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Abstract

This study was designed to determine whether individualistic and collectivistic values have an effect on mate preferences. It was hypothesized that (i) Asians will be more collectivistic and Caucasians will be more individualistic in their respective orientations, (ii) participants that are classified as more individualistic will have a greater preference for potential mates who are socially exciting and have professional status, and (iii) participants who are classified as more collectivistic will have a greater preference for potential mates who are kind, considerate, domesticated, and have a liking for children. The individualist and collectivist values were measured using the Individualistic and Collectivistic Scale, while the mate preference dimensions (kind, socially exciting, domestic, professional status, and “likes-children”) were measured using the Marital Preference Questionnaire. A total of 50 female participants completed the questionnaires. The results supported the first hypothesis as a significant correlation was found between race and individualistic and collectivistic attitudes. The second and third hypotheses were partially supported, as no significant relationship was found between individualism and professional status, or collectivism and the kind dimension. However, there was no significant relationship found between individualism-socially exciting, collectivism-domestic and collectivism-“likes-children”.

Introduction

In the study of contemporary cross-cultural psychology, ~~the~~ two fundamental values that ~~clearly~~ differentiate between Eastern and Western cultures are individualism and collectivism. Individualism is a cultural product of the West, ~~including Western Europe, North America, and Australia~~, while collectivism is ~~considered to be~~ more representative of the non-Western societies ~~of Asia, South America, and Africa~~ (Ghorbani, Bing, Watson, Davison, & LeBreton, 2003); ~~West is referred to countries such as Western Europe, North America, and Australia whereas non-Western societies refer to Asia, South America, and Africa.~~ Both ~~the individualism and collectivism~~ constructs concern the relationship between the individual and the group, and ~~each~~ can be reflected ~~across~~ in many domains of social functioning including mate preferences (Hofstede, 1984; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998).

Individualism ~~is the~~ emphasizes ~~belief in~~ the importance of the individual and ~~in~~ the virtues of self-reliance and personal independence, ~~with thus, showing less~~ concern for other people's needs and interests ~~accorded a low priority~~ (Hui & Triandis, 1986). It focuses on the rights of the individual, ~~on and the importance of~~ individual goals, ~~and such that the emphasis is~~ on promoting one's self-interest (Lalonde ~~et al.~~, Hynies, Pannu, & Tatla, 2004). ~~These individualists~~ often regard relationships as competing with personal needs and ~~regard~~ group pressures as interfering with personal goals (Fiske et al., 2002). Their view of the self is inclined to be ~~In addition, individualists tend to have a~~ more stable and autonomous ~~view of the self~~ (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

For collectivists, the basic unit of survival is the group (Hofstede, 1991; Triandis, 1994). Collectivism ~~is the theoretical or practical~~ emphasizes interdependence and ~~on the~~

group's goals, as opposed to the individual goals (Hui & Triandis, 1986) and is always aware of their implications for others. It is the attitudes and behaviors based on the belief that the basic unit of survival lies within a group, not the individual (Hofstede, 1991; Triandis, 1994). Collectivism is related to if family integrity and family unity are primary values therefore, goals cannot be considered without thinking of the implications for others (Gibbons et al., Richter, Wiley, & Stiles, 1996; Lalonde et al., 2004). Collectivists This is associated with have a sense of duty towards their one's own group, interdependence with others, a desire for social harmony, and conformity with to group norms (Ghorbani et al., 2003; Green, et al. Deschamps, & Paez, 2005).

It is commonly acknowledged that individualist and collectivist attitudes are not mutually exclusive (Bontempo, 1993, as cited in Green et al., 2005). Individuals may be characterized by specific combination of individualist collectivist attitudes; some people may be high on individualist and low on collectivist or vice versa, while others can be high or low on both (Green et al., 2005). In the present Thus, this study, the distinct values and attitudes of will regard the individualism and collectivism attitudes as two distinct components in which will be represented by Western Caucasian and Asian Chinese will represent the collectivistic culture while Western Caucasian will represent individualistic cultures respectively.

Mate preferences

The influence of cultural values, on attitudes, and behaviour associated with individualism and collectivism are has also become an important topic in mate selection (Buss, 1998). It seems likely that cultural dimensions, such as individualism and

collectivism could account for the differences in potential mate preferences. Buss and associates (1990) studied the qualities believed to be important in a potential mate among late adolescents and young adults in 37 different societies. The differences in preferred mate attributes were found to differ between individualistic and collectivistic cultures. Furthermore, the study revealed that young people from collectivistic cultures regarded chastity and good housekeeping as important qualities, while in an ideal mate whilst an exciting personality was of greater regard as more important to for individualistic cultures. As the collectivist emphasis on family integrity and appeared to be an essential aspect of collectivism, the collectivistic emphasis on conformity may have led to a decreased concern about emphasis on individual traits, such as appearance (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987), and about a mate being; thus, individuals who are more collectivistic might not have ranked socially exciting as an important characteristic needed in a mate. Similarly, Gibbons et al. (1996) found that of the five characteristics accounting for mate preferences, collectivistic adolescents preferred their mate to be kind, domestic, and have a liking for children, while individualistic adolescents ranked appearance as more important. In summary, qualities such as being socially exciting and having professional status were more important in a potential mate for young people from individualistic cultures; qualities such as being kind, domesticated and "likes children" were important for young people from collectivistic cultures. Gibbons, Richter, Wiley & Stiles (1996) study also found that these five characteristics highlighted the differential mate preferences between the individualistic and collectivistic cultures.

Differences were also exist found in mate preference of between men and women with respect to traits preferred in a mate in the traits desired of a mate (Buss & Barnes,

1986; Hatfield & Sprecher, 1995; Toromorn & Sprecher, 2003). Men are inclined to prefer attractive mates who are with traits such as attractiveness and good housekeepers, while women prefer a mate with good sound earning capacity and sufficient resources (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1995). Therefore, in order to avoid such gender differences and isolate-emphasize the effect of cross-cultural preferences in mate selection, the present study includes only female participants-will only be used as participants, so as to eliminate gender differences.

The focus of aim of this study is the effect on mate preferences of was to investigate if individualistic and collectivistic values have an effect on mate preferences., with the Individualistic and Collectivistic Scale (ICS) will be used to assess-determine the extent to which Asian and Caucasian participants have these values-are individualistic and collectivistic. In addition, the Marital Preference Questionnaire (MPQ) will be used serves to identify the traits participants most desire in a potential mate. It was hypothesized that (i) Asians will be more collectivistic and Caucasians-will be more individualistic (Ghorbani et al., 2003), (ii) participants-that are classified as more individualistic will have a greater-stronger preference for potential mates who are socially exciting and have professional status, and (iii) participants-who are classified as more collectivistic will have a stronger-greater preference for potential mates who are kind, domesticated, and “likes-children” (Gibbons et al., 1996).

Method

Design

The study was carried out by means of a questionnaire study and had a within-subject design. The independent variables were the degree of individualistic traits and collectivistic traits. The dependent variable was the preference rating for the particular traits of a potential long-term mate as defined by the five subscales in the MPQ: kind, socially exciting, domestic, professional status, and “likes-children”.

Participants

In total, 50 unmarried female participants completed this study; 25 were Asian Chinese and 25 were Western Caucasians. All participants were the volunteer family and friends of researchers who volunteered to take part in the study and had to be aged at least 18 years. Their ages ranged from 18 to 25 years, with a mean of 20.78 years and a standard deviation of 1.36. The participants comprised of 25 Asian Chinese and 25 Western Caucasian females who are not married.

Materials

The basic materials used in the study consisted of the ICS and the MPQ. Demographics were also recorded, and these included the age, race, religion, and cultural identity of the participants. These details provided a control mechanism designed, in order to explain any main effects that such characteristics, for example, age and race may have had on the data.

The Marital Preference Questionnaire (MPQ) is a 22-item questionnaire which measures the five dimensions of mate selection: kind, socially exciting, domestic, professional status, and “likes-children”. The items were selected from the

original 76-item MPQ devised by Gough (1973) for his study of family planning and population psychology. The items were selected to represent a broad array of traits that may be desired in a potential mate. Responses were according to a scale from 0 = "very undesirable" to 4 = "very desirable". The scores were separated into the five respective dimensions and the overall scores ranged from 0 to 20 for all the dimensions, except the "likes-children" dimension, which ranged from 0 to 8.

The Individualistic and Collectivistic Scale (ICS) is a 32 item questionnaire designed to measure individualistic and collectivistic. Each item was rated in terms of a five-point frequency scale, ranging from 1 = "never" to 5 = "always". The individualistic and collectivistic scores were separately calculated and thus the scores ranged from 0 to 75 for individualistic and 0 to 85 for collectivistic.

Procedure

Ethical approval was sought and obtained for the study to proceed. The study was conducted only after the ethics were approved. Prior to distributing the questionnaires, the participants received an information sheet containing the details of what they will experience during the course of their participation (refer to see Appendix A). The participants also had to fill out a consent form to confirm their voluntary agreement to participate and that it is purely voluntary (refer to see Appendix B). Participants were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. In addition, the experimenter also

emphasized that honest answers were required, and that ~~there were no~~ answers were not considered as right or wrong ~~answers and that they were to give honest answers~~. To preserve anonymity, no names were put ~~The participants were also told not to put their names~~ on the questionnaires ~~in order to preserve anonymity~~.

The questionnaires were given out in a package consisting of the ICS, ~~the~~ MPQ, and ~~the~~ demographics ~~sheet~~ in this particular order (~~refer to see~~ Appendix C). The experimenter ~~was present during the~~ administering of the questionnaires ~~to~~ and ensured that no participants discussed the contents ~~was not discussed with the rest of the participants~~. ~~Once the questionnaires were completed, they were sealed in an unmarked envelope to protect their confidentiality~~. The questionnaires took approximately 25 minutes to complete, after which ~~Upon completion of the questionnaires~~, the participants were debriefed concerning the purpose of the study. ~~Completed questionnaires were sealed in an unmarked envelope to protect their confidentiality~~.

Data Analysis

— Each participant's score on the ICS and ~~the~~ MPQ was converted to a percentage of its highest possible score. If a participant did not answer a question in a particular survey, the percentage ~~for that survey~~ was calculated using the highest possible score ~~for of only~~ the answered questions (see Figure 1). ~~In order to create a~~ composite score for the individualistic measure, ~~comprised~~ the scores for items 1 to 15, ~~were added up~~ while the scores for items 16 to 32 were ~~included in~~ ~~added up to calculate~~ the composite scores for the collectivistic measure. To create a composite score for each of the 5 main traits, the scores for the respective items were ~~added up~~ summed (see Table 1).

$$\text{Composite score} = \frac{\text{Overall scores marked by participants}}{\text{No. of items answered} \times \text{Maximum score of an item}}$$

Figure 1. The calculation method used to obtain composite scores for the variables.

Table 1.

The items in the MPQ associated with the 5 main traits.

Traits	Items
Kind	1, 6, 10, 15 and 19
Socially Exciting	2, 7, 11, 16 and 20
Domestic	3, 8, 12, 17 and 21
Professional Status	4, 9, 13, 18 and 22
“Likes-children”	5 and 14

Results

Prior to the analysis, the distribution of the individualist and collectivist scores for each race (Asian and Caucasian), were inspected using the histograms. There was no evidence of gross bimodality and no outliers were identified. Among the Fifty50

participants who participated took part in the study. There was a significant positive correlation between race and individualist scores, and there was a significant negative correlation between race and collectivist scores (see Table 2).

Table 2.

Intercorrelations between Race, Individualist and Collectivist Scores.

Variable	Race	Individualist	Collectivist
Race	--	0.32*	-0.30*
Individualist Scores		--	-0.10
Collectivist Scores			--

No multicollinearity was evident between individualist and collectivist scores. The mean individualist scores for Asians were significantly lower than for Caucasians, for the individualist scores (see Table 3), while the average mean collectivist scores for Caucasians were significantly lower than for Asians, for the collectivist scores (see Table 4).

Table 2.

Intercorrelations between Race, Individualist and Collectivist Scores.

Variable	Race	Individualist	Collectivist
Race	--	0.32*	-0.30*
Individualist Scores		--	-0.10
Collectivist Scores			--

Table 3.

Means and Standard Deviations for Individualist Scores.

Variable	n	Mean	Standard Deviation
Asian	25	47.60	6.51
Caucasian	25	53.36	10.41

* $p < 0.05$.

Table 4.

Means and Standard Deviations for Collectivist Scores.

Variable	n	Mean	Standard Deviation
Asian	25	58.28	10.64
Caucasian	25	52.80	7.12

In order to investigate the difference between the races, t-tests were carried out. ~~The Results from the t-test analyses~~ revealed that the individualist scores for the Asians and Caucasians, ~~was~~ were significantly different, $t(48) = -2.35, p < 0.05$, and that ~~In addition,~~ the collectivist scores for the ~~races were also Asian and Caucasian was~~ significantly different, $t(48) = 2.14, p < 0.05$.

Prior to the second analysis, the ~~relevant distributions for the criterion, mate preferences, and the predictors, individualist and collectivist scores~~ were examined ~~with~~ by means of histograms. ~~and found that a~~ All variables were found to be approximately normally distributed, with no univariate outliers. Scattergrams were inspected for each pair

of measures and ~~found~~ no evidence of curvilinear relationships or multivariate outliers ~~was found~~, with a criterion of three standard deviations. The means and standard deviations for the five mate preference traits were calculated (see Table 5) ~~and the~~ data appeared to be suitable for a regression analysis. —

Table 5.

Means and Standard Deviations for Mate Preference Traits.

Traits	Mean	Standard Deviation
Kind	3.68	0.33
Socially Exciting	3.14	0.58
Domestic	2.58	0.58
Professional Status	2.75	0.57
“Likes C children”	2.94	0.73

Table 6 ~~Inspection of the correlations~~ showed ~~ed~~ that kind was significantly negatively correlated with individualist scores ~~(see Table 6)~~.

Table 6.

Intercorrelations between Individualist and Collectivist on Kind.

Variable	Kind	Individualist	Collectivist
Kind	--	-.25*	0.09
Individualist Scores		--	-.10
Collectivist Scores			--

* $p < 0.05$.

Table 7—~~Inspection of the correlation~~ showed that socially exciting was significantly positively correlated with individualist scores (~~see Table 7~~).

Table 7.

Intercorrelations between Individualist and Collectivist on Socially Exciting.

Variable	Socially exciting	Individualist	Collectivist
Socially exciting	--	0.40*	-.02
Individualist		--	-.10
Collectivist			--

* $p < 0.05$.

Table 8 Inspection of the correlations showed that domestic was significantly negatively correlated with individualist scores and significantly positively correlated with collectivist scores (~~see Table 8~~).

Table 8.

Intercorrelations between Individualist and Collectivist on Domestic.

Variable	Domestic	Individualist	Collectivist
Domestic	--	- 0.33*	0.51*
Individualist		--	- 0.10
Collectivist			--

* $p < 0.05$.

Table 9 Inspection of the correlation between all variables showed that professional status was significantly positively correlated with collectivist scores (see Table 9).

Table 9.

Intercorrelations between Individualist and Collectivist on Professional Status.

Variable	Professional Status	Individualist	Collectivist
Professional Status	--	0.09	0.43*
Individualist		--	- 0.10
Collectivist			--

* $p < 0.05$.

Table 10 Inspection of the correlation showed that “likes-children” was significantly positively correlated with collectivist scores (see Table 10).

Table 10.

Intercorrelations between Individualist and Collectivist on “likes-children”.

Variable	“Likes-children”	Individualist	Collectivist
“Likes-children”	--	-.08	0.50*
Individualist		--	-.10
Collectivist			--

* $p < 0.05$.

~~As there is significant correlation between the mate preference traits and cultural values,~~ Regressions were conducted to determine if the cultural values of individualism and collectivism can predict mate preference traits. The predictions for kind from individualist and collectivist scores were weakly successful ($R^2 = 0.06$). The amount of variance accounted for was not significantly different from zero, $F(2,47) = 1.61$, *ns* (see Table 11).

Table 11.

Multiple Regression Analysis for Kind on Individualist and Collectivist Scores.

Variable	?	<i>T</i>	95 % CI		Sq-Part <i>r</i>
			Upper	Lower	
Individualist	- 0.24	- 1.69	- 0.19	0.01	0.06
Collectivist	0.06	0.45	- 0.01	0.01	0.01

$p < 0.05$.

The predictions for socially exciting from individualist and collectivist scores were weakly successful ($R^2 = 0.16$). The amount of variance accounted for was significantly different from zero, $F(2,47) = 4.58$, $p < 0.05$. The variance accounted for by the individualist scores was 16% per cent and the variance accounted for by the collectivist scores was 1% per cent (see Table 12).

Table 12.

Multiple Regression Analysis for Socially Exciting on Individualist and Collectivist Scores.

Variable	?	<i>t</i>	95 % CI		Sq-Part <i>r</i>
			Upper	Lower	
Individualist	0.41	3.02*	0.01	0.04	0.16
Collectivist	0.02	0.14	- 0.02	0.02	0.01

$p < 0.05$.

The predictions for domestic from individualist and collectivist scores were highly successful ($R^2 = 0.58$). The amount of variance accounted for was significantly different from zero, $F(2,47) = 12.00$, $p < 0.05$. The variance accounted for by the individualist scores

was 8% per cent and the variance accounted for by the collectivist scores was 23% per cent (see Table 13).

The predictions for professional status from individualist and collectivist scores were moderately successful ($R^2 = 0.20$). The amount of variance accounted for was significantly different from zero, $F(2,47) = 5.81, p < 0.05$. The variance accounted for by the individualist scores was 2% per cent and the variance accounted for by the collectivist scores was 19% per cent (see Table 14).

Table 13.

Multiple Regression Analysis for Domestic on Individualist and Collectivist Scores.

Variable	β	t	95 % CI		Sq-Part r
			Upper	Lower	
Individualist	- 0.28	- 2.36*	- 0.03	- 0.00	0.08
Collectivist	0.48	4.04*	0.02	0.05	0.23

$p < 0.05$.

Table 14.

Multiple Regression Analysis for Professional Status on Individualist and Collectivist Scores.

Variable	β	t	95 % CI		Sq-Part r
			Upper	Lower	
Individualist	0.13	1.00	- 0.01	0.03	0.02
Collectivist	0.44	3.34*	0.01	0.04	0.19

$p < 0.05$.

The prediction for “likes-children” from individualist and collectivist scores were moderately successful ($R^2 = 0.25$). The amount of variance accounted for was significantly different from zero, $F(2,47) = 7.97, p < 0.05$. The variance accounted for by the individualist scores was 1% per cent and the variance accounted for by the collectivist scores was 25% per cent (see Table 15).

Table 15.

Multiple regression analysis for “likes-children” on Individualistic and Collectivistic Scores.

Variable	β	t	95 % CI		Sq-Part r
			Upper	Lower	
Individualist	- 0.03	- 0.25	- 0.02	0.02	0.01
Collectivist	0.50	3.94*	0.02	0.06	0.25

$p < 0.05$.

Discussion

The results revealed a significant positive correlation between race and individualism, and a significant negative correlation between race and collectivism. It was hypothesized that (i) Asians will be more collectivistic and Caucasians will be more individualistic, and the results supported the first hypothesis, this as a significant mean difference was found between Asian and Caucasian in the individualist and collectivist scale; Asians scored significantly higher on the collectivist scale than Caucasians while Caucasians scored significantly higher on the individualistic scale than the Asians. This finding is consistent with Ghorbani et al (2003) which found that individualism is a cultural product of the West while collectivism is more deemed of Asian societies. In addition, the results showed that there was no significant correlation between Individualism and Collectivism, thus both constructs are very distinct. This is consistent with Green et al.(2005) study which states that individualist and collectivist attitudes are not mutually exclusive.

While mate preferences were identified according to the were broken down into five subscales (of kind, socially exciting, domestic, professional status, and “likes-children”). The results partially supported the the second and third hypotheses which state that (ii) participants that are classified as more individualistic will have a greater stronger preference for potential mates who are socially exciting and have professional status, and that (iii) participants who are classified as more collectivistic will have a stronger preference for potential mates who are kind, considerate, domesticated, and have a like

for children. ~~The results were consistent with Gibbons et al. (1996) study as there was significant positive correlation between individualist and socially exciting and significant positive correlation between collectivist and domestic and likes children.~~ Unexpectedly, there was significant positive correlation between collectivist and professional status, ~~and collectivism.~~ Thus, ~~this can~~ implying that the collectivism ~~mt tend to~~ emphasize is on traditional family values ~~is combined with in which they would then~~ a preference for men with a good education and a stable job.

There might not have been a significant correlation between collectivist and kind as the ~~relevante collectivistie~~ items in the ICS were probably not a pure measure of collectivism. ~~Instead~~ There was, though, a significant relationship between individualist and kind. ~~This is~~ because ~~there are~~ many family-oriented ~~based~~ questions appeared in the questionnaire ~~such as "I would do what would please my family, even if I hated that activity", thus.~~ Caucasians with strong family values were prone to ~~would naturally~~ scoring them highly ~~and thus lead to the significant correlation between kind and individualistic attitudes.~~

One ~~Limitations~~ of ~~this~~ the present study ~~include the number of participants involved and the amount of time taken to complete the questionnaires.~~ As mentioned previously, a total of 50 subjects participated in this study. This was that number of 50 participants may not have facilitated ~~supplied the study with~~ enough power ~~depth to find and fully~~ to observe the hypothesized relationships ~~between predictors, individualist and collectivist attitudes, and the criterion, mate preferences.~~ More participants ~~The power of this study~~ would ~~behave~~ dramatically increased the power of the study ~~with a greater number of participants.~~

Another limitation was that ~~In addition,~~ it took approximately 25 minutes to complete the survey package, ~~and d~~During this time, ~~the~~ subjects could have become bored or tired. This may have resulted in ~~them-subjects~~ filling in the questionnaires as quickly as possible, ~~and~~ perhaps misreading ~~the~~ questions and providing incorrect answers. ~~This would lead to I~~ inaccurate data, and as a consequence, inaccurate results ~~would ensue~~. The participants ~~were also given~~also completed the survey package ~~of questionnaires~~ in a fixed order ~~that is ICS followed by MPQ and demographics~~. ~~Thus, the a~~Attention given to the last questionnaire might, ~~therefore,~~ have been less ~~than that given when compared~~ to the first ~~questionnaire~~. Distribution of ~~Thus, it would have been better if~~ the questionnaires ~~were given in a~~ random order ~~would instead to~~ eliminate ~~any order~~ this effect.

~~Another~~One further limitation might have been ~~could have been due to~~ the “~~w~~Westernization” of ~~the~~ Asian Chinese participants. Most of the participants tested were international students who ~~have come to Australia to study, thus they could~~ have exposed to ~~been influenced slightly by the w~~Western culture. This might have ~~thus~~ resulted in their adopting a less collectivistic ~~ie~~ attitude.

~~Future research should further investigate the role of individualist and collectivist of~~ males in predicting their mate preferences. Future research ~~with replicating this study~~ should ~~increase~~larger the numbers of subjects-participants ~~would in the study therefore~~ increase ~~ing~~ both the power of the study and ~~the chance of finding more~~ significance of its results. Moreover, future investigations concerning the role of individualism and collectivism among males in predicting their mate preferences would extend the relevance of the study. ~~From this, it is evident that more research is needed to clearly determine~~

~~whether individualist and collectivist scores can predict mate selection from~~ to the general population.

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