EXAMINING RELATIONSHIPS OF ETHNICITY, INDEPENDENT-

INTERDEPENDENT SELF AND SELF-DISCLOSURE

IN YOUNG ADULTS IN THE U.S.

by

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HONORS THESIS

Submitted to Texas State University
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for
graduation in the Honors College
December 2020

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DEDICATION

In loving memory of my ancestors whose battles have allowed me to help the social wellbeing of future generations. Without their sacrifices, I would not be where I am, nor who I am today. So, I hope this research is utilized to maximize the happiness of future generations of the world. Gracias a mi familia por tu amor eterno. Yo siempre lo llevo y sé que no estoy sola. Te recuerdo a través de mi trabajo y te amo mucho.

I would also like to dedicate this research to the late Kim Jonghyun (김종현), Choi Jinri (최진리), and Goo Hara (구하라) who's battles with interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships inspired me to follow this line of research.그동안 진짜 감사하고 수고했어요.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Previous studies have shown that 'individualistic' and 'collectivistic' cultures share different amounts of self-disclosure (SD). It has also been shown that 'individualists' construe self as independent (IND), while 'collectivists' construe self as interdependent (INT). However, research revealed different patterns of multidimensional representation of the IND-INT self across cultures. Our study examined the relationship between multidimensional IND-INT self representation and SD across ethnic groups in the U.S. Overall, we hypothesized that IND-INT would positively correlate with SD but the predictive power of specific dimensions of the cultural-self would vary across ethnic and gender groups. The study used an 8-dimensional, self-construal model of IND-INT to analyze 1) varying degrees of IND-INT in different ethnic groups in the U.S, 2) SD amounts shared among ethnic groups in the U.S, and 3) varying degrees of IND-INT and SD in different relationships (parents, a close friend, and an acquaintance). A sample of n=268 undergraduate students (225 females, 41 males, and 2 non-specified) completed an online survey containing: a) demographic items, b) an IND-INT self-construal scale, and c) an adopted version of Jourard's 25-item SD questionnaire. Results show significant correlations between specific dimensions of IND-INT and self-disclosure. Moreover, the data revealed significant interactions between gender and ethnicity on selected dimensions of IND-INT, suggesting critical influences of ethnicity and gender on cultural self-representation within the U.S.

Keywords: relationships, self-disclosure, individualism-collectivism, independence-interdependence, and ethnicity

I. INTRODUCTION

Relationships are essential for well-being. Previous research suggests that social relationships are important for mental health (Guntzviller et al., 2020; Thoits, 2011). The satisfaction and effectiveness of these relationships are affected by self-disclosure, which is a voluntary, verbal communication that can create intimate connections and deepen a relationship (Jourard, 1971; Schwartz et al., 2011). However, research also shows that Individualism-Collectivism and the Independent and Interdependent self (IND-INT) across cultures differentially affect how people relate to each other and prefer to communicate (Chen, 1995; Kim et al., 2008; Schug et al., 2010; Schwartz et al., 2011). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine relationships between self-disclosure and IND-INT self in the U.S to better understand the cultural differences in self-disclosure in ethnic groups within the U.S.

Importance of Self-Disclosure in Relationships

Self-disclosure has a multitude of effects in relationships, from perceived support, which reduces biological, psychological, and behavioral stress (Wang & Lau, 2018) to initiating relationships (Shelton et al., 2010). However, self-disclosure is especially important in creating and maintaining relationships. For example, it has been shown that people disclose information to strangers whom they like, and the strangers who are being disclosed to tend to like the person that disclosed the information, creating a reciprocated connection. This allows friendships to form, which suggests the importance of self-disclosure in creating relationships (Shelton et al., 2010).

Although self-disclosure plays a significant role in relationships, previous studies have shown that the amount of self-disclosure shared in relationships differs across individualistic and collectivistic cultures (Chen, 1995; Coon & Kemmelmeier, 2001; Schwartz et al., 2011; Vargas & Kemmelmeier, 2013). Therefore, it is important to examine the differences in self-disclosure patterns across cultures.

Individualistic-Collectivistic Cultures and Independent-Interdependent Self

Individualism-collectivism is a construct that describes broad cross-cultural differences in values, cognition, behavior and self-concept between societies and national groups (Kagitcibasi, 1997). Individualists value autonomy, self-reliance, uniqueness, achievement orientation, and competition whereas collectivists value sense of duty toward one's group, interdependence with others, a desire for social harmony, and conformity with group norms (Kagitcibasi, 1997; Triandis, 2002). Similarly, the individualistic self-concept emphasizes the importance of personal autonomy and self-fulfillment; one's identity is based on personal achievements. By contrast, a collectivist's identity is defined by relationships with others and social roles; one considers group goals and expectations of others first, while personal needs and goals are considered second (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Therefore, it has been proposed that in individualistic cultures, self is construed as independent, while in collectivistic cultures, people tend to construe self as interdependent (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Since the 1970s, Western cultures were believed to contain more individualists while Eastern cultures were believed to contain more collectivists (Hamamura, 2012; Kagitcibasi, 1997). However, research found that populations are neither solely

individualistic nor solely collectivistic as each person can contain both individualistic and collectivistic qualities (e.g., Vargas & Kemmelmeier, 2013). Researchers also proposed that additional cultural differences can be captured by distinguishing between societies that value equality between their members (i.e., *horizontal*) or hierarchical relationships between their members (i.e., *vertical*). The original bi-dimensional model of individualism-collectivism has been expanded into four constructs: *horizontal collectivism*, *vertical collectivism*, *horizontal individualism*, and *vertical individualism* (Singelis et al., 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). *Horizontal collectivism* values honesty, directness and cooperation between individuals that are assumed equal whereas *vertical collectivism* emphasizes deference to authority and acceptance of ones position within a strictly defined social hierarchy. *Horizontal individualism* describes the autonomous self that values uniqueness and social equality whereas *vertical individualism* describes the autonomous self that glorifies personal achievement (Vargas & Kemmelmeier, 2013).

Cross-cultural research has shown that individualistic vs. collectivistic cultures differ in the amount of self-disclosure shared within relationships (Chen, 1995; Schwartz et al., 2011). For example, in Chen's 1995 study, 200 American and 144 Chinese students were asked to report their willingness to share various types of information (i.e., opinions, interests, work, financial issues, personality, and body) with their parents, intimate friends, coworkers, or with strangers. Overall, the results revealed that American students (i.e., individualists) disclosed more information in relationships than Chinese students (i.e., collectivists). Moreover, both Chinese and American students reported more willingness to disclose information to their parents and intimate friends than to

strangers suggesting culturally universal tendency for more disclosure in more intimate relationships.

Similarly, Schug et al.'s 2010 study suggested that individualists disclose more information than collectivists. In the study, 74 Japanese students and 93 American students were asked to report how likely they would share, "1) their biggest secret, 2) their most embarrassing experience, 3) their greatest failure, 4) their greatest worry, and 5) the worst thing that ever happened to them" (p. 6) to a close friend and a close family member. The results showed that American students (i.e., individualists) reported disclosing more information to friends and family than Japanese students (i.e., collectivists). However, the study also measured relational mobility, or the degree to which individuals can choose to develop or terminate their relationships in society. Inconsistent with Chen's (1995) findings, it was shown that both Japanese and American students reported disclosing more information to a close friend than to a close family member. This suggests that relational mobility, which is a product of cultural values, has an impact on the patterns of self-disclosure in different relationships. Additionally, it has been proposed that the social contexts of stable interpersonal relationships prevalent in collectivistic cultures is associated with low relational mobility. Consequently, self-disclosure would be less prevalent in the relationships in collectivistic cultures as low relational mobility would encourage individuals to maintain stable relationships with positive reputations, in order to not be socially excluded (Kim et al., 2008; Schug et al., 2010). However, the result of Japanese students not differing from American students in disclosing more information to close friends than to family members seems to reveal

within-culture differences in self-disclosure patterns in collectivistic Asian cultures (i.e., China vs. Japan).

Researchers found (e.g., Kim et al., 2008) that people in individualistic cultures seek social support from others more readily than people in collectivistic cultures because of a relatively greater importance placed by individualists on a personal well-being compared to others' well-being. Whereas in collectivistic cultures, sharing private problems with others for the purpose of obtaining help is seen as presenting a burden. Additionally, it was revealed that people in collectivistic cultures, such as Koreans, displayed more negative emotions (i.e., regret and shame) when explicitly sharing their concerns with others, which suggests another cultural norm in collectivistic cultures that potentially affects self-disclosure is related to a fear of disrupting group harmony and receiving criticism from others. Furthermore, it has been shown that perceived social support did not decrease biological, psychological, nor behavioral stress outcomes of Asian Americans compared to individualistic, European Americans (Wang & Lau, 2018). However, in other collectivistic cultures, like Hispanic cultures, perceived social support decreased stress which was demonstrated by decreased anxiety and depression symptoms in young adults (Guntzviller et al., 2020). These differences in social support effects among collectivistic cultures (i.e., Asian and Latin American) suggest more complex variations across cultures than the early bi-dimensional models of individualism-collectivism.

Recently, the original, bi-dimensional model of independent-interdependent self, IND-INT, (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) has been expanded to an eight-dimensional model of IND-INT to capture cultural diversity of how the self is construed around the world

(Vignoles et al., 2016). These eight dimensions include *difference vs. similarity* to others, *self-containment vs. connection to others*, *self-direction vs. receptiveness to influence*, *self-reliance vs. dependence on others*, *consistency vs. variability* of behavior, *self-expression vs. harmony* with others, *self-interest vs. commitments to others*, and *de-contextualized vs contextualized self*. The first poles of each dimension (i.e., difference, self-containment, self-direction, self-reliance, consistency, self-expression, self-interest, and de-contextualized self) reflect independence, while the second poles (i.e., similarity, connection to others, receptiveness to influence, dependence on others, variability, harmony, commitment to others, and contextualized self) reflect interdependence. For example, in the *Self Construal Scale* (SCS) based on the 8-dimesional model, the difference vs. similarity dimension contains statements such as, "*Being a unique individual is important to me*" (independence) and "*I avoid standing out among my friends*" (interdependence). The self-containment vs. connection to others dimension contains statements such as, "*I consider my happiness separate from the happiness of my friends and family*" (independence) and "*If a person hurts someone close to me, I feel personally hurt as well*" (interdependence). The self-direction vs. receptiveness to influence contains statements such as, "*I should decide my future on my own*" (independence) and "*Other people's wishes have an important influence on the choices I make*" (interdependence). The self-reliance vs. dependence on others dimension contains statements such as, "*I prefer to be self-reliant rather than depend on others*" (independence) and "*I prefer to turn to other people for help rather than to solely rely on myself*" (interdependence). The consistency vs. variability dimension contains statements such as, "*I always see myself in the same way, independently of who I am with*"

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(independence) and "*I sometimes feel like a different person when I am with different groups of people*" (interdependence). The self-expression vs. harmony dimension contains statements such as, "*I prefer to be direct and forthright when discussing with people*" (independence) and "*It is important to maintain harmony within my group*" (interdependence). The self-interest vs. commitment to others dimension contains statements such as, "*My personal accomplishments are more important than maintaining my social relationships*" (independence) and "*I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group*" (interdependence). Lastly, the de-contextualized vs. contextualized self dimension contains items such as, "*Someone could understand who you are without needing to know which social groups you belong to*" (independence) and "*If someone wants to understand who you are, they would need to know which social groups you belong to*" (interdependence).

Although most research on cultural self involves cross-cultural comparisons of Western and Eastern countries, some studies have applied these constructs to explore cultural differences between ethnic groups in the multicultural population of the U.S.

Ethnicity, Independent-Interdependent self, and Self-Disclosure in the U.S.

In the U.S, studies have found different patterns of the Independent-Interdependent self (IND-INT) among ethnic groups. When comparing European Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and African-Americans on horizontal vs. vertical collectivism-individualism, European Americans showed higher vertical individualism than any other ethnic/racial group in the study (Vargas & Kemmelmeier 2013). However, in another study comparing these ethnic/racial groups, researchers found that African-

Americans score higher in individualism compared to European Americans and Asian Americans (Coon & Kemmelmeier, 2001). These inconsistent results concerning African-Americans suggest the need for further investigation of cultural differences in minority populations in the U.S. This is further demonstrated by studies which have found different patterns of self-disclosure among ethnic groups. For example, researchers found that when measuring collectivism with a 10-item scale containing items such as, "I consider myself a team player," higher scores of collectivism in Latinos predicted higher rates of self-disclosure (Schwartz et al., 2011).

In the study, 132 Latino adults, including exchange students, immigrants from Latin American countries, and Latinos born in the U.S, were asked to retrospectively rate how much information they tend to disclose to friends and acquaintances. Results found that overall, higher collectivism predicted higher rates of self-disclosure with friends and acquaintances. These results are noteworthy as they are inconsistent with findings of cross-national research that Asian collectivistic cultures (i.e., China or Japan) show less amounts of self-disclosure (Chen, 1995; Schug et al., 2010). The inconsistent patterns of self-disclosure and social support seeking (e.g., Guntzviller et al., 2020) in collectivistic countries from various regions of the world (i.e. Latin America vs. Asia) suggest various patterns of Individualism-Collectivism across cultures. This variability could potentially be captured by an expanded conceptual approach to self in cultural context that is offered by the multidimensional model of independent-interdependent self, IND-INT (Vignoles et al., 2016).

Therefore, in our study, we replaced the 10-item collectivism scale (Schwartz et al., 2011) with the multidimensional Self-Construal Scale (Vignoles et al., 2016) to assess

the IND-INT self as a predictor of self-disclosure. Additionally, the current study investigated differences in multidimensional IND-INT self between major ethnic/racial groups in the U.S to conduct a conceptual replication of earlier studies in this population (i.e., Schwartz et al., 2011, Coon & Kemmelmeier, 2001, Vargas & Kemmelmeier 2013).

Overview of Current Study

Our study examined differences in multidimensional independent-interdependent self, IND-INT, between ethnic groups in the U.S. Additionally, it investigated the relationship between IND-INT and self-disclosure, SD, in communication with various people (i.e., a mother/mother-like figure, a father/father-like figure, a close friend, and an acquaintance). The assessment of cultural self was conducted with an 8-dimensional Self-Construal Scale, SCS, which is based on the multidimensional independent-interdependent self, IND-INT model (Vignoles et al., 2016).

The study examined 1) differences in IND-INT self among Anglo-Americans (Non-Hispanic Whites), White Hispanics, and African Americans, 2) differences in self-disclosure, SD, among these ethnic/racial populations, and 3) relationships between various dimensions of IND-INT self and SD in different relationships (i.e., a mother/mother-like figure, a father/father-like figure, a close friend, and an acquaintance).

Previous studies have shown that White Americans are more individualistic compared to Latinos and African Americans (Vargas & Kemmelmeier, 2013). Therefore, we hypothesized that Non-Hispanic Whites will overall score higher on IND self dimensions than White Hispanics and African Americans. It was also shown that

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individualists tend to disclose more information while collectivists tend to disclose less information across relationships (Chen, 1995; Schug et al., 2010). Therefore, our general hypothesis was that the dimensions of IND-INT self will reveal positive correlations with self-disclosure, SD. However, this general pattern may vary across specific dimensions of IND-INT and types of relationships (e.g., parents vs. friend). Overall, we expected to find differences in self-disclosure across ethnic/racial groups with Non-Hispanic Whites disclosing more information than Hispanic Whites or African-Americans.

II. METHOD

Participants

Using a convenience sampling method, 268 students (male, n = 41, 15.4%; female, n = 225, 84.6%; non-specified, n = 2) were recruited from undergraduate courses at Texas State University and received course credit in exchange for participation. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 43 years old (M= 19.71; SD= 3.13). Additionally, about one-third of participants identified as first-generation students (n=96, 35.8%).

The sample was composed of students who described themselves as White (70.9 %), Black (14.2%), Asian (4.2%), American Indian (1.5%) or Native Hawaiian (0.4%); 7.6% of participants preferred not to identify their race. As far as ethnicity, 43.3% of participants identified themselves as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

For purpose of statistical analysis, participants were grouped into the following race/ethnic groups, White Hispanics (n = 85, 37.4%), White Non-Hispanics (n = 104, 45.8%), and Black Non-Hispanics (n = 38, 16.7%).

Procedure

Data was collected by using an online survey administered in Qualtrics. It included an IRB consent form and three questionnaires (i.e., Demographic information, Self-Construal Scale, SCS, and Self-Disclosure scale, SD). Participants were invited to participate in a study about how they perceived themselves in social situations and how they related to others. The survey took about 30 minutes to complete.

Instruments

The online survey administered to participants consisted of three questionnaires with a total of 229 items.

Demographic Information. The first part of the online questionnaire included 5 demographic questions regarding gender, race, ethnicity, and generation of college attendance. Gender answer options included, "Male," "Female," "Other," and "Prefer not to answer." The question regarding ethnicity asked if the participant was of "Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin" (Yes/No). The item about race included the following answer options, "American Indian or Alaskan Native," "Asian," "Black or African American," Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander," "White," and "Prefer not to answer."

Independent-Interdependent Self. Independent-Interdependent self, IND-INT, was assessed by the *Self-Construal Scale*, *SCS* (Vignoles et al., 2016), which was constructed using items originally developed by Markus & Kitayama (1991), Singelis et al. (1995), and Triandis & Gelfand (1998). The scale consists of 8 subscales, each corresponding to one dimension of the multidimensional model of self: *difference versus similarity*, *self-reliance versus dependence on others*, *self-containment versus connection to others, self-*

interest versus commitment to others, *consistency versus variability*, *self-direction versus receptiveness to influence*, *self-expression versus harmony*, and *de-contextualized vs contextualized self.* Each subscale contains 6 items with 3 of them in reversed wording. Participants rated how well each item described themselves using a 9-point Likert scale with 0.5 answer options ranging from 1 – (*Doesn't describe me at all*) to 5 – (*Describes me exactly*). The *SCS* items were randomized following the order recommended by Vignoles (unpublished). The full 48-items Self-Construal Scale, *SCS,* is included in Appendix A.

Self-Disclosure. The amount of Self-Disclosure, SD, was assessed by a modified version of Jourard's 60-item *Self-Disclosure Questionnaire* (1971). It is a retrospective instrument that measures the amount of self-disclosure individuals share with selected people. The original 60 items in Jourard's questionnaire were reduced to 44 items corresponding to 6 areas of disclosure: *Identity* (14 items), *Relationships* (6 items), *Studies/ Prospective career* (6 items), *Finances* (6 items), *Personality* (6 items), and *Body Image* (6 items). Participants were asked to rate amounts of self-disclosure shared with 4 target people in their lives: Mother/Mother-Like Figure, Father/Father-Like Figure, Closest friend, and Friend/Acquaintance. Of the 44 items, 12 items were designed by researchers to better match the purposes of this study (e.g., items about participants' *Relationships* and *Studies/Prospective Career* were added to match the specific areas of SD that are relevant to the undergraduate student population). Participants responded to each item and each target person using a numerical scale ranging from 0 – (*I have never disclosed this information to this person*) to 2 – (*I have disclosed this information in full detail to this person*). There was also an answer option, X, provided to indicate a

lie/misrepresentation in self-disclosure. The format of administering self-disclosure items across different relationships followed Tsuda's (1985) design to minimize a boredom effect. The SD scale used in this study is included in Appendix B.

III. RESULTS

The responses to demographic variables of race and ethnicity were used to create three ethnicity/race groups with a sufficient number of participants to be included in statistical analysis (i.e., White Non-Hispanics, White Hispanics and Black Non-Hispanics). The mean indexes of IND-INT self from the SCS were computed for the total scale (i.e., SCS total) and for each of the eight subscales. The scores of the reversed SCS items were recoded before the calculation of means so that the higher scores of all IND-INT indexes indicate more independent self. The self-disclosure indexes were calculated as means for specific topic areas and self-disclosure to four target recipients (i.e., a mother/mother-like figure, a father/father-like figure, a close friend, and an acquaintance), and the total mean of self-disclosure. The SPSS software was used to perform all statistical analysis (i.e., Cronbach's alpha tests, t-tests for independent samples and Pearson correlations).

Self-Construal Scale, SCS Reliability

The Cronbach's alpha tests were calculated to assess the internal consistency of overall Self-Construal Scale (SCS) and each of its subscales. The overall reliability of the scale produced Cronbach α = .67; after removing three weakest subscales (i.e., *self-containment vs. connectedness to others*, *consistency vs. variability* and *de-contextualized vs. contextualized self*), internal reliability increased to Cronbach α = .71. The internal reliability of each SCS subscale is presented in Table 1.1.

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Table 1.1: Cronbach's Alphas for 8 Subscales of Self-Construal Scale, SCS

Subscales	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	N
Difference vs. Similarity	.73	.73	267
Self-Containment vs. Connectedness to Others	.61	**.67**	268
Self-Direction vs. Receptiveness to Influence	.71	.71	268
Self-Reliance vs. Dependence on Others	.77	**.79**	268
Self-Expression vs. Harmony	.70	.70	268
Self-interest vs. Commitment to Others	.64	.64	268
Consistency vs Variability	.82	.82	268
De-Contextualized Self vs. Contextualized Self	.68	.68	268

Further analysis showed that the reliability of two subscales, *Self-containment vs. Connectedness to Others* and *Self-Reliance vs. Dependence on Others* could be improved by removing one item from each. Table 1.2 and Table 1.3 show the inter-item

Table 1.2: Inter-Item Correlations of *Self-Containment vs. Connectedness to Others* items

	SC_C1	SC_C2	SC_C3	SC_C4	SC_C5	SC_C6
SC_C1	1	.01	.05	.31	.19	.243
SC_C2	.01	1	.12	.11	**-.03**	.071
SC_C3	.47	.12	1	.37	.30	.210
SC_C4	.31	.11	.37	1	.38	.391
SC_C5	.19	**-.03**	.30	.38	1	.55
SC_C6	.24	.07	.21	.39	.54	1

correlations for these subscales and the highlighted items that if deleted, would result in the higher Cronbach's alphas. As shown in Tables 1.2, if the 5th item of the *Self-Containment vs. Connectedness to Others* subscale (SC_C5) was removed, the Cronbach's alpha of this subscale would increase from .61 to .67 (Table 1.1).

Table 1.3: Inter-Item Correlations of *Self-Reliance vs. Dependence on Others* items

	SR_D1	SR_D2	SR_D3	SR_D4	SR_D5	SR_D6
SR_D1	1	.414	.596	.425	.485	.254
SR_D2	.414	1	.322	.226	.279	.269
SR_D3	.596	.322	1	.417	.477	**.148**
SR_D4	.425	.226	.417	1	.539	.27
SR_D5	.485	.279	.477	.539	1	.27
SR_D6	.254	.269	.148	.27	.27	1

Additionally, if the 6th item in the *Self-Reliance vs Dependence on Others* subscale (SR_D6) was removed (Table 1.3), the Cronbach's alpha for this subscale would increase from .77 to .79 (Table 1.1).

Ethnicity/Race and Independent-Interdependent Self, IND-INT

A one-factor ANOVA for independent samples conducted on the overall IND-INT self (i.e., SCS total) revealed significant differences between the three ethnic/racial groups, $F(2, 225) = 9.23$, $p < .001$. The ANOVA tests repeated on individual SCS subscales showed that the groups differ on all but two subscales; the group differences were not significant only on the *Self-Containment vs. Connectedness* (SC_C) and *De-Contextualized Self vs. Contextualized Self* (DeC_C) subscales. Furthermore, the post hoc

tests (i.e., Hocherg's GT2) demonstrated that the differences are only significant between White Non-Hispanics and Black Non-Hispanics. The t-test results for independent samples comparing only Black and White Non-Hispanics are presented in Table 2. Black Non-Hispanics showed more independent self than White Non-Hispanics on all dimensions of IND-INT but the *Self-Containment vs. Connectedness to Others* and *De-Contextualized vs. Contextualized Self.*

Table 2.1: T-tests for independent samples on SCS Total and 8 SCS subscales

	Black Non-Hispanic		White Non-Hispanic		t-test
	M	SD	M	SD	
SCS Total	3.40	.449	3.11	.382	4.17**
Difference vs. Similarity	3.87	.74	3.46	.611	3.66***
Self-Containment vs. Connectedness to Others	2.47	.815	2.43	.681	.33
Self-Direction vs. Receptiveness to Influence	3.67	.672	3.38	.664	2.44*
Self-Reliance vs. Dependence on Others	3.65	.834	3.35	.826	2.06*
Self-Expression vs. Harmony	3.38	.733	3.02	.747	2.73**
Self-interest vs. Commitment to Others	3.44	.827	2.98	.890	2.92**
Consistency vs. Variability	3.23	.718	2.86	.642	3.21**
De-Contextualized vs .Contextualized Self	3.51	.754	3.42	.717	.76

N = 228 *p < .05   ** p < .01   ***p < .001

Black vs. White Non-Hispanics and Self-Disclosure, SD

Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare Black vs. White Non-Hispanics on self-disclosure (SD) across relationships (i.e., *Mother/mother-like figure, Father/father-like figure, Closest Friend, and Friend/Acquaintance*) and topic areas (i.e., *Identity, Relationships, Studies/Prospective career, Finances, Personality and Body Image*). Only a small number of significant differences were found. There was a significant difference in overall SD about *Relationships* shared by White Non-Hispanics (M= 1.26, SD= 0.42) vs. Black Non-Hispanics (M= 1.09, SD= 0.46), t(140) = 2.10, p < .05. Further results showed that the group differences in SD about *Relationships* are present in communication with friends but not with parents. The self-disclosure with a *Closest Friend*, revealed a significant difference in SD about *Relationships,* t(140) = 2.06, p < .05 (White Non-Hispanics M= 1.62, SD = 0.42 vs. Black Non-Hispanics M = 1.44, SD = 0.58) and about *Personality*, t(140) = 1.97, p < .05 (White Non-Hispanics M = 1.52, SD = 0.51 vs. Black Non-Hispanics M = 1.32, SD = 0.64). Similarly, there was a significant difference in SD about *Relationships* shared with a *Friend/Acquaintance*, t(140) = 2.24, p < .05 (White Non-Hispanics M= 0.85, SD= 0.53 vs. Black Non-Hispanics M= 0.62, SD= 0.60).

Correlations between Independent-Interdependent Self, IND-INT, and Self-Disclosure, SD

Pearson correlation tests were used to examine relationships between Independent-Interdependent Self, IND-INT, and Self-Disclosure, SD. The relationship between SCS total (i.e., overall IND-INT) and SD total was not significant. However, significant negative correlations were noted between few SCS subscales and SD total:

Self-Containment vs. Connection to others (r(266) = -.19, p < .01), *Self-reliance vs.*

Dependence on others (r(266) = -.23, p < .001) and *Self-interest vs. Commitment to*

others (r(266) = -.13, p < .05). The significant positive correlations were found with *Self-*

expression vs. Harmony (r(266) = .14, p < .05 and *Consistency vs. Variability* (r(266)

= .19, p < .01. With only minor variations, this general pattern of correlations was

detected in communication across all targets of SD and topic areas.

IV DISSCUSSION

Ethnicity/Race and Independent-Interdependent Self, IND-INT

Our research findings were not consistent with the hypothesis that higher degrees

of independence (IND) correlated with greater self-disclosure compared to higher degrees

of interdependence (INT). For example, Black Non-Hispanics showed significantly

higher IND than White Non-Hispanics on almost all of the IND-INT dimensions except

for *Self-Containment vs. Connectedness* and *De-Contextualized Self vs. Contextualized*

Self. Although these results do not support our hypothesis, they could be related to

previous findings of African Americans scoring higher amounts of individualism than

European Americans. For example, when using four different assessments- binary

assessments of IND-COL, and assessments measuring the four constructs, HI, VI, HC,

VC- Coon and Kemmelmeir (2001) found that African-Americans had higher scores of

individualism compared to European Americans. In their study, they discuss that these

results could be due to increased individualization which is used to cope with negative

responses from society (i.e., past injustices in history, current racism, etc). This is an

interesting potential influence on our results as Black Non-Hispanics disclosed less information about Relationships to a *Friend/Acquaintance* than White Non-Hispanics.

Black vs. White Non-Hispanics and Self-Disclosure, SD

Black Non-Hispanics disclosed less information about Relationships to a *Friend/Acquaintance* than White Non-Hispanics, which could potentially result from the necessity to cope with negativity previously discussed (Coon and Kemmelmeir, 2001). These results do not support the hypothesis that Non-Hispanic Whites disclose more information than African-Americans. However, they do support previous studies as a similar pattern was shown in types of information disclosed across ethnicities in the U.S. For example, in Berry-Cyprian et al.'s study (2017) it was found that less Black/ African-American participants reported sharing personal information to friends, while more White/ Caucasian participants reported sharing personal information to friends. Similarly, our study shows that Black Non-Hispanics disclosed less information about Relationships and Personality to a *Closest Friend*. Therefore, our results of Black Non-Hispanics displaying less amounts of SD about select topics to a *Friend/Acquaintance* and a *Closet Friend* compared to White Non-Hispanics supports previous findings on SD patterns.

Correlations between Independent-Interdependent Self, IND-INT, and Self-Disclosure, SD

Weak correlations between specific dimensions of IND-INT and specific SD dimensions in relationships were found. Although some correlations were positive (i.e., *Self-expression vs. Harmony* and *Consistency vs. Variability*), there were also negative correlations (i.e., *Self-Containment vs. Connection to others, Self-reliance vs. Dependence on others*, and *Self-interest vs. Commitment to others*) which does not

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support the hypothesis that the dimensions of IND-INT self would reveal positive

correlations with SD. These results imply that although significant, there is a weak

relationship between IND-INT and SD. These differences in results are potentially a

result of historical changes in the studied population. For example, in Chen's 1995, it was

proposed that individualists disclosed more information than collectivists. However, it

has been several decades since this research was conducted and individuals in the U.S

have changed. Additionally, previous studies (e.g., Chen, 1995; Cozma, 2011) examined

correlations in cross-cultural populations which provide greater differences, creating

stronger correlations. Dissimilarly, our study examined correlations within the U.S,

which provided smaller differences between ethnicity/race groups, creating weaker

correlations.

Limitations and Directions for Future Studies

These results could potentially stem from uneven representation of gender and

ethnicity/race groups. For example, there were 83.95% females and 15.29% males in the

study. While there is enough variance in these groups to support our findings, it would be

beneficial to obtain a larger group of male participants to further examine the effects

between gender conditions and Independent-Interdependent Self (IND-INT), which

would reveal additional relationships between gender, IND-INT, and self-disclosure

(SD). Similarly, only 14.2% of participants identified as Black, while 70.9% of

participants identified as White. The unbalanced proportion of females to males and

ethnic groups may influence the results of the correlation between IND-INT and SD

(Schwartz et al., 2011; Tsuda, 1985). In the future, more male and minority participants

should be obtained in order to further gather information about SD patterns among minorities and SD patterns across gender conditions.

      This study also analyzed the reliability of the IND-INT Self-Construal Scale (SCS). The outcomes of Cronbach's alphas showed marginally acceptable reliability and identified specific items that if removed, would improve the scale's internal consistency. Future research should further examine psychometric properties of SCS and attempt to replicate our reliability findings on more representative samples of diverse populations in the U.S. (i.e., not solely undergraduate participants). Therefore, with further analyzation, the relationships between IND-INT and SD can be better examined, which can provide better insight of the cultural-self for future cross-cultural studies.

Appendix A

Self-Construal Scale (Vignoles et al., 2016) used to assess Independent-Interdependent

Self, IND-INT. Italicized items have reversed wording (abbreviations with asterisks).

Legend

S_D - Similarity vs Difference subscale
SC_C - Self-containment versus Connection to others
SD_R - Self-Direction versus Receptiveness to influence
SE_H - Self-expression versus Harmony
C_V - Consistency versus Variability
SI_C - Self-interest versus commitment to others
SR_D - Self-Reliance versus Dependence on others
DeC_C - De-contextualized vs Contextualized self

Below are some statements that someone might use to try to describe you. Probably some of the statements will not describe you well, whereas others will describe you better. Please choose a number under each statement to show how well it describes you. For example, if the statement doesn't describe you at all, then choose 1. If the statement describes you very well, then choose 4. If you are undecided between two possible answers, you can choose the number in between (1.5, 2.5, 3.5, 4.5).

How well does each statement describe you?

doesn't describe me at all		describes me a little		describes me moderately		describes me very well		describes me exactly
1	1½	**2**	2½	**3**	3½	**4**	4½	**5**

1	*You like being similar to other people.*	**S_D***
2	*If someone in your family achieves something, you feel proud as if you had achieved something yourself.*	**SC_S***
3	You always make your own decisions about important matters, even if others might not approve of what you decide.	**SD_R**
4	You show your true feelings even if it disturbs the harmony in your family relationships.	**SE_H**
5	You see yourself the same way even in different social environments.	**C_V**
6	Your happiness is independent from the happiness of your family.	**SC_S**
7	*You usually ask your family for approval before making a decision.*	**SD_R***

8	Someone could understand who you are without needing to know about your social standing.	**DeC_C**
9	You tend to rely on yourself rather than seeking help from others.	**SR_D**
10	*You prefer to preserve harmony in your relationships, even if this means not expressing your true feelings.*	**SE_H***
11	You usually give priority to your personal goals, before thinking about the goals of others.	**SI_C**
12	*If someone wants to understand who you are, they would need to know about the place where you live.*	**DeC_C***
13	You would not feel personally insulted if someone insulted a member of your family.	**SC_S**
14	*In difficult situations, you tend to seek help from others rather than relying only on yourself.*	**SR_D***
15	You behave in a similar way at home and in public.	**C_V**
16	Someone could understand who you are without needing to know about your place of origin.	**DeC__C**
17	You like being different from other people.	**S_D**
18	*If someone insults a member of your family, you feel as if you have been insulted personally.*	**SC_S***
19	*You usually follow others' advice when making important choices.*	**SD_R***
20	*You try to adapt to people around you, even if it means hiding your feelings.*	**SE_H***
21	Your own success is very important to you, even if it disrupts your friendships.	**SI_C**
22	*You act very differently at home compared to how you act in public.*	**C_V***
23	*If someone wants to understand who you are, they would need to know which social groups you belong to.*	**DeC_C***
24	*You see yourself as similar to others.*	**S_D***
25	*You value good relations with the people close to you more than your personal achievements.*	**SI_C***
26	You see yourself as unique and different from others.	**S_D**
27	*If a close friend or family member is sad, you feel the sadness as if it were your own.*	**SC_S***
28	You decide for yourself what goals to pursue even if they are very different from what your family would expect.	**SD_R**
29	*Being able to depend on others is very important to you.*	**SR_D***

30	You protect your own interests, even if it might sometimes disrupt your family relationships.	**SI_C**
31	You behave in the same way even when you are with different people.	**C_V**
32	*You would rather be the same as others than be different.*	**S_D***
33	*You usually do what people expect of you, rather than decide for yourself what to do.*	**SD_R***
34	You prefer to rely completely on yourself rather than depend on others.	**SR_D**
35	You prefer to express your thoughts and feelings openly, even if it may sometimes cause conflict.	**SE_H**
36	*You usually give priority to others, before yourself.*	**SI_C***
37	*You behave differently when you are with different people.*	**C_V***
38	*If someone wants to understand who you are, they would need to know about your place of origin.*	**DeC_C***
39	You try to avoid being the same as others.	**S_D**
40	*If a close friend or family member is happy, you feel the happiness as if it were your own.*	**SC_S***
41	You usually decide on your own actions, rather than follow others' expectations.	**SD_R**
42	Someone could understand who you are without needing to know which social groups you belong to.	**DeC_C**
43	*You prefer to ask other people for help rather than rely only on yourself.*	**SR_D***
44	*You try not to express disagreement with members of your family.*	**SE_H***
45	You try to avoid being reliant on others.	**SR_D**
46	You like to discuss your own ideas, even if it might sometimes upset the people around you.	**SE_H**
47	*You would sacrifice your personal interests for the benefit of your family.*	**SI_C***
48	*You see yourself differently when you are with different people.*	**C_V***

Appendix B

Self-Disclosure scale based on Jourard's Self-Disclosure Questionnaire (Tsuda, 1985).

Legend

Idenitity (items 1-14)
Relationships (items 15-20)
Studies/Prospective Career (items 21-26)
Finances (items 27-32)
Personality (items 33-38)
Body Image (items 39- 44)

Use the rating scale shown below to describe the extent that you have talked about each item/issue to a Mother/Mother-like Figure, Father/Father-like Figure, Closest Friend, and Friend/ Acquaintance.

0: I have **told** her/him **nothing** about this aspect of me.
1: I have **talked in general terms** about this. The other she/he has only a general idea about this aspect of me.
2: I have **talked in full and complete detail** about this item to the other person. She/he knows me fully in this respect and could describe me accurately.
X: I have **lied** or **misrepresented myself** to her/him so that they have a **false picture of me**.

Please place a 0, 1, 2, or X in each column as it pertains to the question. **If you are using a mobile device, please make sure to scroll horizontally to type an answer in all 4 columns.**

#	QUESTION	MOTHER/ MOTHER-LIKE FIGURE	FATHER/ FATHER-LIKE FIGURE	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAINTANCE
1	What I think and feel about religion; my personal religious views.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
What I think and feel about other religions I am not affiliated with (e.g., Muslims, Jews, Protestants, Catholics, atheists)	What I think and feel about my race & ethnic heritage.	What I think and feel about other race & ethnic groups.	How I feel that I ought to behave in sexual matters.	How I feel that others ought to behave in sexual matters.	Things in the past that I feel ashamed and guilty about.	Things in the past that I feel proud of.	Things that I presently feel ashamed and guilty about.	Things that I presently feel proud of.	My positive views on the present government —the president, government policies, etc.	My negative views on the present government —the president, government policies, etc.
MOTHER/ MOTHER	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**
FATHER/ FATHER-	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**
CLOSEST FRIEND	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**
FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**

#	Prompt				
13	Positive things on my social media.	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**
14	Negative things on my social media.	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**
15	What makes me happy about important relationship s in my life.	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**
16	What makes me stressed about important relationship s in my life.	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**
17	Conflict with important people in my life.	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**
18	Impressive stories of important people in my life (e.g., their prestigious work or school attended, admired qualities or activities etc.)	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**
19	My positive thoughts and feelings about my relationship with close family.	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**
20	My negative thoughts and feelings about my relationship with close family.	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**
21	What I find to be the worst pressures and strains in my studies.	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**
22	My ambitions and goals in my studies.	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**
23	What I find to be the most boring and unenjoyable aspects of my studies.	**MOTHER/ MOTHER**	**FATHER/ FATHER-**	**CLOSEST FRIEND**	**FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA**

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Item	Statement				
24	What I enjoy most and get the most satisfaction from in my present studies.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA
25	What makes me feel anxious about my prospective career.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA
26	What I feel are my special strong points and qualifications in my prospective career.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA
27	How much money I make at my work or get as an allowance.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA
28	My worries about financial issues.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA
29	Whether or not I owe money; if so, how much.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA
30	Whether or not I have savings, and the amount.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA
31	My most pressing need for money right now (e.g., outstanding bills, some major purchase that is needed).	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA
32	How I budget my money—the proportion that goes to necessities, luxuries, etc.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA
33	The aspects of my personality that I dislike, that I worry about.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA
34	The aspects of my personality that I like, that I am proud to have.	MOTHER/ MOTHER	FATHER/ FATHER-	CLOSEST FRIEND	FRIEND/ ACQUAIN TA

No.	Description	Response options
35	Things, people, or events that make me feel depressed and blue.	MOTHER/MOTHER; FATHER/FATHER-; CLOSEST FRIEND; FRIEND/ACQUAIN TA
36	Things, people, or events that make me really happy.	MOTHER/MOTHER; FATHER/FATHER-; CLOSEST FRIEND; FRIEND/ACQUAIN TA
37	Things, people, or events that make me feel worried, anxious and afraid.	MOTHER/MOTHER; FATHER/FATHER-; CLOSEST FRIEND; FRIEND/ACQUAIN TA
38	Things, people, or events that make me become less anxious and relieved.	MOTHER/MOTHER; FATHER/FATHER-; CLOSEST FRIEND; FRIEND/ACQUAIN TA
39	My positive feelings about the appearance of my face—things that I like about my face and head—nose, eyes, hair, teeth, etc.	MOTHER/MOTHER; FATHER/FATHER-; CLOSEST FRIEND; FRIEND/ACQUAIN TA
40	My negative feelings about the appearance of my face—features that I wish I could change about my face and head—nose, eyes, hair, teeth, etc.	MOTHER/MOTHER; FATHER/FATHER-; CLOSEST FRIEND; FRIEND/ACQUAIN TA
41	My positive feelings about different parts of my body—things that I like about my body—legs, hips, waist, weight, chest, or bust, etc.	MOTHER/MOTHER; FATHER/FATHER-; CLOSEST FRIEND; FRIEND/ACQUAIN TA
42	My negative feelings about different parts of my body—things that I wish I could change about my body—legs, hips, waist, weight, chest, or bust, etc.	MOTHER/MOTHER; FATHER/FATHER-; CLOSEST FRIEND; FRIEND/ACQUAIN TA
43	My worries about any health problems—e.g., trouble with sleep, digestion, female complaints, heart condition, allergies, headaches, pills, etc.	MOTHER/MOTHER; FATHER/FATHER-; CLOSEST FRIEND; FRIEND/ACQUAIN TA
44	Whether or not I make special efforts to keep fit, healthy, and attractive, e.g., physical exercises, eating regiments, special diets, hair/beauty treatments.	MOTHER/MOTHER; FATHER/FATHER-; CLOSEST FRIEND; FRIEND/ACQUAIN TA

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