

Culture and Personality: Toward an Integrated Cultural Trait Psychology

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ABSTRACT Two theoretical perspectives currently dominate research on culture and personality, the cross-cultural trait psychology approach, in which the trait concept is central, and the cultural psychology approach, in which the trait concept is questioned. Here I review theory and research from both perspectives and propose that the tenets of cultural psychology, at least in their more moderate forms, can be synthesized with the trait psychology approach, resulting in an integrated *cultural trait psychology* perspective.

The centrality of the trait concept for personality theory, assessment, and research is evident in Western psychology. Traits—defined as relatively stable or enduring individual differences in thoughts, feelings, and behavior—have been described as “the core of personality” (McCrae & Costa, 1996), “its central and defining characteristic” (A. Buss, 1989), and as being “virtually required for a systematic understanding of personality” (Johnson, 1997). Others have argued that without traits the study of personality and the psychometric approach could not exist (Wiggins, 1997; Zuroff, 1986). Given the centrality of the trait perspective in personality psychology, it is not surprising that trait psychology,

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with its focus on stable internal attributes, has provided the theoretical basis for most of the cross-cultural research on personality.

Now, however, consider the following views:

The Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgment, and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against a social and natural background is . . . a rather peculiar idea within the context of the world's cultures. (Geertz, 1975, p. 48)

. . . the concept of personality is an expression of the Western ideal of individualism. (Hsu, 1985, p. 24)

The data gathered from . . . personality inventories lends illusory support to the mistaken belief that individual differences can be described in a language consisting of context-free global traits, factors, or dimensions. (Shweder, 1991, pp. 275–276)

Universal [personality] structure does not by itself imply that “personality” as understood within a European-American framework is a universal aspect of human behavior . . . nor does it imply that the variability that appears as an obvious feature of human life is a function of an internal package of attributes called a “personality.” (Markus & Kitayama, 1998, p. 67)

In many, perhaps most, cultures there is a marked absence of discourse that explains human behavior in terms of transsituationally stable motivational (or intentional) properties captured by explanations of trait and disposition. (Hirschfield, 1995, p. 315)

Personality is less evident in collectivist cultures than it is in individualistic cultures, because the situation is such a powerful determinant of social behavior. (Triandis, 1995, p. 74)

These quotations highlight a relatively new and significant challenge to trait theory and personality psychology. In more extreme perspectives, the whole notion of the person as a separate psychological entity with a distinct sense of self and internal psychological processes is rejected and depicted as an arbitrary Western construction. If true, this would seem to make attempts to identify, measure, and attribute personality traits with

non-Western individuals futile. Even more moderate views, however—which argue that cultures differ in their emphasis on the individual versus collective (Triandis, 1989, 1995) or in their construals of self as independent versus interdependent with others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991b, 1998)—have significant implications for the value and role of traits as units of analysis across cultures.

In this article, I review the two theoretical perspectives that dominate current research on culture and personality—the cross-cultural trait psychology approach, in which the trait concept is central, and the cultural psychology approach, in which the trait concept is questioned. Although these two approaches have not yet been integrated, theoretically or empirically, I propose that the tenets of cultural psychology, at least in their more moderate forms, can be synthesized with the trait psychology approach, resulting in an integrated *cultural trait psychology* perspective.¹

Cross-Cultural Trait Psychology

Although the distinction between cross-cultural and cultural psychology is a fuzzy one (Greenfield, 1997), some prototypical distinctions can be noted. In cross-cultural psychology, culture is treated typically as an independent variable, and thus as implicitly outside of, and distinguishable from, the individual personality (Lonner & Adamopoulos, 1997). Culture is assumed to impact in varying degrees the structure, level, and correlates of various traits. Many cross-cultural psychologists endorse the “psychic unity” of mankind—the idea that the human mind and its processes are essentially the same everywhere, despite cultural differences in content and context, which in turn leads to some optimism about the possibility of identifying universal personality dimensions and processes. Cross-cultural personality psychologists are often interested in identifying cultural universals, testing the generality of personality theories

1. Despite its historical interest, I do not address the classical culture-and-personality school in anthropology, with its emphasis on psychoanalysis, early childhood origins of personality, use of the Rorschach technique, and attempts to delineate national character and basic or modal personality of cultural groups (e.g., Kardiner, 1939; for reviews, see Piker, 1998; Singer, 1961). Because of the decreasing influence of psychoanalysis, concerns about the cross-cultural use of the Rorschach, and criticisms about the theoretical assumptions underlying the approach, the classical culture-and-personality school has minimal influence today on psychologists who study culture and personality.

and constructs, and clarifying the role of cultural influences in personality and behavior.

The dominance of the trait approach in cross-cultural personality psychology can be seen in early and continuing cross-cultural work on specific individual-differences dimensions such as achievement motivation, anxiety, authoritarianism, psychological differentiation, locus of control, and individual modernity (for a review of this and other cross-cultural work addressing values, beliefs, emotions, and motivation, see Church & Lonner, 1998). In addition, although some cultural psychologists have questioned the role of the trait concept in non-Western cultures, many non-Western psychologists have described indigenous constructs that resemble individual-differences dimensions or traits. Examples include the Japanese concept of *amae* (indulgent dependence; Doi, 1978) and *sunao* (docility and peace of mind; Murase, 1982); the Korean concept of *cheong* (human affection; S. Choi, Kim, & Choi, 1993); the Indian concept of *hishkama karma* (detachment; Sinha, 1993); the Chinese concept of *ren qin* (relationship orientation; F. M. Cheung et al., 1996); the Mexican concept of *simpatía* (avoidance of conflict; Triandis, Marin, Lisansky, & Betancourt, 1984); and the Filipino concepts of *pagkikipagkapwa* (shared identity), *pakikiramdam* (sensitivity, empathy), and *pakikisama* (going along with others; Enriquez, 1992).

The viability of the trait concept across cultures has been (or could be) demonstrated in some of the same ways that have been used to support the trait concept in Western psychology. These would include empirical evidence, in diverse cultural settings, of the following: (a) replicable personality structure; (b) criterion validity; (c) replicable and interpretable cultural differences in personality traits; (d) temporal and cross-situational consistency of trait-relevant behavior; (e) interjudge agreement in personality ratings; and (f) heritability of culture-relevant traits. The viability of the trait concept across cultures would also be strengthened by the existence of plausible theory addressing the existence of traits in all cultures. I consider the evidence in each of these areas in the following sections.

Personality Structure Across Cultures

The viability of the trait concept does not require the existence of the *same* traits across cultures. Culture-specific trait dimensions could exist. Nonetheless, some of the best support for the trait concept across cultures

comes from studies of the cross-cultural comparability of personality dimensions.

Most of this research has been of the “transport and test” variety, in which personality dimensions operationalized by Western inventories have been imported and tested in new cultural contexts. For example, the structure of the revised NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992), a measure of the Big Five or five-factor model of personality (i.e., Extraversion/Surgency, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability vs. Neuroticism, Openness to Experience or Intellect), has replicated well in many languages, although there is some question about the optimal orientation of the two Big Five dimensions that define the interpersonal circumplex (i.e., Extraversion and Agreeableness; Katigbak, Church, & Akamine, 1996; McCrae & Costa, 1997; McCrae, Costa, del Pilar, Rolland, & Parker, 1998; Piedmont & Chae, 1997). Further support for the universality of the Big Five dimensions comes from factor analytic studies of Jackson’s Personality Research Form and the Nonverbal Personality Questionnaire (Paunonen & Ashton, 1998) and factor analytic studies of translated lexical markers of the Big Five dimensions (Bond, 1979; Heaven, Connors, & Stones, 1994; Yang & Bond, 1990; Yik & Bond, 1993). The dimensions of a number of other Western personality models have also been well replicated across cultures (Ben-Porath, Almagor, Hoffman-Chemi, & Tellegen, 1995; Brief, Comrey, & Collins, 1994; Eysenck, Makaremi, & Barrett, 1994; Paunonen & Ashton, 1998). These studies provide persuasive evidence of the ability to replicate personality factors across cultures. However, the finding that one can replicate the dimensions of each of these instruments—not all of which carve up the personality domain in an identical manner—suggests that existing instruments do to some degree “impose” their structure in the new cultural contexts.

Even more persuasive evidence of cross-cultural comparability may come from studies that search for indigenous dimensions first, rather than imposing an existing structure from outside the culture. Such studies also provide the best opportunity for culture-unique dimensions to be identified. Investigators have compiled indigenous trait terms under the assumption that the most salient individual differences in personality will be encoded in the natural language (Saucier & Goldberg, 1996). In factor analytic studies of personality ratings using such trait terms, the Big Five dimensions have been found in several European languages, although the cross-cultural comparability of the Intellect dimension has been less

definitive (Caprara & Perugini, 1994; De Raad, Perugini, Hrebícková, & Szarota, 1998; De Raad, Perugini, & Szirmák, 1997; Shmelyov & Pokhil'ko, 1993; Szirmák & De Raad, 1994; see Saucier, Hampson, & Goldberg, in press, for a review). In Asian lexical studies Big Five–like dimensions often emerge, but the indigenous dimensions have sometimes carved up the personality space somewhat differently (P. C. Cheung, Conger, Hau, Lew, & Lau, 1992; Church, Katigbak, & Reyes, 1998; Church, Reyes, Katigbak, & Grimm, 1997; Isaka, 1990; Yang & Bond, 1990; Yik & Bond, 1993). A Big Seven model, comprised of Positive Valence, Negative Valence, and Big Five–like dimensions has been supported in a few cultures when positive (e.g., remarkable) and negative (e.g., wicked) evaluative terms have been included (Almagor, Tellegen, & Waller, 1995; Benet-Martínez & Waller, 1997; see Church et al., 1998, however).

Given the limitations of lexical approaches—for example, their tendency to identify only global, higher-order dimensions, and the possibility that not all aspects of personality are encoded in the natural language—some of the best support for cross-cultural comparability of personality structure may come from indigenous test development projects in various cultures. For example, Katigbak et al. (1996) developed an indigenous questionnaire to assess Filipino conceptions of healthy personality and found six dimensions that overlapped with the Big Five dimensions. Joint factor analyses of the scales of the indigenous Chinese Personality Assessment Inventory (CPAI; F. M. Cheung et al., 1996) and the revised NEO Personality Inventory have suggested that the CPAI scales assess the Big Five, plus a culture-specific dimension, which the authors labeled Chinese Tradition (F. M. Cheung & Leung, 1998; see also Guanzone-Lapeña, Church, Carlota, & Katigbak, 1998). In sum, the replication of fairly comparable personality dimensions, using both imported and indigenous approaches in a wide variety of cultures, provides one source of evidence for the viability of the trait concept across cultures.

Criterion Validity Across Cultures

Less research has been done on the cross-cultural equivalence of the nomological nets (e.g., behavioral correlates) of personality dimensions. The viability of the trait concept rests on the ability of trait assessments to predict relevant criteria in a given culture, not on the cross-cultural

equivalence of these trait-criterion relationships. Nonetheless, available evidence suggests that personality assessments often do predict similar criteria across cultures.

For example, in a variety of cultures various diagnostic groups have shown expected elevations on the MMPI/MMPI-2 scales (Butcher, 1996; F. M. Cheung & Song, 1989; Strassberg, Tilley, Bristone, & Oei, 1992). Sensible external correlates of MMPI/MMPI-2 scales have also been reported across cultural or ethnic groups (Dahlstrom, Lachar, & Dahlstrom, 1986; Han, 1996; Strassberg, 1997). Expectable mean profiles for various psychiatric diagnostic groups in China have been reported with a Chinese version of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Yang et al., 1999). In an investigation of "pancultural pathways to life satisfaction," Kwan, Bond, and Singelis (1997) found similar nomological networks relating the five-factor model and self-construals to life satisfaction, with self-esteem and relationship harmony functioning as mediating variables in both cultures. The Socialization and Femininity/Masculinity scales of the California Psychological Inventory have successfully differentiated delinquents from nondelinquents and women from men, respectively, in many cultures (Gough, 1965; Gough & Bradley, 1996). Luk and Bond (1993) found predictable relationships between values and scale scores on the Chinese NEO-PI-R. Brief et al. (1994) found meaningful relationships in Russia between scores on the Comrey Personality Scales and a variety of attitudinal, personality, adjustment, and demographic variables.

While the above studies addressed the validity of imported or foreign measures across cultures, Zhang and Bond (1998) showed that measures associated with the indigenous Chinese Tradition factor of the Chinese Personality Assessment Inventory (F. M. Cheung et al., 1996) added unique prediction of a salient indigenous construct, filial piety, beyond that provided by a measure of the five-factor model. Church and Katigbak (in press) reviewed a number of studies that supported the predictive or concurrent validity of both imported and indigenous measures in the Philippines.

At the same time, there is some evidence that assessments of traits or other internal attributes (e.g., self-esteem, affect) may have less predictive validity in some collectivistic cultures. In two studies with Jackson's Personality Research Form, one in the Philippines (Fekken, Holden, Jackson, & Guthrie, 1987) and one in Zimbabwe (Wilson, Doolabh, Cooney, Khalpey, & Siddiqui, 1990), the researchers noted that peer

ratings on associated trait descriptions correlated substantially less with PRF scores than they typically do in North American data. The authors speculated that respondents in collectivistic cultures may find it difficult to rate acquaintances on global trait terms without a specification of situational context. Also, three studies have found that self-esteem and affect are stronger predictors of life satisfaction in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures (Diener & Diener, 1995; Kwan, Bond, & Singelis, 1997; Suh, Diener, Oishi, & Triandis, 1997). In collectivistic cultures, relationship harmony (Kwan et al., 1997) and successful adherence to norms (Suh et al., 1997) may be more important as determinants of life satisfaction. Before conclusions can be drawn about the differential validity of trait measures across cultures, however, more systematic cross-cultural comparisons will be needed, using equivalent trait measures and comparable criteria.

Cultural Mean Differences

Findings of replicable cultural mean differences in trait scores that conform to theory or expectations could provide evidence for the cross-cultural viability of traits. For example, Shiota, Krauss, and Clark (1996) viewed the mean differences between normal samples of Japanese and Americans on the MMPI-2 as being consistent with characterizations of the Japanese as valuing harmony with others. The Japanese showed greater restraint, less extraversion, greater self-effacement, and less willingness to share personal problems. McCrae, Yik, Trapnell, Bond, and Paulhus (1998) concluded, on the basis of cultural mean differences on the NEO-PI-R, that Hong Kong culture, relative to Canadian culture, seems to inhibit imaginative fantasy, need for variety, and liberal values as well as cheerful optimism. The authors viewed these differences as consistent with portrayals of Chinese culture as being practical, conservative, and serious-minded.

Interpretation of cultural mean differences can be difficult, and sufficient evidence of cross-cultural measurement equivalence is important. Eysenck's extensive cross-cultural comparisons (e.g., Barrett & Eysenck, 1984; Eysenck, Barrett, & Barnes, 1993; Eysenck et al., 1994; see also Lynn, 1981; Lynn & Martin, 1996) have been criticized on this point (Bijnen, van der Net, & Poortinga, 1986). These studies have included demonstrations of structural (factorial) equivalence but not scalar equivalence, or full-score comparability (van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Without

evidence of measurement equivalence, mean comparisons can be risky, and lead to stereotypic, if not ethnocentric, characterizations. For example, Lynn's (1981, p. 281) implication that the lower average EPQ Psychoticism scores found in more affluent countries is indicative of greater moral sensitivity among European peoples would seem to reflect this risk.

Van de Vijver and Leung (1997) discuss methods that can be used in establishing cross-cultural scalar equivalence (i.e., full-score comparability) of items and scale scores. For example, a few studies have applied item response theory methods to identify items that function differently across cultures (Ellis, Becker, & Kimmel, 1993; Huang, Church, & Katigbak, 1997). A challenge for cross-cultural psychologists will be separating out the many factors that can influence mean comparisons, including translation, structural, scalar, and sampling inequivalencies; cultural differences in response styles, self-presentation, and social judgments; and substantive personality differences based on biological or sociocultural differences. For example, McCrae, Yik, et al. (1998), in a study of Hong Kong and North American Chinese, combined the bilingual test-retest method, comparisons of Chinese-Americans with different degrees of acculturation to North American culture, and both self- and peer ratings of personality traits assessed by the NEO-PI-R in a careful attempt to disentangle many of these factors.

Finally, several authors have suggested that ethnic group stereotypes may to some extent accurately capture or encode real mean trait differences between cultural groups (e.g., Ottati & Lee, 1995). If so, such stereotypes might serve as another source of information on average cultural differences in personality, as well as an additional means for validating the mean trait differences observed with self-report inventories, peer judgments, and behavioral observations.

Cross-Situational Consistency and Interjudge Agreement

Evidence of cross-situational consistency of trait-relevant behavior in a variety of cultures would provide strong support for the trait concept across cultures. Several studies dealing with communication, social interaction, conformity, conflict resolution, and resource allocation behaviors have suggested that the behaviors of persons in collectivistic cultures may vary more across ingroups and outgroups than do the

behaviors of persons in individualistic cultures (Gudykunst et al., 1992; Gudykunst, Yoon, & Nishida, 1987; Leung, 1988; Leung & Bond, 1984; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988; Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990). Almost all of these studies have examined self-reported behaviors in hypothetical or experimental situations, however, rather than actual behavior in naturalistic settings.²

Individualism-collectivism theorists seem to imply that the behavior of individuals in collectivistic cultures is less traited or cross-situationally consistent *in general*, that is, for all or most traits, although they have not provided explicit clarification of this point (Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Triandis, 1995). Snyder's (1974, 1987) self-monitoring theory postulated just such individual differences in general traitedness versus situational determination of behavior, and thus would seem promising as a theoretical framework for testing cross-cultural differences in trait-relevant consistency. Snyder (1974) hypothesized that high self-monitoring individuals, who are concerned about the situational and interpersonal appropriateness of their behavior, would be relatively "trait-free" and would show considerable cross-situational variability in their behavior. In contrast, low self-monitoring individuals, who are portrayed as being less sensitive to situational cues and as more guided in their behavior by internal dispositions, would be relatively "traited" in their behavior and show greater behavioral consistency across trait-relevant situations. Snyder (1987) focused very little on cultural differences, but did suggest that there would be a higher prevalence of high self-monitoring personalities in Japan, a collectivistic culture.

The small number of cross-cultural studies of self-monitoring have yielded unexpected results, however. Gudykunst and colleagues (Gudykunst et al., 1989; Gudykunst, Yang, & Nishida, 1987) and Goodwin and Soon (1994) found higher, not lower, self-monitoring scores in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures and Furnham and Capon (1983) and Hosch and Marchioni (1986) found no significant

2. Other authors who have assessed the behavior of individualists and collectivists across diverse situations could (re)analyze their data to address the extent of cross-situational consistency in trait-relevant behavior across cultural groups. For example, M. S. Kim et al. (1996) compared the perceived importance of various conversational constraints in request situations that varied in the relative statuses of the hearer and speaker. These data could be reanalyzed to determine whether persons in both individualistic and collectivistic cultures show some cross-situational consistency in this aspect of communication behavior.

differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures in self-monitoring. Only Hamid (1994), who used the Lennox and Wolfe (1984) measure, not the Snyder measures (Snyder, 1974; Snyder & Gangestad, 1986), found differences in the expected direction: Hong Kong Chinese were higher in self-monitoring than New Zealanders.

Gudykunst et al. (1989) suggested that their findings might be due to the culture-bound nature of Snyder's (1974, 1979) conceptualization and measure of self-monitoring, which they viewed as insensitive to aspects of self-monitoring in collectivistic cultures, such as the context and status of the individuals present. An alternative explanation for these unexpected findings is the following: Snyder's self-monitoring construct and measure have evolved away from their original focus on individual differences in the dispositional versus situational determination of behavior toward a conception that is highly correlated with extraversion (John, Cheek, & Klohnen, 1996). It is the former focus of the construct—not extraversion—that should mediate cultural mean differences in cross-situational consistency.³

Trait theorists also consider interjudge agreement in personality judgments to be persuasive evidence for the existence of traits (Funder, 1991). Although I could not identify any cross-cultural studies that used equivalent procedures across cultures to compare the level of interjudge agreement in personality ratings, several monocultural studies allow some cautious conclusions. For example, using a German version of the NEO Five Factor Inventory, Riemann, Angleitner, and Strelau (1997) reported correlations between self-ratings and averaged ratings of others ranging from .46 to .60 ($M = .55$) and peer agreement indices ranging from .59 to .65.

More important are studies of interjudge agreement in non-Western or collectivistic cultures, where cultural psychologists would expect interjudge agreement to be lower. Yik, Bond, and Paulhus (1998) demonstrated that good interjudge agreement can be obtained in a presumably collectivistic culture such as Hong Kong. Self- and peer ratings correlated

3. Support for this explanation can be gleaned from two cross-cultural studies that reported subscale scores for the Self-Monitoring Scale (Gudykunst, Yang, & Nishida, 1987; Gudykunst et al., 1989). For example, Gudykunst, Yang, and Nishida (1987) found that a U.S. sample scored *higher* than Japanese and Korean samples on the total scale and on the Acting and Extraversion subscales, but, as would be predicted by individualism-collectivism theory, *lower* on the Other-Directedness scale, which should better predict cross-situational consistency.

from .17 to .63 ($M = .38$) across the eight scales of the Sino-American Person Perception Scale (peer ratings were based on the mean of four to six raters). Peer-peer agreement, indexed by intraclass correlations, ranged from .64 to .85 ($M = .74$). Using a Korean version of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory with Koreans studying in the United States, Spurrison and Choi (1998) reported self-spouse correlations that were generally comparable to those reported in U.S. samples (Costa & McCrae, 1992; median $r = .55$). Using a Chinese version of the NEO-PI-R, Yang et al. (1999) reported self-spouse correlations in a Chinese psychiatric sample that were somewhat lower (median = .40) than those reported in a normal adult sample in the United States (Costa & McCrae, 1992), but it is unclear if this was due to cultural factors or the use of a psychiatric sample.

In sum, although there are insufficient data presently to determine whether or not interjudge agreement is lower in collectivistic cultures, the available evidence strongly suggests that substantial interjudge agreement can be demonstrated in collectivistic cultures. Thus, any cultural differences will be at most a matter of degree.

Heritability and Maturation of Personality Traits Across Cultures

Heritability evidence alone is sufficient to indicate that personality traits are not merely cultural constructions, but rather “something intrinsic to the person that accounts at least in part for consistency in behavior and experience” (McCrae & Costa, 1995, p. 238). There is strong evidence of at least moderate heritability of personality traits, including traits that one might expect to be particularly susceptible to cultural influences (e.g., traditionalism, absorption, openness to experience, altruism, sociopolitical and religious beliefs; Jang, McCrae, Angleitner, Riemann, & Livesley, 1998; Loehlin, 1992; Tellegen et al., 1988). In addition, heritability estimates do not seem to differ substantially across cultures, although the evidence in this regard is somewhat sparse (Jang et al., 1998; Loehlin, 1992). Universal maturational trends in personality traits across very different cultures are also consistent with, but do not guarantee, some degree of genetic control of personality traits (e.g., McCrae et al., 1999).

Theoretical Perspectives

A number of theoretical perspectives are consistent with the existence of universal traits. These include biological theories of temperament and personality (e.g., Rowe, 1997), recent evolutionary theories (Buss, 1996; Hogan, 1996; MacDonald, 1998), and McCrae and Costa's (1996) Five Factor Theory.

Evolutionary theorists view certain trait dimensions as having evolved to solve adaptive problems of group living that were tied to reproductive success in ancestral environments. For example, Hogan (1996) proposed that people's reputations (i.e., their social status and acceptance) are encoded in terms of the Big Five dimensions, which he views as innate categories of human perception used to evaluate the potential contribution of others to the success of one's group. Similarly, Buss (1996) views the Big Five as "critical-selection dimensions" that are important in identifying individuals who will be strategic facilitators of one's goals. Buss postulates that all humans have evolved difference-detecting mechanisms that enable us to place others along the Big Five dimensions. Buss also implies that *strategic trait usage* will be a cultural universal, used to attain mates, friends, and allies; all humans apply characteristics at the desirable poles of the Big Five dimensions to themselves (i.e., tactics of attraction) and characteristics associated with the negative poles to their rivals (i.e., derogation of competitors). While Buss (1996) and Hogan (1996) have emphasized evolved categories of person perception, MacDonald (1998) has proposed the existence of universal adaptive systems that have evolved as discrete neurophysiological systems in the brain and which underlie individual differences in Big Five traits.

In McCrae and Costa's (1995, 1996) Five Factor Theory, inherited basic tendencies (including the Big Five dimensions) and external influences (including culture) are viewed as independent co-determiners of characteristic adaptations such as acquired competencies, attitudes and goals, and self-concepts. The implied agenda for cross-cultural psychologists is to determine (a) how the same universal traits are manifested across cultures; and (b) the means different cultures provide for individuals to express their personality traits.

In summary, the following findings in support of the cross-cultural trait psychology perspective can be noted: (a) rather strong evidence for the heritability and cross-cultural comparability of Big Five-like dimensions; (b) ample evidence of the validity of personality traits in predicting

societally relevant criteria across cultures, with very preliminary indications that trait-criterion relationships may be weaker in some cultures; (c) limited evidence of sensible cultural differences in average trait levels, tempered by concerns about measurement equivalence issues; (d) limited evidence, but not in naturalistic settings, that behavior may show less cross-situational consistency in collectivistic cultures; (e) limited evidence that even in collectivistic cultures judges can agree in their judgments of individuals' traits; and (f) ample theoretical bases for the existence of universal traits, mostly from evolutionary perspectives.

Cultural Psychology of Personality

In contrast to cross-cultural psychology, which tends to treat culture as an independent variable distinct from personality, cultural psychologists view culture and personality as “mutually constitutive,” as “making each other up,” and as affording each other (Markus, Kitayama, & Heiman, 1996; Miller, 1997; Shweder & Sullivan, 1993). In this view, the very nature of the self is seen as socially constructed and hence variable across cultures, and the existence of personality traits that are relatively independent of culture is questioned. Here I provide an overview of three influential perspectives, explicate some implications for trait psychology across cultures, and summarize the most relevant research.

Richard Shweder: Articulate Spokesperson for Cultural Psychology

Richard Shweder has advocated a number of positions that call into question the viability of the trait psychology enterprise, particularly across cultures. Shweder (1991) defines cultural psychology as “the study of the way cultural traditions and social practices regulate, express, and transform the human psyche, resulting less in psychic unity for humankind than in ethnic divergences in mind, self, and emotion” (p. 73). Because, he argues, the subjectivity and mental life of every human being are altered through the process of seizing meanings and resources from a particular sociocultural environment (i.e., the person as semiotic subject), persons and cultures “interpenetrate each other’s identity and cannot be analyzed into independent and dependent variables” (p. 74). Accordingly, Shweder is skeptical of the existence of personality dimensions or processes that are independent of culture—for example, he

rejects the existence of a “universal central processing mechanism”—and, in any case, suggests that such universals will imply very little about inherent features of psychological functioning (Shweder & Sullivan, 1993).

For example, in a widely cited study, Shweder and Bourne (1984) compared open-ended descriptions of persons given by Hindu Indians and Americans and concluded that the descriptions given by Hindu Indians were more concrete and context-dependent, while the descriptions given by Americans were more abstract and context-free (e.g., Americans listed more global trait terms). The authors described these results as evidence of a more holistic and sociocentric conception of the person among Hindu Indians (i.e., the sociocentric self), as compared to a more autonomous, abstract conception of the person among Americans (i.e., the egocentric self). Miller (1994) subsequently linked such differences in person concepts to cultural differences in duty-based versus individually centered (e.g., rights-based) moral codes, respectively.⁴

Most of Shweder's (1991, pp. 269–312) specific criticisms of culture and personality theory address problems associated with the classical culture-and-personality school in anthropology rather than current trait theory. Those criticisms that are most pertinent to trait theory, such as the purported low cross-situational consistency of behavior and the purported systematic distortion of trait ratings caused by respondents' implicit theories, have been largely rebutted by more recent research on behavioral consistency and interjudge agreement, at least in Western studies (e.g., Funder & Colvin, 1997; Kenrick & Funder, 1988). Nonetheless, Shweder's (1991) claim that assessments based on personality inventories “lend illusory support to the mistaken belief that individual differences can be described in a language consisting of context-free global traits, factors, or dimensions” (p. 276) provides a significant challenge to those who would apply trait concepts and assessments across cultures.

4. In a detailed critique of the Shweder and Bourne (1984) study, however, Spiro (1993) noted that the small and better educated American sample ($N = 17$) included respondents (i.e., counseling psychologists and teachers) who might be expected to focus more on personality traits than respondents in the Hindu Indian sample. Also, the American sample was asked to describe in writing the *personalities* of acquaintances, while the Hindu Indians were asked to describe orally the “character, nature, and *behavior*” (italics added) of acquaintances (see also Noricks et al., 1987). Funder (1997, pp. 316–319) also questioned the “rather dramatic claims” about different concepts of self or persons that have been made on the basis of the Shweder and Bourne (1984) research.

Markus and Kitayama: Independent Versus Interdependent Views of Self and Personality

Markus and Kitayama (1998; Kitayama & Markus, 1999) argue that different assumptions underlie personality conceptions in cultures that are characterized by independent versus interdependent views of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991b). The independent view of personality, which is most prevalent in Western countries, incorporates the following ideas:

1. A person is an autonomous entity defined by a somewhat distinctive set of attributes, qualities, or processes.
2. The configuration of internal attributes or processes determines or causes behavior (i.e., the origins of behavior are in the individual and people are knowable through their actions).
3. Individual behavior will vary because people vary in their configurations of internal attributes and processes and this distinctiveness is good.
4. People should express their attributes and processes in behavior so there should be consistency in behavior across situations and stability over time and this consistency and stability is good.
5. The study of personality is significant because it will lead to an understanding of how to predict and control behavior (Markus & Kitayama, 1998; p. 69).

In contrast, the interdependent view of personality, which is most prevalent in Asian, African, Latin American, and many southern European countries, incorporates the following ideas:

1. A person is an interdependent entity who is part of an encompassing social relationship.
2. Behavior is a consequence of being responsive to the others with whom one is interdependent. The origins of behavior are in relationships and people are knowable through their actions within a given social relationship.
3. The precise nature of a given social context often varies so individual behavior will be variable from one situation to another and from

one time to another. This sensitivity to social context and consequent variability is good.

4. The study of personality is significant because it will lead to an understanding of the relational and interpersonal nature of behavior (Markus & Kitayama, 1998, p. 70).

In a series of papers, Markus, Kitayama, and colleagues have elaborated on (a) how different cultural groups are associated with characteristic patterns of sociocultural participation, or self-ways, and, by extension, culture-specific ways of “having or being” a personality (Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Markus, Mullally, & Kitayama, 1997); (b) how a cultural group’s views of the self and personality are pervasive in the culture because they are rooted in institutions, practices, and scripts, not just ideas and values (Markus & Kitayama, 1994, 1998); and (c) how cultural conceptions of personality coherence are also socially constructed, with the Western conception of coherence as behavioral consistency contrasted with the non-Western (or at least Japanese) view of coherence, which is characterized by balance or harmony between multiple, even contradictory, aspects of one’s self or personality (Kitayama & Markus, 1999).

Although Markus and Kitayama (1991b) acknowledge the existence of internal attributes of the self (e.g., personality characteristics, abilities, and opinions), these attributes are viewed as situation specific, and thus elusive and unreliable. Furthermore, these attributes are contrasted with (but also in balance with) multiple selves in specific contexts, and thus are not very powerful in predicting behavior (Kitayama & Markus, 1999).

Not surprisingly, then, Markus and Kitayama (1998) raise questions about the methods and findings of cross-cultural trait psychology. They are skeptical about the significance of factor analytic evidence of universal personality dimensions such as the Big Five. They question (a) whether such results imply that Western conceptions of personality are universal; (b) whether universals in the Big Five semantic space capture the actual structure of personality in different cultures; and (c) whether the complexity of personality and lived experience can be reduced to five underlying traits. They concede that individuals in all cultures can rate themselves, but suggest that introspecting and reporting on one’s characteristics is a much more natural task within individualistic cultures.

Markus and Kitayama's (1991b) theoretical perspective has had a major impact on cross-cultural (and mainstream) psychology, in providing a unified theoretical framework for explaining the many cultural differences in cognition, motivation, and emotion that have been identified in cross-cultural studies. The theory, or at least its evidentiary basis, has not gone unchallenged, however. For example, Matsumoto (1999) argued that available evidence is almost entirely from North America and East Asia (especially Japan), that the logic of most studies has been flawed because researchers did not directly measure self-construals, and that many studies which have included measures of self-construals or individualism-collectivism have provided little support for expected cultural differences along these dimensions.

Matsumoto (1999), among others (e.g., Church & Lonner, 1998; Kagitçibasi, 1997), also has warned that attempts to characterize cultures or individuals in terms of such broad cultural dichotomies may be overly simplistic. Indeed, many researchers have begun to view the self in all cultures as incorporating both independent and interdependent self-construals in varying degrees, with different selves being differentially salient or accessible in different contexts (e.g., Oyserman, 1993; Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991). This would suggest that the implications of self-construals for person description, trait attribution, and behavioral consistency that have been proposed by Markus and Kitayama (1998) also may be a matter of relative degree and context across cultures. For example, trait-relevant behavior may show some cross-situational consistency in all cultures, but more so, or across more diverse situations, in cultures where independent self-construals are more typically salient.

Individualism-Collectivism and Personality⁵

Although a number of dimensions have been used to differentiate cultures (e.g., Hofstede, 1980), the dimension of individualism-collectivism (I-C) dominates current theory and research efforts relevant to personality (e.g., Triandis, 1989, 1993, 1995). Triandis (1995) described several contrasts between individualism and collectivism, including the following:

5. Some individualism-collectivism (I-C) theorists would probably identify themselves as cross-cultural psychologists rather than cultural psychologists. Nonetheless, individualism-collectivism is discussed in this section of the article because many of the predictions of I-C theorists regarding personality are consistent with those of cultural psychologists.

(a) a sense of self as an autonomous, independent person versus a sense of self as more connected to in-groups (i.e., an independent vs. interdependent self-construal; Markus & Kitayama, 1991b); (b) priority of personal goals versus group goals, and (c) emphasis on personal attributes versus roles and norms in guiding behavior.

I-C has been related to personality in three ways. First, at the level of cultures, I-C has been treated as an independent variable and expected to be at least a distal cause of cultural differences in personality. For example, Triandis (1989) proposed an ecocultural model in which ecology, culture, socialization, personality, and social behavior comprise a causal sequence. For example, Triandis (1995) argued that cultural differences in socialization or child-rearing practices along an independence-dependence dimension are primarily responsible for the personality differences associated with individualism and collectivism.

Second, I-C has been viewed and assessed as an individual-differences variable, where it has sometimes been referred to as idiocentrism-allocentrism (I-A; Triandis, Leung, Villareal, & Clack, 1985). Many measures have been developed in recent years to assess I-C, or independent-interdependent self-construals, as an individual-differences variable (Hui & Yee, 1994; U. Kim, Triandis, Kagitçibasi, Choi, & Yoon, 1994; Matsumoto, Weissman, Preston, Brown, & Kupperbusch, 1997; Singelis, 1994; Singelis et al., 1996; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998) and some efforts have been made to investigate their convergent validity or cross-cultural replicability (e.g., Grimm, Church, Katigbak, & Reyes, 1999; Rhee, Uleman, & Lee, 1996; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). Church and Lonner (1998) suggested that if I-A is a personality dimension or type we should be able to describe I-A in terms of some combination of the Big Five dimensions. A few studies have obtained somewhat inconsistent results in this regard (Dollinger, Preston, O'Brien, & DiLalla, 1996; Grimm, Church, Katigbak, & Reyes, 1999; Kwan et al., 1997; Realo, Allik, & Vadi, 1997).

In the theoretical literature, a number of traits and values have been associated with I-C (or I-A) (e.g., for individualism: independence, pleasure-seeking, assertiveness, creativity, curiosity, competitiveness, self-assurance, efficiency, initiative, and directness; for collectivism: attentiveness, respectfulness, humility, dependence, empathy, self-control, moderation, nurturance, dutifulness, self-sacrifice, conformity, traditionalism, and cooperativeness; e.g., Ho & Chiu, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1991b; Triandis, 1989, 1993). These personality implications

of I-C (or I-A) have been supported generally in empirical studies (R. Bond & Smith, 1996; L. H. Chiu, 1990; Grimm et al., 1999; Ho & Chiu, 1994; Hui & Villareal, 1989; Triandis et al., 1985; Triandis et al., 1990; Yamaguchi, 1994; Yamaguchi, Kuhlman, & Sugimori, 1995).

Third, I-C has been portrayed as a kind of “metatrait”: Cultures or individuals who are more individualistic are hypothesized to be more “traited” than cultures or individuals who are more collectivistic. That is, traits are expected to play a more important role in self-concepts, person descriptions, causal attributions, and predictions of behavior in individualistic cultures and individuals, as compared to collectivistic cultures and individuals (Rhee, Uleman, Lee, & Roman, 1995; Triandis, 1989, 1995). It is in regard to this third use of the I-C construct that the views of I-C theorists most resemble those of cultural psychologists like Markus and Kitayama (1991b, 1998).

Summary of Implications for Trait Psychology Across Cultures

The more moderate views of cultural psychologists and individualism-collectivism theorists (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Triandis, 1995) are consistent with the following predictions about the “traitedness” of self-concepts, person descriptions, attributions, and behavior in different cultures, and the accuracy or validity of trait assessments:

1. Self-concepts and descriptions of others will be comprised less of internal attributes (e.g., traits), at least of a more global, noncontextual nature, in collectivistic cultures, as compared to individualistic cultures.
2. Persons in individualistic cultures focus more on traits in their inferences about behavior, whereas persons in collectivistic cultures focus more on contextual factors.
3. Persons in collectivistic cultures will exhibit less temporal and cross-situational consistency in their behavior than will persons in individualistic cultures.
4. The behavior of persons in collectivistic cultures, as compared to the behavior of persons in individualistic cultures, will be less predictable from assessments of internal dispositions such as personality traits or attitudes and more predictable from social roles and norms.

5. Trait self-assessments in individualistic cultures will be distorted by self-enhancement tendencies, whereas trait self-assessments in collectivistic cultures will not reflect these tendencies and may reflect self-effacing tendencies.⁶

The first prediction follows from the hypothesis that in collectivistic cultures the person is viewed less as an autonomous being with abstract internal attributes, and more in terms of specific relationships, roles, and contexts (Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Rhee et al., 1995). The second prediction follows from (a) the hypothesized differential emphasis on personal attributes over norms and roles as determinants of behavior in individualistic versus collectivistic cultures, and (b) the assumption that these differences will lead to cultural differences in inferential goals during behavioral attribution (Krull, 1993; Newman, 1993). The third and fourth predictions follow from the view in individualistic cultures that persons are autonomous individuals who will (or should) express their individual attributes, whereas persons in collectivistic cultures will exhibit more variable behavior across time and situations in response to contextual cues (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Triandis, 1995). The fifth prediction follows from the hypothesis that those with independent selves, for whom internal attributes are central to identity, will be motivated to identify, confirm, and enhance positive internal attributes of the self (Heine & Lehman, 1995a, 1997a; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunit, 1997). Empirical evidence relevant to the third and fourth predictions was reviewed earlier in the sections on cross-situational consistency and criterion validity. In the following sections, I first cite some ethnographic accounts that address cultural differences in conceptions of self and personality, then summarize culture-comparative research addressing the remaining trait-relevant predictions of cultural psychology.

Ethnographic Accounts

Cultural psychology perspectives on personality have derived, in part, from ethnographic accounts of conceptions of the person or self, particularly in Asian and Pacific Island cultures (e.g., Geertz, 1975; Marsella,

6. For each of these five predictions, the hypothesized differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures would also describe differences between idiocentrics and allocentrics *within* cultures.

DeVos, & Hsu, 1985; Rolland, 1988; Rosaldo, 1980; Rosenberger, 1994b; White & Fitzpatrick, 1985). Indeed, most anthropologists now prefer to label this field “culture and self” rather than “culture and personality,” reflecting perhaps the “tarnished image of the classical culture-and-personality school” (Lebra, 1994, p. 105) and the view that the concept of “personality” captures a Western or individualistic notion of persons and their behavior (Hsu, 1985; Smith, 1985).

Ethnographic accounts of Asian and Pacific Island cultures, which typically describe a more relational (i.e., collectivistic or sociocentric) conception of self, may provide some of the best support for cultural psychology perspectives on self and personality (e.g., Fajans, 1985; Geertz, 1975; Hsu, 1985; Lebra, 1994; Lutz, 1985; Mageo, 1998; Rolland, 1988; Rosaldo, 1980; Rosenberger, 1994b).⁷ For example, Lutz (1985) noted that among the Ifaluk (in Micronesia), “the point at which the self stops and the other begins is neither fixed nor conceptualized as an impermeable wall” (p. 43). Lutz cited the frequent use of the pronoun “we” in cases where the pronoun “I” would be more typical in Western cultures (e.g., “we feel worried”) and argued that this provides “strong evidence that the relevant viewpoint is taken to be that of the group rather than the individual” (p. 44).

Rosenberger (1994a) argued that the word for “self” in Japanese, *jibun*, means “self-part,” implying that the self is not an essentiality apart from the social realm of groups and relationships. Similarly, Hsu (1985) noted that the Chinese word for “man” is *jen*, which refers to “the *individual’s transactions with his fellow human beings*” (p. 33, original italics). Hsu argued that the central focus of the *jen* concept is the place of the individual in a network of interpersonal relationships and that the individual’s personal wishes, predilections, and anxieties are evaluated in terms of whether they facilitate or inhibit these interpersonal relationships. Mageo (1998) has noted that in sociocentric Samoa the term for the self is *aga*, which translates as “nature” or essential character. However, *aga* also means “persona,” implying, she argues, that one’s social roles or mask constitute one’s nature or sense of self. The Samoan ontological premise that people are role players underlies a moral premise that

7. Nonetheless, the varied portrayals of self conceptions in some cultures can be disconcerting; for example, compare the portrayals of the Japanese sense of self provided by Kondo (1994), Lebra (1994), Mathews (1996), Rolland (1988), and Rosenberger (1994a).

individuals should play a role conforming to their status and rank within the group.

At the same time, ethnographic studies that address the role of individual differences or personality traits in collectivistic cultures provide evidence that traits do, in varying degrees, play a role in understanding persons and their behavior in these cultures. For example, Lutz (1985) noted that the Ifaluk people prefer situational explanations of behavior, but that explanations in terms of the individual's *tip-* (will/emotion/desire) or enduring personality traits (e.g., "hot temper," "calmness") are employed when the behavior cannot be readily explained in terms of situational features. Furthermore, although, according to Lutz, only a small number of trait terms are applied with any regularity to describe enduring personality characteristics of persons, she mentions a number of trait terms whose English glosses are recognizable indicators of Big Five dimensions (e.g., *metagu* [afraid/anxious], *mweal* [generous/friendly], *sheowefish* [industrious and careful in their work]).

Whiting (1996) cited a number of Kikuyu (Kenya) terms for interpersonal traits (e.g., respectful, generous) and for individualistic or "self-traits" (e.g., careful, composed, confident, clever, hardworking). Furthermore, Kikuyu mothers were able to describe the traits they considered important for children's success in school and viewed some traits as being largely inherited (e.g., good-hearted, generous, confident, brave, clever).

Mageo (1998) noted that in Samoa the personal self, or *loto*, is seen as interfering with the ideal of role playing but that the Samoan language abounds with *loto* terms that describe and evaluate the inner dispositions of persons (e.g., *lotolelei* [kind], *lotoma'a'a* [obstinate], *lotomitamita* [proud], *lotoali'i* [polite]). Mageo (1998) theorized that it is the very sociocentric orientation of Samoans, ironically, that "generates an intense and even obsessive relation" to inner life and dispositions in Samoans' everyday talk about persons (p. 7).

White (1985) emphasized the interpersonal nature of A'ara (Solomon Islands) trait terms and argued that A'ara descriptions of people emphasize interpersonal interactions and relationships. Nonetheless, results from a multidimensional scaling of A'ara trait terms clearly revealed that A'ara trait terms define the same two dimensions that define the interpersonal circumplex in Western psychology (e.g., Wiggins, 1979). Shweder (1991, pp. 140–143) found similar results using Oriyan (India) trait terms. In addition, when Oriyan informants grouped behavioral

descriptions into categories and labeled them, they generated 420 trait and type terms, indicating that they were quite capable of inferring traits from behavioral descriptions. Schieffelin (1985) noted the importance of individual differences in personality in egalitarian Kaluli (Papua New Guinea) society, where, at least in men, a premium is placed on individual assertiveness and where a man's temper, or anger-proneness, is a major feature by which his character is judged.

More ambiguous ethnographic accounts regarding the role of personality traits are provided by Kirkpatrick (1985) and Fajans (1985). Kirkpatrick (1985) noted that Marquesans (French Polynesia) expect individuals to have distinctive qualities that are part of a "recurrently visible personal organization" (p. 109), but also contended that observed traits do not tell Marquesans much about a person, whereas the person's interactive style does. Fajans (1985) noted that the Baining (Papua New Guinea) tend to describe others in terms of social roles and interpersonal interactions, but if pressed to label persons or their behavior will do so using terms such as *atlo* (good, industrious), *abu* (bad, lazy), and *akambain* (crazy, wild, drunk, lost).

In sum, ethnographic evidence suggests that cultures do differ in their conceptions of self or persons in ways that suggest relative cultural differences in the salience of independent versus interdependent (or egocentric vs. sociocentric) self-construals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991b). At the same time, the evidence also indicates that even in sociocentric cultures, persons and their behavior are described and understood to some degree in terms of personality traits, at least under appropriate conditions. Indeed, the apparent existence of trait descriptors in all languages (Dixon, 1977; Saucier & Goldberg, 1996) would seem to argue for the universal significance of traits, although it is conceivable that trait terms could be used in some cultures to describe only behaviors, not individuals. Less clear is the extent to which personality traits are viewed, in the folk theories or ethnopsychologies of various cultures, as they generally are in Western psychology, that is, as reflecting relatively stable tendencies over time and contexts and as being moderately predictive of behavior. It should be noted, however, that a weak role for personality traits in the folk theories of various cultures would not imply necessarily a lack of predictive power for traits in actual behavior in these cultures. I turn now from ethnographic or anthropological studies to culture-comparative studies conducted primarily by psychologists.

Traitedness of Self-Concepts

The vast majority of culture-comparative studies of self-concept have used the Twenty Statements Test (TST), in which respondents complete the statement "Who am I?" up to twenty times. Consistent with the predictions of cultural psychology, investigators have expected to find larger proportions of idiocentric responses (e.g., traits, aspirations, preferences, etc.) in individualistic cultures, and larger proportions of allocentric responses (e.g., social roles, relationships) in collectivistic cultures.

About half of the Asian studies have largely supported the theoretical hypotheses (Bochner, 1984; Cousins, 1989; Dhawan, Roseman, Naidu, Thapa, & Rettke, 1995; Shweder & Bourne, 1984; Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991; Triandis et al., 1990). The others have shown negative or mixed results (Bond & Cheung, 1983; Ip & Bond, 1995; Lalljee & Angelova, 1995; Rhee et al., 1995; Watkins & Gerong, 1997). When a broader range of cultures has been sampled, the results have most often failed to support the hypotheses (Lalljee & Angelova, 1995; Oyserman, 1993; Watkins, Adair, Akande, Cheng, et al., 1998; Watkins, Adair, Akande, Gerong, et al., 1998). For example, in a study of four individualistic and five collectivistic cultures, Watkins, Adair, Akande, Gerong, et al. (1998) found that the collectivistic cultures actually averaged a bit higher (70%) than the individualistic cultures (66%) on idiocentric responses. It is also clear from these studies that persons in collectivistic cultures do utilize traits and other personal attributes in their self-descriptions, so cultural differences in the "traitedness" of self-concepts is at most a relative one. These mixed results may be due to limitations of the TST method, including the subjective coding process, the diverse coding systems used, uncertain test-retest reliability, and unresolved questions about the optimal number and weighting of responses (Watkins, Yau, Dahlin, & Wondimu, 1997).

In a few studies researchers have used objective self-concept or identity inventories to assess the salience or centrality of different aspects of self-concept, with mixed results (e.g., Oyserman, 1993; Watkins, Akande, Fleming, et al., 1998). For example, Watkins, Adair, Akande, Cheng, et al. (1998) concluded that their results in 5 individualistic and 10 collectivistic cultures using the Adult Sources of Self-Esteem Inventory raised questions about the validity of I-C-based hypotheses. For example, individuals in collectivistic cultures, as compared to those in

individualistic cultures, reported greater salience of family relationships but not social relationships as an element of self-concept. In addition, family relationships (a collectivistic aspect) and personal goals (an individualistic aspect) were ranked highly in both collectivistic and individualistic cultures.

In sum, support for the hypothesis that self-concepts incorporate fewer personal or trait attributes in collectivistic cultures, as compared to individualistic cultures, must be considered equivocal. The use of multiple methods, including more indirect or implicit approaches, would seem important in future studies. For example, Heine and Lehman (1997a) used a free-choice dissonance paradigm to infer the extent to which internal attributes are at the core of the self. These authors reasoned that Asian participants would show less dissonance reduction in such a paradigm than North American participants because cognitive dissonance would only be threatening to those individuals whose identities were closely tied to their internal attributes (i.e., those characterized by an independent construal of self; Markus & Kitayama, 1991b). Heine and Lehman's (1997a) expectations were confirmed in a comparison of Japanese and Canadian adults.

Trait Versus Contextual Inferences Across Cultures

Many of the studies on this topic have involved attributions of academic success and failure, and suggest that the relative importance attributed to ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck in performance is fairly similar across cultures (Chandler, Sharma, Wolf, & Planchard, 1981; Crittenden, 1996; Little, Oettingen, Stetsenko, & Baltes, 1995; Yan & Gaier, 1994). Various Asian samples, however, as compared to other cultural groups, have tended to report more focus on effort, a presumed contextual factor (although might effort also reflect a conscientiousness trait? Chen & Stevenson, 1995; Crittenden, 1996; Hess, Chang, & McDevitt, 1987; Mizokawa & Ryckman, 1990; Stevenson & Lee, 1996; Tuss, Zimmer, & Ho, 1995). In contrast, Americans tend to emphasize ability somewhat more (Chandler et al., 1981; Yan & Gaier, 1994). It is not clear, however, that attributions involving ability and academic performance will generalize to dispositional inferences involving personality traits. Other studies indicate that persons in individualistic cultures, as compared to individuals in more collectivistic cultures, tend to perceive greater internal locus of

control for events (Chan, 1989; Hamid, 1994; Little et al., 1995; Tobacyk & Tobacyk, 1992).⁸

Most relevant are studies that compare the prevalence of personality-trait versus situational explanations of behavior in different cultural groups. Morris and Peng (1994) and Lee, Hallahan, and Herzog (1996) found that American, as compared to Chinese, newspaper articles make more dispositional attributions of behavior (e.g., in descriptions of a murder or a sporting event). S. Choi, Markus, and Kitayama (cited in Markus et al., 1996) found that Korean students, as compared to American students, made more situational inferences when a murder was described as committed by a young student or random stranger, but as many dispositional attributions when the murder was committed by a mature professor. The authors suggested that for Korean students dispositional attributions are context-bound. These studies did not address dispositional versus situational inference in relation to one's own or others' behavior in naturalistic settings, however.

Miller (1984) had Hindu Indian and American adults and children attribute causes to deviant and prosocial behaviors they had actually observed in people they knew. For the adults, but not the children, the Americans emphasized dispositions more and context less than did the Hindu Indians, particularly for the deviant behaviors. Although among the more persuasive results, this free-response study is subject to a counterinterpretation: There may be cultural differences, not so much in attribution processes, but in the social acceptability of commenting on the dispositional characteristics of others, particularly for deviant behaviors.

Given this interpretative ambiguity of self-report attribution studies, the relatively new experimental paradigms for investigating spontaneous trait inferences (i.e., inferences made without intention or awareness) may be promising for cross-cultural studies, and it might also be possible to extend these paradigms to compare cultures on their relative tendencies toward spontaneous trait versus situational inferences (e.g., Krull & Dill, 1996; Lupfer, Clark, & Hutcherson, 1990). Four studies found some evidence that individuals or ethnic groups in the United States who are

8. Cross-cultural findings involving control beliefs can be complex, however. Cultural differences may vary as a function of societal change (Grob, Little, Wanner, & Wearing, 1996), whether locus of control is measured as a uni- or multi-dimensional construct (Krampen, Galli, & Nigro, 1992), and whether control or causality beliefs are assessed in general or in relation to specific life domains (El-Sheikh & Klaczynski, 1993) or positive versus negative events (Y.-T. Lee & Seligman, 1997).

more individualistic are more likely to make spontaneous trait inferences than those who are low in individualism (Duff & Newman, 1997; Newman, 1991, 1993; Zarate & Uleman, cited in Uleman, Newman, & Moskowitz, 1996). Although promising, none of these studies involved a cross-national comparison, probably reducing cultural variability and effect sizes, and only the Duff and Newman (1997) study addressed whether collectivists might show greater spontaneous situational inference than trait inference. Based on their own review of these studies, I. Choi, Nisbett, and Norenzayan (1999) also concluded that spontaneous trait inference may be less prevalent in collectivists, but that the body of evidence is “still small and less than robust” (p. 49).

I. Choi et al. (1999) also reviewed evidence suggesting that (a) individuals in Eastern cultures are not immune from the correspondence bias or fundamental attribution error, that is, the tendency to attribute (or overattribute) behavior to traits, while underestimating the causal role of situational factors (e.g., I. Choi & Nisbett, 1998); and (b) individuals in East Asian cultures do make dispositional inferences, but also make more use of situational information in explaining or predicting behavior, assuming that the situational information is salient enough (I. Choi & Nisbett, 1998; Morris & Peng, 1994; Norenzayan, Choi, & Nisbett, cited in I. Choi et al., 1999). Indeed, I. Choi et al. (1999) concluded that cultural differences in causal attribution are likely due more to stronger situational inference in some (e.g., East Asian) cultures than to differences in dispositional inference, which may be only slightly weaker in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures.

Self-Enhancement Tendencies

Cultural psychologists expect that individuals with independent self-construals will be more susceptible to various self-enhancement tendencies than will individuals with interdependent self-construals. Indeed, studies have suggested that persons in collectivistic cultures, as compared to individualistic cultures, may be *less* likely to exhibit (a) “false uniqueness” effects (i.e., overestimating the uniqueness of their own positive attributes, Markus and Kitayama, 1991a); (b) unrealistic optimism regarding the likelihood of positive and negative events happening to oneself as opposed to others (Heine & Lehman, 1995a); and (c) self-enhanced evaluations of their own or their ingroups’ performance (Akimoto & Sanbonmatsu, 1999; Hanover, 1995; Heine & Lehman, 1997b; see also

Brockner & Chen, 1996). The results of cross-cultural studies of self-serving or positivity biases in attributions (e.g., emphasizing internal attributions more for successes than failures) are more mixed (Al-Zahrani & Kaplowitz, 1993; Chandler et al., 1981; Crittenden, 1996; Kashima & Triandis, 1986; F. Lee, Hallahan, & Herzog, 1996; Y.-T. Lee & Seligman, 1997).

Most relevant for trait assessment would be evidence of cultural differences in self-enhancement when filling out personality measures. There is evidence, for example, that North American samples, as compared to Asian samples, score higher on typical self-esteem measures and list more positive self-statements when filling out the TST (Bond & Cheung, 1983; Campbell et al., 1996; Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994; Diener & Diener, 1995; Heine & Lehman, 1997b; Ip & Bond, 1995; Kityama et al., 1997). These results are consistent with Kitayama et al.'s (1997) collective constructionist theory of the self, which attributes cultural tendencies of self-enhancement versus self-criticism to the situations, and their construals, that are prevalent in different cultures (e.g., whether situations are seen as opportunities for increased self-esteem or self-criticism). Using a more indirect measure of self-esteem, however—self-evaluations of letters and numbers appearing in respondents' names and birthdays—Kitayama and Karasawa (1997) concluded that Japanese do have a deep-seated regard for self, but that this positive self-regard is masked when responding to explicit self-referential questions by the tendency to attend to negative features of self.

If persons in individualistic cultures show a greater self-enhancement bias, then we would expect them to score higher on measures of socially desirable responding. However, there is no consistent trend in this regard. Indeed, in some studies, respondents in presumably collectivistic samples (e.g., Mexicans, Black South Africans, Sri Lankans) have responded in a more socially desirable manner than respondents in presumably individualistic samples (e.g., Anglo-Americans, Canadians, British; Mwamwenda, 1993; Perera & Eysenck, 1984; Ross & Mirowsky, 1984). Grimm and Church (1999) did find that Americans rated themselves on trait terms in a more socially desirable manner than did Filipinos. However, Heine and Lehman (1995b) found no differences between Asians in Canada and European-Canadians in the Self-Deception and Impression Management subscales of Paulhus' (1998) Balanced Inventory of Socially Desirable Responding.

Two studies involved direct comparisons of self versus others' ratings as an index of self-enhancement tendencies. Falbo, Poston, Triscari, and Zhang (1997) found that Chinese children did exhibit self-enhancement tendencies, rating themselves on trait attributes more positively than did peers, parents, and teachers, and more positively than they rated a specific classmate. Yik et al. (1998) found that larger percentages of North American than Chinese students exhibited a self-enhancement bias in their trait ratings, relative to peer ratings. However, two findings were especially noteworthy from an individual differences or trait perspective. First, in both cultures, both self-enhancing *and* self-effacing individuals could be identified. Second, even in the Chinese sample, the majority of respondents showed self-enhancement tendencies for agentic traits, but self-effacement tendencies for communal traits. These findings suggest that both within-culture and between-culture differences in self-enhancement versus self-effacement may be associated with underlying trait differences (cf. Paulhus & John, 1998).

Finally, a study by Campbell et al. (1996) suggests another way in which cultural differences in self-construals might impact the accuracy and validity of trait assessments across cultures. These researchers found that Japanese participants showed lower levels of self-concept clarity than did Canadian participants, and that self-concept clarity was positively associated with the internal consistency and temporal stability of trait self-ratings.

In summary, from the cultural psychology perspective, and from both ethnographic and culture-comparative studies, the following findings can be noted: (a) evidence that individuals in all cultures incorporate traits and other internal attributes in their self-concepts, coupled with mixed evidence that self-concepts are less "traited" in collectivistic cultures; (b) limited evidence that individuals in collectivistic cultures, as compared to individualistic cultures, attribute behaviors less to personality traits and more to contextual factors; (c) growing evidence that individuals in some individualistic cultures exhibit certain self-enhancement biases more than individuals in some collectivistic cultures; and (d) cogent theoretical perspectives relating cultural institutions and practices, and associated dimensions of culture (i.e., individualism-collectivism, independent versus interdependent self-construals) to the "traitedness" of self-concepts, attributions, and behavior, and to the accuracy and meaningfulness of trait assessments.

Toward an Integrated Cultural Trait Psychology

General Considerations

The trait and cultural psychology perspectives are sometimes viewed as incompatible (Shweder, 1991). It seems possible, however, to integrate the two approaches, if one can refute the more extreme view of those who question the idea of the individual person as a separate psychological entity with a distinct sense of self and internal psychological processes and characteristics. In a detailed critique of the conceptual reasoning and empirical evidence for this view, Spiro (1993) concluded that such a lack of self-other differentiation in non-Western cultures is dubious and that some authors may have conflated the distinction between interpersonal autonomy and intrapsychic autonomy.⁹

Indeed, a number of ethnographers argue that the ability to differentiate self from others and the world of objects is a basic fact of human nature in all cultures (Hallowell, 1955; Kirkpatrick & White, 1985; Lebra, 1994; Lutz, 1985; Mathews, 1996; Wierzbicka, 1993). For example, Lutz (1985) argued, "Without some notion of the self as distinct from other selves and objects, the creation, perception, and enactment of a human social and moral order would be impossible" (p. 36). Lebra (1994) noted that "a discovery of cultural variations in self-awareness does not disprove but rather confirms the . . . universalistic thesis on self" (p. 105). Wierzbicka (1993), while not disputing that the folk theories of some cultures place less emphasis on the uniqueness and boundaries of a person as a distinctive whole, noted that cross-linguistic investigations demonstrate that "the idea of a 'person' who 'thinks,' 'wants,' 'feels,' and 'knows' (as well as 'says' and 'does' various things) appears to be a universal" (pp. 212–213). Thus, she argues, "the concept of an individuated person is in all probability universal" (footnote 3) and "the idea that the notion of 'person' is the product of Western culture is simply not tenable" (p. 210).

Fiske (1995) also contended that even in cultures that explain behavior in terms of roles and norms, individuals are aware of their own private goals and wishes, particularly when these conflict with their public

9. Spiro (1993) points out, for example, that the meaning of Markus and Kitayama's (1991b) assertion that, in non-Western cultures, "others are included within the boundaries of the self" is unclear; if it is meant to imply that other-representations are included in one's self-representations, then it would suggest severe psychopathology.

obligations. Indeed, Sedikides and Skowronski (1997) argued that the symbolic self is an evolutionary adaptation; although its contents will vary across cultures, all individuals have a distinct symbolic self which includes, among other things, a representation of one's personality characteristics.

Furthermore, one can adopt the cultural psychology view that the person and culture are mutually constitutive without ignoring the evidence and potential role of inherited traits. Evolutionary psychologists remind us, for example, that to say that psychological phenomena are socially constructed only means that the sociocultural environment provides some of the inputs used by individuals' psychological mechanisms (Buss, 1995). Similarly, at the level of the individual, we can argue that heritable personality traits are "prior to" culture, that is, encoded in the individual's genetic make-up prior to cultural exposure during development. These inherited dispositions may (a) influence how one processes and reacts to cultural input and thus constitute an additional source of individual variability in behavior, and (b) contribute toward maintenance or change of cultural institutions and practices. At the same time, culture would likely influence the manner and extent to which traits are expressed in different contexts. McCrae and Costa (1996) make a similar point in their five factor theory of personality when they make a distinction between inherited basic tendencies such as the Big Five traits, which they view as independent of culture, and characteristic adaptations such as self-concepts and personal strivings, which are viewed as a joint function of basic tendencies and external influences such as cultural norms.

Cultural psychologists sometimes acknowledge biological constraints on the person (Kitayama & Markus, 1999; Markus & Kitayama, 1998), but have not addressed the implications of such constraints for the content and processes of self, dispositional versus situational attributions, or behavioral consistency. Of course, it is a question for empirical research whether sociocultural influences in some cultures are so potent and pervasive that all individual variability that might result from inherited traits is entirely suppressed, but this possibility seems unlikely.

In their effort to differentiate self-processes associated with individualism and collectivism, cultural psychologists have tended to downplay or ignore the potential moderating role of personality dispositions. Markus and Kitayama (1998) do acknowledge a role for individual distinctiveness in Japan, for example, in contrasting students who fulfill

the prototypical student role (“student-rashii”) by being either diligent or spirited, but note that “this distinctiveness itself is predicated on the context-contingent nature of the person” (p. 73); that is, presumably, being a diligent student would not necessarily imply anything about a broader trait of conscientiousness. Kitayama et al. (1997) also concede that some individuals might resist the central cultural tendency, for example, by seeking more independence or interdependence from the cultural norm, but do not explicitly consider whether these within-group differences might be associated with enduring personality traits such as openness to experience or autonomy.¹⁰

A few examples of how individual differences might be incorporated into cultural psychology studies might be useful. Kitayama et al. (1997) argued that situations are more apt to be construed as promoting self-esteem in the United States, but as an opportunity for self-criticism in Japan. Might not neurotics in either culture, as compared to more emotionally stable individuals, be more likely to construe situations in a self-critical manner? Furthermore, trait theorists argue that traits are expressed not only in the construal of situations but in the seeking-out of more trait-congruent situations (Ickes, Snyder, & Garcia, 1997). Might not individuals in all cultures manifest their traits, at least to some degree, in their selection of situations? As another example, Yik et al. (1998) showed that even in collectivistic cultures, there are individual differences in the tendency to self-enhance versus self-efface in self-ratings of personality. Might not these individual differences in self-deceptive tendencies be related to antecedent traits or motives, as Paulhus and John (1998) have suggested?

Toward an Integrated Framework

If we assume that both the trait psychology and cultural psychology perspectives are correct, then Figure 1 provides a schematic summary of what some aspects of an integrated framework might look like. The model addresses only the “traitedness” of self-concepts, attributions, and behaviors, and the accuracy of trait assessments across cultures, because these are currently the primary areas of intersection between trait psychology and cultural psychology.

10. Markus et al. (1996) also refer to a “culture as diversity” perspective in cultural psychology, in which cultural systems do not produce uniform effects for all individuals, but then provide the example of social class differences rather than individual differences in personality.

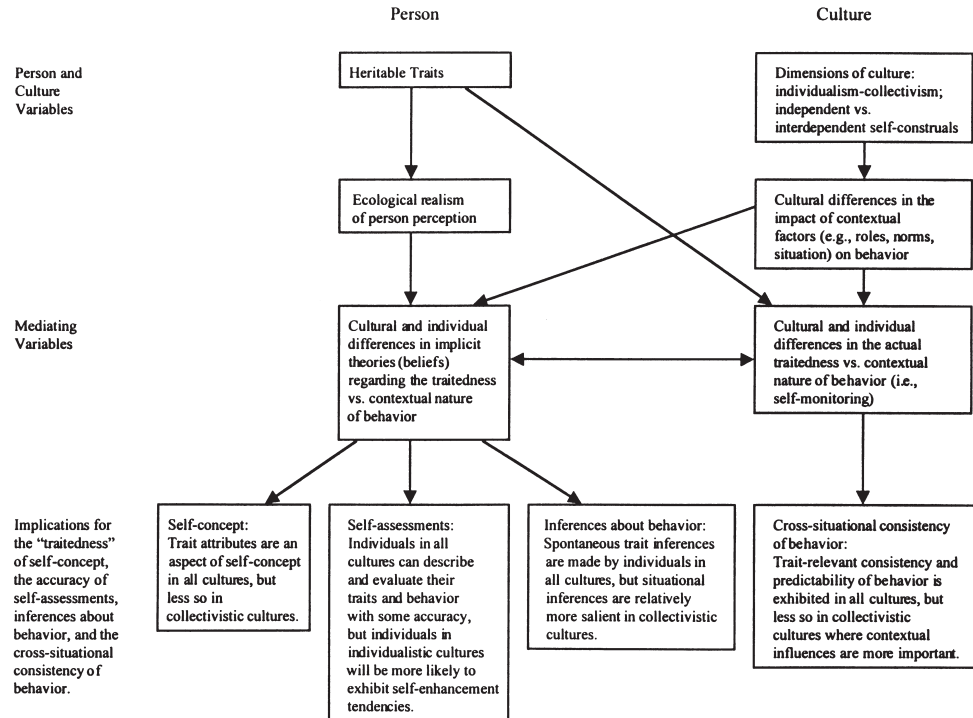


Figure 1
Selected components of an integrated cultural trait psychology perspective.

Starting with the person variable in Figure 1, the framework incorporates evolved, heritable, and culturally universal traits, which are “prior to” cultural influences on the individual, but whose manifestation in different contexts may be influenced by culture. The existence of heritable traits with adaptive significance, combined with an ecological-realist perspective on person perception (Baron & Misovich, 1993; McArthur & Baron, 1983), leads to the predictions that traits will be an element of self-concept and be spontaneously inferred and perceived with some accuracy in all cultures (see bottom row in Figure 1). The ecological-realist perspective postulates, with some empirical support, that dispositions can be directly perceived through certain evolved indicators (e.g., facial expression, gait, vocal qualities, etc.), particularly if one is able to observe people in the context of trait-relevant activities (Baron & Misovich, 1993; Zebrowitz-McArthur, 1988). Findings of significant self-peer rating agreement, even after minimal exposure to target individuals, also support the ecological-realist position that traits are real and directly observable from minimal visual or verbal cues (e.g., Borkenau & Liebler, 1993; Funder & Colvin, 1988; Watson, 1989). The ecological-realist perspective is also consistent with Buss’s (1996) evolutionary theory, which postulates that humans have evolved difference-detecting mechanisms that enable us to place others along the Big Five dimensions.

At the same time, because of ecological, institutional, and socio-historical differences, cultures come to differ along dimensions associated with individualism versus collectivism, including differences in independent versus interdependent self-construals (e.g., Markus et al., 1997; Triandis, 1995). From I-C theory, we can then predict cultural differences in the impact of contextual factors such as roles, norms, and situational contexts on self-concepts, trait inference, and the consistency of behavior (right side and bottom row in Figure 1).

Also depicted in Figure 1 are certain mediating variables that are hypothesized to exhibit both cultural and individual variability. One is implicit theories or beliefs about the traitedness versus contextual nature of behavior.¹¹ Cultural psychologists and I-C theorists have hypothesized that implicit theories favoring trait or dispositional explanations may be

11. Note that in presuming that individuals can be placed along a continuum reflecting the relative strength of their beliefs in the traitedness versus contextual nature of behavior, I am not denying the actual reciprocal and dynamic nature of person-situation interactions in determining behavior.

more prevalent in individualistic cultures where it may be more instrumental to infer dispositions, whereas in collectivistic cultures implicit beliefs emphasizing the contextual nature of behavior are expected to be higher and the primary inferential goal may be to identify the more predictive contextual determinants of behavior (Krull, 1993; Markus & Kitayama, 1991b; Newman, 1993).

Individual and cultural differences in the *actual* traitedness versus situational nature of behavior—possibly related to differences in self-monitoring (e.g., Snyder, 1974, 1987)—are also depicted as a mediating variable in Figure 1. As shown, I expect that the implicit beliefs of individuals and cultures about the traitedness versus contextual nature of behavior will be at least moderately related to the actual traitedness of their behavior, because persons' beliefs will be based in part on their observations of their own and others' behavior. Persons in collectivistic cultures are expected to be higher in self-monitoring, on average, and thus likely to show less trait-relevant behavioral consistency.

In the bottom row of Figure 1, I show selected implications of an integrated model for the traitedness versus contextual nature of self-concepts, self-processes related to the accuracy of trait assessments (i.e., self-enhancement tendencies), causal attributions, and behavioral consistency. Some of these predictions differ from what either the trait psychology or cultural psychology perspectives alone might predict. For example, although I incorporate the cultural psychology hypothesis that situational inference, rather than trait inference, will be more salient in collectivistic cultures, the integration of a trait-theory perspective leads to the additional prediction that persons in all cultures will infer traits spontaneously to some degree, at least under appropriate conditions. This is consistent, for example, with I. Choi et al.'s (1999) conclusion that dispositional inference is present in all cultures, although perhaps weaker in individualistic cultures, and that individuals in some cultures (e.g., East Asian) are more sensitive to situational information, assuming it is sufficiently salient (I. Choi & Nisbett, 1998; Norenzayan, Choi, & Nisbett, cited in I. Choi et al., 1999).

Available evidence addressing most aspects of the integrated model is presently limited and was summarized in earlier sections of this article. More thorough testing of the model would require some of the following: (a) cross-cultural assessment of implicit theories regarding the traitedness versus contextual nature of behavior;¹² (b) adaptation of existing measures of self-monitoring to emphasize those aspects of the construct most

relevant to cross-cultural and individual differences in trait-relevant behavioral consistency; (c) additional studies of the salience or accessibility of internal (idiocentric) versus contextual (allocentric) aspects of self-concept, using methods that go beyond the TST (e.g., objective measures of aspects of identity; implicit or indirect measures, e.g., Heine & Lehman, 1997a); (d) additional cross-cultural studies of dispositional versus contextual attributions, focusing especially on real behaviors in naturalistic settings, plus cross-national studies applying existing paradigms for the study of spontaneous trait versus situational inference; (e) cross-cultural studies of self-enhancement tendencies in personality ratings, using a broader sample of individualistic and collectivistic cultures, and with a greater focus on the possible role of individual differences in these tendencies; (f) studies comparing the criterion validity of trait assessments across diverse cultures using equivalent measures and comparable criteria; (g) culture-comparative studies of trait-relevant behavioral consistency, particularly using experience sampling methods or behavioral observations in naturalistic settings; (h) culture-comparative studies of cross-role variability in trait ratings (e.g., Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997), which might also address cross-cultural differences in behavioral consistency and conceptions of personality coherence; (i) longitudinal studies; personality trait scores should be less stable over time in collectivistic cultures; and (j) comparative studies of interjudge agreement in personality judgments using comparable trait dimensions and judges across cultures; such studies could also address the extent to which the same variables moderate interjudge agreement in different cultures (e.g., characteristics of the judges, targets, and traits rated; Funder & Colvin, 1997).

12. The distinction made by Dweck, Hong, and Chiu (1993) between entity theorists, who believe in fixed stable traits, and incremental theorists, who believe that attributes are malleable, may be relevant here, although their findings of a greater proportion of entity theorists in Hong Kong than in the United States seems inconsistent with the expectation that implicit theories favoring trait explanations will be more prevalent in individualistic cultures (C. Chiu, Dweck, Tong, & Fu, 1997; C. Chiu, Hong, & Dweck, 1997). Norenzayan, Choi, and Nisbett (cited in I. Choi et al., 1999) did find, however, that Korean students endorse an incremental theory of personality to a greater extent than do Americans.

Additional Research Needs and Questions

In relation to the cross-cultural trait approach more generally, research on the cross-cultural comparability of personality structure needs to be extended to the organization of lower-level dimensions in a hierarchical structure of personality; current research has focused almost exclusively on higher-order dimensions such as the Big Five. More extensive efforts also need to be made to identify and assess indigenous personality constructs and to determine whether they add anything to the Big Five in predicting relevant societal criteria. Further studies of cultural mean differences in various traits can advance our understanding of how culture influences personality, assuming that methods are adopted to eliminate rival interpretations of score differences (e.g., response biases, measurement inequivalencies).

To fully elaborate an integrated cultural trait psychology perspective, additional research questions, such as the following, might also be addressed (see also McCrae, *in press*). How comparable are the behavioral manifestations of universal traits across cultures? What are the conditions under which particular traits are freely expressed or inhibited in different cultures? Do persons in individualistic cultures, as compared to collectivistic cultures, have greater freedom to seek out trait-congruent situations? Do inherited traits and sociocultural influences interact in a similar manner across cultures in the formation of cognitive-affective mediating variables such as expectancies, affects, goals, and plans (e.g., Mischel & Shoda, 1995)? Are individuals' multiple selves more congruent in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures, and is this congruence more important for subjective well-being in individualistic cultures? Does cross-role consistency of behavior (e.g., Sheldon et al., 1997) have different implications for psychological adjustment or well-being in different cultures? Will situation-behavior profiles (e.g., Mischel & Shoda, 1995) be even more important in the description of personality and behavior in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures? Will incorporation of situational context in personality items be more important in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures for a more meaningful and valid assessment? Will the development of interactionist personality-situation taxonomies (e.g., Murtha, Kanfer, & Ackerman, 1996) be more crucial in the description and assessment of personality in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures, and how comparable will these interactionist taxonomies be across cultures?

Finally, will broad distinctions between individualistic and collectivistic cultures (or independent versus interdependent self-construals) be sufficient to account for cultural differences in the traitedness of self-concepts, attributions, and behavior or will more refined or multidimensional distinctions be required?

In sum, the position taken in this article is that an integration of the dominant trait psychology and cultural psychology perspectives in the study of culture and personality is possible and that such an integration would involve addressing integrated models and research questions such as those proposed here. A goal of the article has been to facilitate the synthesis of theory and research from these two perspectives, with the expectation that such a synthesis will lead to a more comprehensive and accurate description of the relationship between culture and personality.

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