Pandemic Control: What Political and Governance Features Impact the Effectiveness of Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions?  
Thuy Nguyen, University of Oregon, [thuyn@uoregon.edu](mailto:thuyn@uoregon.edu)

There was a great variance in the ability of controlling the Covid-19 pandemic across countries. Successes and failures in containing the coronavirus can be found in democracies and autocracies, federal and unitary states, and governments with high and low scores of perceived corruption in the public sector. There is yet to be seen a clear pattern of the relations between political systems or types of government to the effectiveness of coronavirus control. A recent study by Haug et al (2020) on the effectiveness of non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) in mitigating the spread of coronavirus finds almost no significant positive correlation between the Worldwide Governance Indicators and the level of virus control effectiveness[[1]](#footnote-1). This is a real puzzle that demands better understanding. Why doesn’t seemingly “better” governance as measured by WGI mean stronger capability in coping with a health crisis like Covid-19? This paper zooms into the black box that links political and government characteristics and the effectiveness of NPIs. I trace the Worldwide Governance Indicators back to its 33 data sources, disaggregating and reintegrating the data components that are most relevant to the pandemic matter. I then conduct a fine-grained analysis of political and governance features that 1) likely lead a country to the adoption of certain sets of virus control measures and 2) impact the level of effectiveness of such measures. In other words, I ask: why does a country adopt the policy that they did in the first place? Are there any inherent political and governmental characteristics that make a NPI more effective in a country than another? And how did these characteristics contextually play out in the process?

1. https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-020-01009-0#Sec7 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)