INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM SCALE (INDCOL)

Reference:

Description of Measure:
A 32-item scale consisting of items designed to measure four dimensions of collectivism and individualism:

- **Vertical Collectivism** – seeing the self as a part of a collective and being willing to accept hierarchy and inequality within that collective
- **Vertical Individualism** – seeing the self as fully autonomous, but recognizing that inequality will exist among individuals and that accepting this inequality.
- **Horizontal Collectivism** – seeing the self as part of a collective but perceiving all the members of that collective as equal.
- **Horizontal Individualism** – seeing the self as fully autonomous, and believing that equality between individuals is the ideal.

All items are answered on a 9-point scale, ranging from 1 = never or definitely no and 9 = always or definitely yes.

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

People in different cultures have strikingly different construals of the self, of others, and of the interdependence of the 2. These construals can influence, and in many cases determine, the very nature of individual experience, including cognition, emotion, and motivation. Many Asian cultures have distinct conceptions of individuality that insist on the fundamental relatedness of individuals to each other. The emphasis is on attending to others, fitting in, and harmonious interdependence with them. American culture neither assumes nor values such an overt connectedness among individuals. In contrast, individuals seek to maintain their independence from others by attending to the self and by discovering and expressing their unique inner attributes. As proposed herein, these construals are even more powerful than previously imagined. Theories of the self from both psychology and anthropology are integrated to define in detail the difference between a construal of the self as independent and a construal of the self as interdependent. Each of these divergent construals should have a set of specific consequences for cognition, emotion, and motivation; these consequences are proposed and relevant empirical literature is reviewed. Focusing on differences in self-construals enables apparently inconsistent empirical findings to be reconciled, and raises questions about what have been thought to be culture-free aspects of cognition, emotion, and motivation.

Do cultural values influence the manner in which people cooperate with one another? This study assessed cultural characteristics of individuals and then related these characteristics to cooperative behavior in social dilemmas. Participants were assessed for their degree of vertical and horizontal individualism and collectivism, cultural values identified by Triandis (1995). They made choices in either a single-group or an intergroup social dilemma. The single-group dilemma entailed a three-person dilemma; the intergroup dilemma was identical but added subgroup competition, i.e., an opposing three-person group. The results indicated an interaction between cultural characteristics and type of dilemma for cooperation. The single-group versus intergroup effect reported by Bornstein and Ben-Yossef (1994) was replicated, but only for vertical individualists. The vertical individualists were least cooperative in the single-group dilemma but were more cooperative in the intergroup dilemma—where cooperation with the group maximized personal outcomes. The vertical collectivists were most cooperative in the single-group dilemma but were less cooperative in the intergroup dilemma—where group defection resulted in maximum group outcomes.


Studies of cooperation are abundant in the social sciences, but organizational researchers are calling for integrating the numerous conceptions of cooperation and meeting the new challenges of cultural differences. In this article we develop a culturally contingent model of cooperation. We differentiate various mechanisms from cooperative behaviors and theorize about how culture affects behavioral cooperation through mechanism selection or modification. Delineating cultural effects, we derive patterned differences in the instrumental and expressive motives of individualists and collectivists and propose six culturally contrasting cooperation mechanisms. Finally, we discuss directions for future research and consider implications for practice.

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