSTICE/FAIRNESS
  Treat equals equally and unequals unequally
  Fair Treatment with No Exceptions
- COMMON GOOD
  The Whole is Greater than the Sum of its Parts
  The Welfare of All
- VIRTUE
  Be the Best Version of Yourself
  What would a good person do
- CARE
  Nurture and Empathize
  Caring for the Vulnerable

Experiments

- **Experiment 1**
  Method
  $N = 307$. 241 Female, 66 Male $M_{age} = 19.3$
  Participants rated ethical leanings using the Ethical Perspectives Scale (EPS). Further, they rated 30 items representing Care ethics. Finally, they answered a series of dilemmas.
  Results
  Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) confirmed an independent and unique Care factor and identified the three items that best represent it for future use.
- **Experiment 2**
  Method
  $N = 441$. 282 Female, 159 Male $M_{age} = 19.6$
  A revised version of the EPS including the 3 identified Care items, was introduced. Participants rated the EPS items, then rated the morality of a number of dilemma scenarios, including new ones focused on perspective and context.
  Results
  Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the revised EPS showed the model met or exceeded all recommendation thresholds.
- **Experiment 3**
  Method
  $N = 152$. 99 Female, 53 Male $M_{age} = 19.0$
  Participants were given the revised EPS at two time points, three weeks apart.
  Results
  Test-retest reliability was established
- **Experiment 4**
  Method
  $N = 501$. 244 Female, 257 Male $M_{age} = 38.0$
  Experiment 4 was identical to Experiment 2, except this took place on CloudResearch
  Results
  Confirmatory Factor Analysis revealed the continuing validity of the revised model across a generalized sample.

Regression Differences by Sample

- On the left are results from Experiment 2, using a student sample
  On the right are results from Experiment 4, using a general sample

	U	R	F	CG	V	CA
SP1	.042	**.062***	.039	.046	**.067***	.034
SP2	.036	-.027	-.025	.006	.002	.018
SP3	-.021	-.017	-.045	-.019	-.042	-.029
SP4	-.010	-.013	.032	.026	-.020	-.004
SP5	**-.102****	**-.123*****	**-.115*****	**-.121*****	**-.162*****	**-.116*****
SI1	.004	-.186	-.151	.025	-.182	-.107
SI2	.205	.015	**-.235***	.024	.021	.029
SI3	-.011	.168	-.124	.048	-.011	.141
SI4	.037	.191	-.033	-.071	-.141	-.115
SI5	.099	-.060	**-.351*****	.043	**-.222***	.114
CP1	.122	-.144	-.068	-.183	-.156	**.242***
CP2	-.018	.070	.107	-.037	.123	.010
CP3	.142	-.061	-.157	-.117	-.103	.145
CP4	-.052	.150	.079	.143	.212*	-.205
CP5	.136	**-.284***	-.092	-.150	.083	.226
CI1	-.038	-.103	-.163	-.088	-.165	**.283***
CI2	-.029	.028	-.024	-.159	.102	.154
CI3	**-.209***	.074	**.243***	-.013	.069	-.090
CI4	.083	-.022	-.090	.156	-.012	-.117
CI5	.040	.065	-.073	-.028	**-.309****	.143

	U	R	F	CG	V	CA
SP1	.010	-.038	.009	.031	.015	.016
SP2	.040	.033	.018	.034	.035	.054
SP3	-.009	-.001	-.030	.027	**-.076***	-.006
SP4	-.020	-.028	-.007	-.034	-.033	**-.050***
SP5	.026	-.027	-.025	.017	.018	**.074***
SI1	-.054	-.024	-.046	**-.094****	-.044	**-.095*****
SI2	.008	.008	.009	.017	.050	-.003
SI3	**.105*****	.051	**.079****	**.088****	**.090****	**.081****
SI4	-.058	-.035	-.046	-.018	.016	.011
SI5	-.010	-.017	-.014	.053	-.020	.001
CP1	**-.062****	**-.053***	-.040	-.007	-.017	-.021
CP2	.002	**.078***	**.069***	.031	.008	.054
CP3	**-.086****	**-.063***	**-.096*****	**-.116*****	**-.071***	**-.138*****
CP4	.004	.038	.024	-.011	**-.075****	.002
CP5	-.026	-.022	.015	.026	.022	-.011
CI1	-.026	.006	-.017	.016	**.063***	.016
CI2	.006	-.002	.010	.001	-.021	-.034
CI3	.009	.026	.009	.028	.034	-.029
CI4	.004	-.041	-.026	-.008	**-.098*****	**-.059***
CI5	.023	.026	.002	-.009	.008	.013

- The second (right) group had many more males than the student sample and was double the average age of the student sample. Highlighting age and sex differences.

Trolley Footbridge (SP5)

- A runaway trolley is heading down the tracks toward five workmen who will be killed if the trolley proceeds on its present course. You are on a footbridge over the tracks, in between the approaching trolley and the five workmen. Next to you on this footbridge is a stranger who happens to be very large.
- The only way to save the lives of the five workmen is to push this stranger off the bridge and onto the tracks below where his large body will stop the trolley. The stranger will die if you do this, but the five workmen will be saved.
- Would you push the stranger on to the tracks in order to save the five workmen?

Definitely Not Shein (CP3)

- Recently, a new company has been gaining a lot of attention for selling high-quality products at incredibly low prices. After some news organizations investigated how this was possible, they discovered that the company relies heavily on cheap labor in foreign countries with questionable laws about working age and conditions. Buying those same products from companies that follow more ethical labor standards means paying anywhere between three to five times more than if purchased from the cheaper company. Critics of the company argue that the financial savings are not worth the human cost, while supporters contend it's hypocritical to single out this company when many popular products sold elsewhere are made under similar conditions.
- Is it okay to purchase from this company as long as it saves you money?