



## **THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR LEVERAGING DEMOCRATIC POLARITIES**

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### **Abstract**

The polarities of democracy framework is used to achieve human emancipation by simultaneously managing multiple paradoxes by employing Johnson's polarity management as the conceptual framework. Although Johnson's framework may be appropriate for managing other tension-dependent pairs, it is less suitable for managing multiple democratic values when the goal is human emancipation and sustainable democratic social change. Managing multiple polarities is exacerbated by the problem-shifting and problem-creation effect inherent in a tension-driven framework. The aim was to develop a constructivist grounded theory to answer the research question: How can the first principles of democracy be used to reduce dynamic tension and achieve human emancipation? This gap has been filled by a parsimonious conceptual framework based on three democratic principles: human dignity, fairness, and knowledge. The principles of democracy conceptual framework can synthesize the tension between democratic values in order to manage, plan, and evaluate democratic social change initiatives.

**Keywords:** constructivist grounded theory, democratic social change, first principles of democracy conceptual framework, polarities of democracy, polarity management.

### **Introduction**

The polarities of democracy is a synthesis of Butts's (1980, 1988) democratic civism and Johnson's 1996 polarity management frameworks (Benet, 2006). Johnson's (2014) framework is used to effectively leverage interdependent pairs to facilitate the pursuit of "expansive dreams" and to address "chronic issues" (p. 2). Although Johnson's framework may be appropriate for leveraging other tension-dependent pairs, it is less suitable for managing multiple democratic values

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paired as manageable dilemmas if the goal is human emancipation and sustainable democratic social change. Five weaknesses emerged with employing Johnson's (1996, 2014) to leverage democratic values simultaneously as dilemmas to be managed: problem allocation, prediction problem, determining maximum benefits, determining which sacrificial value(s), and suitability of early warning signs. In light of these shortcomings, a parsimonious framework was constructed for leveraging the polarities of democracy. The principles of democracy conceptual framework can synthesize the tension (Poole & Van de Ven, 1989 as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014) between polar democratic values to manage, plan, and evaluate democratic social change initiatives. This strategy can assist decision-makers in preventing injustice and achieving sustainable democratic social change. The premise is that when human dignity, fairness, and knowledge are at the center of managing, planning, and evaluating strategies to achieve human emancipation, they reduce dynamic tension because they are the focus and goal of democratic social change objectives.

### **Relevant Literature**

Relevant literature includes polarity management and polarities of democracy, the incorporation of polarity management with Butts's (1980, 1988) civic virtues. Polarity management is a tension-driven framework for managing interdependent dilemmas (Johnson, 1996, 2014). The effective use of the framework requires achieving the maximum positive aspects of the poles while reducing the maximum negative aspects (Benet, 2006; Johnson, 1996, 2014). As "poles are inseparable," and neither pole can be chosen "as a sustainable solution," both sides of the poles must be pursued to achieve a "greater purpose" and avoid the "deeper fear" that undermines peak performance (Johnson, 2014, p. 2). However, pole upsides cannot be experienced simultaneously because the more time spent focusing on one pole, the more time will be spent on the downside of that pole (Benet, 2006; Johnson, 1996). Shifting tension between the poles causes the positive aspects to destabilize the negative aspects of the opposite pole (Benet, 2006; Johnson, 1996). The instability caused by the dynamic tension between the two poles spreads to multiple pairs, shifting existing problems and creating new ones (Benet, 2006). Shifting problems requires that stakeholders make concessions to manage existing dilemmas. Thus, key stakeholders' participation is required in two processes: creating Action Steps to maximize each pole's upsides and identifying Early Warnings to detect polar dips (Johnson, 2014). Both processes are necessary to achieve peak performance (Johnson, 2014). A High-Level Action Step "has double value," and is essential for effectively leveraging both pairs: It "simultaneously supports both upsides" and is thus listed for both upsides (Johnson, 2014, p. 4). Suitability for using the polarity management framework requires affirmative responses to Johnson's proposed two-pronged test: "Does the problem persist?" and "Are the poles interrelated?" (Johnson, 1996, p. 81).

### **Polarities of Democracy**

The polarities of democracy framework is used to manage and reduce incidents of oppression, violence, and the corrupting influence of power (W. J. Benet, personal communication, March 17, 2021, p. 2) when facing "an unsolvable problem rather than a problem to be solved"

(Benet, 2006, p. 57). The values Benet postulated to support democracy included the following: freedom, diversity, due process, human rights, justice, equality, authority, participation, and communal obligations (Butts (1980) originally used the concept of *personal obligation for the public good*). However, organizations cannot use a both-and approach to democracy without tradeoffs because organizations “will never experience the upside of both poles [of democratic values] simultaneously” (Benet, 2006, p. 60). Leveraging multiple democratic values using Johnson’s (1996) conceptual framework makes instability a fundamental problem. Meaning, emancipation and social change may be hindered by shifting problems to one or more unknown areas. Research evaluating the practical use of the polarities of democracy is lacking. The following section will be a discussion of relevant literature and why there is a need for a parsimonious conceptual framework to achieve human emancipation and sustainable democratic social change when using a tension-driven framework.

### ***Democratic Values as Dilemmas to be Managed***

By using polarity management as a conceptual framework, Benet (2006) organized democratic civic values as democratic paradoxes. Problems exist with Benet’s framework and the pairing of democratic values. The concept of ethics is lacking in applying authority, justice, due process, human rights, diversity, and equality, because Butts (1980, 1988) and Benet (2006, 2013) adopted corrupt forms of these values. Justice and due process must be used with at least two or more paired polarities to achieve fairness (W. J. Benet, personal communication, March 3, 2022). Moreover, Benet asserted that “diversity leads to the wielding of power in ways that make democracy untenable” (p. 187). Although this may be true at times, it is also true that it is antithetical to the civil rights movement. Historically, diverse people (e.g., women, the disabled, LGBTQ+, people of color, and immigrants) were treated unequally in the US and excluded from participation in the country’s democratic processes and representation in that democracy. In addition, this premise invalidates human dignity, runs against the idea that “all men are created equal” (Declaration of Independence, 1776), and Lincoln’s promise of democracy: A “government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth” (Gettysburg Address, 1863, p. 1).

### ***The Limitations of Stacking Dilemmas***

Benet (2006) used Johnson’s (1996) conceptual framework, which distinguishes Benet’s (2006, 2013) framework from Butts’s democratic civism. Benet paired the democratic civic values proposed by Butts (1980, 1988) and employed Johnson’s “both-and” duality, an indication that both values are necessary for democratic governance (Benet, 2013) as a means of managing paradoxes. In incorporating Johnson’s polarity management framework into the polarities of democracy theory, Benet (2006, 2013) proposed three fundamental ideas. First, the polarities of democracy assist in managing social and workplace problems to build tenable, fair, and healthy organizations and communities. Second, all the paired democratic values must be successfully leveraged to maximize the positive aspects of each pole while minimizing its negative aspects (Benet, 2013; Johnson, 1996,

2014). Third, to effectively leverage each pair, their interrelatedness must be understood. The leveraging of the polarities of democracy is intended to allow individuals and organizations to achieve the poles' maximum positive aspect while reducing the negative aspects of the poles as much as possible (Benet, 2006, p. 30). Benet (2006) asserts that using the polarity management framework makes evaluation, planning, guiding, and social change more likely (p. 30). The overall social change objective of incorporating democratic civism (see Butts, 1980, 1988) with polarity management is to assist individuals and organizations in forming healthy, just, and sustainable communities (Benet, 2013, p. 26), with the goal of human emancipation.

However, several factors impeding progress toward democratic social change were identified in this study by analyzing the fit between the polarities of democracy and polarity management. The weaknesses of Benet's theory emerged while analyzing the interactions of Johnson's (1996, 2014) axioms with Benet's polarity framework. Problems encountered in the use of Johnson's (1996, 2014) framework to leverage multiple polarities include (a) how to locate a problem that has shifted to another polarity pair; (b) how to predict which polarity pair will experience a new problem as a result of managing multiple polarities, true to managing dilemmas (Benet, 2006); (c) determining whether all the polarity pairs have reached their maximum benefits, (d) determining which democratic value(s) an organization and stakeholders are willing to sacrifice to preserve the other(s), and (e) whether the corrupt democratic values are suitable as Early Warnings, a measure that minimizes the time in either downside (Johnson, 2014). The identified weaknesses suggest that the polarity management framework is unsuitable for managing democratic values when the goal is human emancipation through sustainable social change (Benet, 2013). Managing multiple paradoxes could overwhelm organizational problem solvers and create an organizational disaster whereby organizations achieve neither democratic value being leveraged (see Porter 1985, 1989 as cited by Heracleous and Wirtz, 2014). Moreover, leveraging multiple paradoxes with a tension-driven framework that leads to the shifting and creation of problems detracts from social change, consumes time and exhausts resources (Gibson and Birkinshaw, 2004; Markides & Oyon, 2010; Porter, 1980, 1985; as cited in Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014). Although leveraging one polarity pair at a time would permit a focused assessment and evaluation of the applied remedies, thereby producing better control and management of the problem and its tentative solutions (see Porter 1980, 1985 as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014), Benet (2006) removed managing only one polarity pair as an option.

Despite the complexities involved in managing multiple dualities, Johnson (2014) endorsed the idea during his review of an article by Heracleous and Wirtz (2014) that lauded Singapore Airlines' effective implementation of "an unconventional dual strategy: differentiation through service excellence and innovation, together with simultaneous cost leadership in its peer group" (p. 151). Singapore Airlines' successful employment of a generic strategy of cost leadership through differentiation revealed that the airline was able to manage four paradoxes: cost-effective service excellence, simultaneous decentralized and centralized innovation, being a follower and leader in service development, and standardization and personalization in customer interaction (p. 156). However, there are differing opinions regarding a company's attempt to leverage "more than one

generic strategy” (Porter, 1980, 1985 as cited in Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014). Porter (1980; as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014) argued against dual strategies. Porter believes it is “impossible to achieve and sustain over time because they necessitate contradictory investments and organizational processes” (p. 151). Nevertheless, he admitted that such strategies could temporarily succeed under certain conditions.

In contrast to Porter’s position, Heracleous and Wirtz (2014) cite several scholars who suggested that firms balance paradoxes: Abel (1999), March (1991), Tushman and O’Reilly (1996), Markides and Oyon (2010), and Gibson and Birkinshaw (2004). Abel advocated the dual strategy of short and long-term planning as an iterative relationship but did not clarify whether this should be done within the same organization (p. 152). March advocates balancing exploitation with exploration and financial controls with strategic controls. Although Tushman and O’Reilly, Markides and Oyon, and Gibson and Birkinshaw advocate for firms to leverage perceived paradoxes, they take a slightly different approach to how firms can succeed. Tushman and O’Reilly’s approach is “structural ambidexterity:” The institution of “separate subsidiaries with separate strategies and organizational characteristics integrated through a common executive team at the corporate level” (p. 152). March’s approach is implementing a second business model to avoid organizational conflict (p. 152). Selective integration for synergies is possible with March’s approach. According to Gibson and Birkinshaw, a supportive organizational contest allows individuals to align with current goals and adapt to the changes that will happen in the future. The company’s time allocation is constantly assessed to manage tension. Andriopoulos and Lewis (2009, as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014) identified nesting dualities as an efficient way to fulfill dualities through integration simultaneously. Finally, Heracleous and Wirtz’s (2014) findings suggest three different ways to balance polarities effectively: Embed a culture of “balancing paradoxes within the organizational culture” (p. 165); “make strategic use of technology to support dual strategy” (p. 166), and harness the power of business systems and context to support dual strategy” (p. 167).

Polarity management may be an effective tool for managing dualities in for-profit organizations. However, there is no evidence that it can be used successfully to achieve human emancipation through democratic social change despite the different choices available to manage dual strategies. Private organizations use these choices to increase profit and produce innovation through products, services, or a combination. However, profits, innovation, products, and services are distinct from human emancipation and respect for human dignity. The difference is evident when comparing the outcomes of Singapore Airlines’ and Benet’s democratic social change. Singapore Airlines’ primary goal is profit regardless of its customer service or innovation approach. The options to manage dualities do not solve the lingering problem of managing dilemmas. The crux of the issue is the tradeoffs of leveraging democratic values as paradoxes to be managed instead of problems to be solved. The tradeoff between human rights and communal obligations delayed the recognition of the human dignity of captives and led to national development without the consent of the sacrificed. This tradeoff elevated communal obligations above human rights.



### ***Early Warnings and the Corrupt Forms of Democratic Values***

Effective Early Warnings when using the polarities of democracy are imperative when managing democracy because, as Johnson (1996, as cited in Benet, 2006) pointed out, “we will never experience the upside of both [democratic values] simultaneously” (p. 60). Benet (2006) incorporated Butts’s axiom of corrupt democratic values into his polarities of democracy theory: anarchy and authoritarianism, totalitarianism (freedom and authority), law and order and soft on criminals (justice and due process), unstable pluralism and enforced sameness (diversity and equality), cultural imperialism and chauvinism (human rights and communal obligations), and majoritarianism (participation). However, Benet (2006, 2013) did not provide guidance on how to leverage paradoxes to prevent them from aligning with the corrupt aspects of democratic values or restore them to their proper alignment. In addition, it was discovered that the corrupt forms may violate the first principles of democracy. It represents a departure from critical theory’s social justice goal of fairness.

For example, the corrupt forms of justice, due process, authority, and equality undermine basic fairness and security. The corrupt forms of human rights violate human dignity. Justice and due process could produce problems with the freedom and authority pair, thus, facilitating anarchy as a reaction to authoritarianism. The justice and due process pairs could create problems with the diversity and equality pair in attempts at enforcing sameness among racial, ethnic, religious, or regional groups. Diversity could result in an unstable pluralism (Butts, 1988), which affects participation and representation. As the pairs are interrelated, starting with any one pair thus will produce a similar effect. As the goal is to leverage the five interdependent paired democratic values as dilemmas to be managed (Benet, 2006), the task could become an exercise in “strategic mediocrity and below-average performance” (Porter, 1985, p. 12 as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014, p. 151); such a task would lead to difficulties in problem prediction or even identifying possible problems, if at all possible.

Predicting outcomes is critical in a data-driven world, particularly when democracy requires a both-and approach (Benet, 2006). The challenges of shifting and creating problems could be costly for organizational leaders. Organizational leaders and stakeholders must agree on acceptable “tradeoffs between poles” (Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014, p. 153) when leveraging human rights and communal obligations, justice and due process, freedom and authority, equality and diversity, or a combination. However, no research indicates that Benet evaluated the utility of using corrupt aspects as Early Warnings that could “minimize [the] time in either downside” (Johnson, 2014, p. 4). Not doing so leads to many unanswered questions regarding how one can determine when corrupt aspects produce negative outcomes or stifle democratic social change. For example, the corrupt aspects of justice and due process are law and order and soft on crimes. Are organizational leaders to assume law and order is always a corrupt aspect, or could it be a strategy for achieving security during a pandemic? Similarly, is the Court’s attempt to enforce suspects’ constitutional rights an example of it being soft on crime, or could it be interpreted as protecting American citizens’ human rights and dignity?

Furthermore, under certain conditions, enforced equality becomes a form of enforced fairness, respect for human dignity, and a method of securing democracy (i.e., fair lending, fair housing practices, and free and appropriate education). There is a lack of instruction about when corrupt aspects of values have negative or positive consequences for individuals and communities. Neither Butts (1980, 1988) nor Benet (2006, 2013) discussed how problem solvers determine when a corrupt aspect may lead to democracy or pose as an anti-democratic strategy. Therefore, leaders and stakeholders may struggle to determine when to leverage downside polarities.

## **Method**

This conceptual framework was nested in a grounded theory study with the research question: In what ways does the polarities of democracy theory contribute to or detract from realizing the promise of democracy as encapsulated in our founding documents? A constructivist grounded theory was employed to examine the founding documents to explore democracy: the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, the US Constitution, and The Federalist Papers. Grounded theory's data analysis method of theoretical sampling, theoretical coding, constant comparative, memoing (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007), and methodological self-consciousness (see Charmaz, 2016) were employed during data analysis. The coding stages were open, selective, and axial (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Abductive reasoning and multiple data analysis strategies— deconstruction, perspective-taking, systems and holistic thinking, and dramaturgical and situational analysis— were employed throughout the data analysis process. Benet's polarities of democracy— specifically, freedom, authority, justice, due process, diversity, equality, human rights, communal obligations, participation, and representation—were compared and contrasted with the emerged theoretical codes, the first principles of democracy: knowledge, fairness, human dignity, hope, unity, and security.

## **Grounded Theory: A Conceptual Framework for Leveraging Polarities**

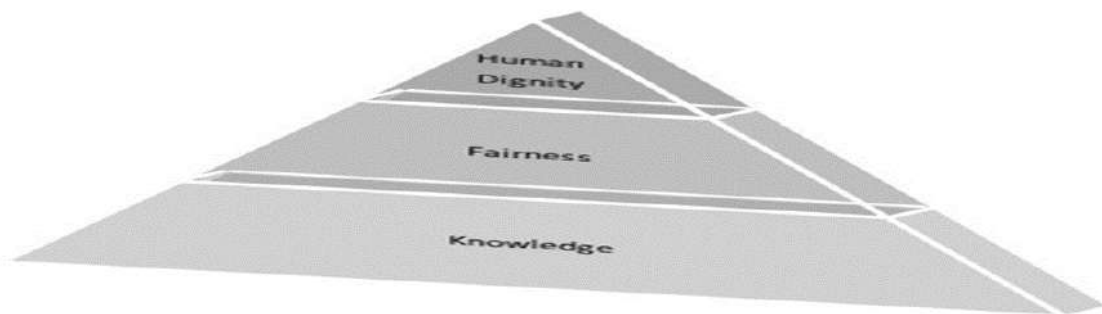
Johnson's polarity management is an unsuitable framework for human emancipation through democratic social change. Johnson's tension-driven framework would negate or minimize the realizable gains. A parsimonious conceptual framework based on the first principles of democracy may reduce dynamic tension between democratic values by enabling simultaneous management of all paired polarities, and eliminate concerns about shifting and creating problems. The proposed conceptual framework is a practical way to manage dilemmas and social problems. Policies and solutions should be judged on whether they reflect respect for human dignity, fairness, and knowledge. The three concepts are required for planning, decision-making, and evaluating social change policies as they promote empowerment and foster security and unity. Knowledge—the foundation of all decisions, whether ethical, national, organizational, personal, or other—must uphold respect for human dignity in all areas, including public policy, political science, and democracy. Fairness is a concept that spans domains of knowledge and has a role in organizational justice (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), educational justice, social justice, criminal justice, and every other area. As such, respect for dignity imposes the duty to treat others fairly so that respect

for human dignity is upheld. The assumptions of the principles of democracy conceptual framework are:

- Human dignity is the central focus of democracy.
- Fairness facilitates security.
- Knowledge is required to preserve human dignity and fairness.

### **Human Dignity**

As the most abstract of the first principles of democracy, all democratic principles and democratic values are buttressed by this concept as their goal is to preserve humankind. Therefore, the desirable conceptual framework must include human dignity as the highest inalienable endowment and the greatest equalizer of individual human beings, irrespective of socially constructed characteristics or differences. Human dignity belongs at the top of the pyramid (Figure 1). Absent respect for human dignity, human rights are invalid; this lack of recognition exposes individuals to oppression (see the *long train of abuses and usurpations* in the US Declaration of Independence, 1776). Therefore, human dignity is the focal point of planning, analyzing, as well as evaluating policies and efforts at social change lest we forget that the past criminal disrespect for human dignity evidenced in slavery, eugenics, and the Tuskegee experiments in the United States, the Holocaust in Germany, the Nanjing Massacre in China, the Darfur genocide, and the casualties in Palestine.



*Figure 1, Conceptual Model*

### **Fairness**

Respect for human dignity is based on fairness. Fairness as a process and outcome of justice constitutes the moral essence of equality (Aristotle, 353 BC/1992). Aristotle viewed fairness as a method to achieve the highest sum of all virtues and a deviation from a standard that ensures the equal application of the law during extraordinary circumstances (i.e., disabilities and incompetence; Aristotle 353 BC/1992). To the Founders, fairness forms a basis for the Bill of Rights and is evident in the *doctrine of consent of the governed* mentioned in the US Declaration of Independence, 1776. Fairness in society, therefore, must be addressed to avoid conditions that would otherwise cause unequal treatment and, thereby, injustice. Exceptions in judicial proceedings include *mitigating circumstances, extra-legal factors, the insanity defense, and self-defense*.



Likewise, extraordinary circumstances are recognized in education, employment, and public places to afford accommodations to people with disabilities or to level the playing field as a remedy for *de jure* discrimination. Fairness is a basic need human beings seek to satisfy (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Maslow, 1954/1987). It is deliberately placed at the pyramid's center because decisions to preserve respect for human dignity must be centered on equity (both are supported by knowledge, as previously stated). In upholding justice and fairness, the Founders believed that constitutional "rights [are necessary] to control the abuses of government" (The Federalist No. 51, 1787/1998, p. 333). They understood that the government is "the greatest of all reflections [of] human nature. Thus, if men were angels, no government would be necessary" (No. 51).

### **Knowledge**

Knowledge is at the base of the pyramid, the foundation upon which decisions are often made (and by which the other two assumptions are supported) based on science, intuition, pragmatism, or ideology. The most effective decisions are made using reliable scientific evidence and sound reason. Democracy's first principles and the cherished democratic values proposed by Butts (1980, 1988) and the United Nations (UN) General Assembly's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) are maintained when decisions are based on the three principles (knowledge, preserving human dignity, and upholding fairness). Moreover, knowledge is not only the foundation of innovation. It is a major contributor to the United States' geopolitical standing, a source of competition in intelligence gathering, and a feature of American legislators (i.e., "some of the most distinguished members of that Congress ... who have grown old in acquiring political information were also members of this convention and carried into it their accumulated knowledge and experience;" The Federalist No. 3, 1787/1998, p. 11).

When using this conceptual framework, there are three essential questions: Does the policy under consideration lead to human dignity? Is the policy under consideration fair? Is the policy under consideration based on the best available information? One can assume that the model is useful in preserving human dignity, an essential value of democracy, because the American Psychological Association (2017; see Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct), the American Medical Association (2002; see Declaration of Professional Responsibility: Medicine's Social Contract with Humanity), and the American Bar Association (2020; see Model Code of Judicial Conduct) reflect the three principles: human dignity, fairness, and knowledge incorporated into their professional conduct framework. Professional codes of conduct require respect for human dignity, impartiality, and competence. The three principles will be used for assessing, planning, problem-solving, and evaluating social change policies. The democratic social change framework is a parsimonious model better suited to the planning and evaluating policy and social change efforts than leveraging multiple polarities using Johnson's tension-driven approach. Its use could lead to empowerment. Individuals and organizations have employed the polarities of democracy framework theoretically to promote healthy, just, and sustainable communities (Benet, 2013). There is no research assessing the practical application of the polarities of democracy.

## **Discussion**

Firms are encouraged to balance paradoxes; however, certain conditions are necessary for managing dualities successfully (see Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004; see also Porter 1980, 1985; and Tushman & O'Reilly, 1996 (as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014). Options include separate business models with different strategies (Tushman & O'Reilly's, 1996 as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014), balancing alignment with adaptability ((Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004 as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014), and nesting paradoxes (Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009 as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014). Heracleous and Wirtz (2014) found that organizations must act to support dual strategy by embedding a culture of polarity, strategically using technology in support of this objective, and by valuing business systems and context. Polarity management is an effective tool for managing dualities in for-profit organizations; however, there is no evidence that incorporating it as a conceptual framework in the polarities of democracy theory is effective in achieving human emancipation. Although private organizations can manage dual strategies to increase profit while innovating through products, services or a combination of these, there is a difference between products and services and human emancipation and respect for human dignity. For example, Singapore Airlines' primary goal is profit regardless of its customer service or innovation approach. However, the objective of using the polarities of democracy is to manage and reduce incidents of oppression, violence, and the corrupting influence of power (W. J. Benet, personal communication, March 17, p. 2). Moreover, managing polarities involves tradeoffs (Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014) that involve human and civil rights when leveraging the polarities of democracy.

Unless the problems encountered using polarity management (see Johnson, 1996, 2014) are addressed, managing democratic values using the framework will remain elusive. The principles of democracy conceptual framework can manage tradeoffs and synthesize the tension (see Poole & Van de Ven, 1989 as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014) between democratic values to allow managing, planning, and evaluation of democratic social change initiatives. In addition, as high-level abstractions, human dignity, fairness, and knowledge can serve to nest paradoxes (i.e., knowledge can nest participation and representation; fairness can nest justice and due process; human dignity can nest human rights and communal obligations). Hope, unity, and security are not used to leverage the polarities of democracy but play an important role in achieving democratic social change. The framework could be used independently to plan and evaluate sustainable democratic social change initiatives and can also be used with Johnson's polarity management. Even though the framework must be evaluated, it appears promising in light of the concepts that emerged in ethical codes of conduct in psychology, medicine, and law.

## **Conclusion**

Consider the challenges of managing multiple paradoxes: problems shifting (Benet, 2006), the need for early warnings (Johnson, 2014), competing for resources (Porter, 1985 as cited by Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014), and the inherent tension, competition, and tradeoffs of managing polarities (Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014). A non-tension-driven framework based on human dignity,

fairness, and knowledge may not please all stakeholders all the time, but it will protect and respect the innate right to human dignity. Problem managers, therefore, can use the principles of democracy conceptual framework to assess, plan, and guide social change at various levels: micro, meso, macro, and global. The principles of democracy conceptual framework provides a practical assessment of whether a policy promotes respect for human dignity, fairness, and the best available knowledge in resolving social problems. It can be used in conjunction with Johnson's conceptual framework or independently. Using the first principles of democracy conceptual framework with Johnson's conceptual framework could assist in achieving human emancipation (Benet, 2013) and democracy's "greater purpose" (Johnson, 2014, p. 2).

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