

**Factor Pattern of Auckland Individualism-
Collectivism Questionnaire:
A Study of Turkish Sample**

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to investigate the validity of the Auckland Individualism-Collectivism Questionnaire in Turkish cultural context. The sample was comprised of 2720 participants, of whom 1314 were women and 1406 men. The questionnaire was developed by Shulruf, Hattie and Dixon (2007), and consisted of 28 items which were rated on a five point Likert scale. It was used as a measurement tool for assessing individualistic and collectivistic attitudes of the participants. The data that were analyzed by the Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation yielded six factors as in the original instrument. Consequently, all dimensions showed consistency with the original scale and these findings revealed the validation of the scale for the Turkish sample. This implication has also supported the efforts of testing a new individualism-collectivism measurement tool for extensive variety of populations.

Keywords: Individualism-Collectivism, Cultural Attributes, Measurement

Literature Review

The idea of contrasting societies on the basis of differences in individualism has increased in popularity in the past 30 years, especially, because of the well known and influential work of Geert Hofstede (Oyserman, Coon and Kimmelmeier, 2002). Although academic studies of many social scientists focused explicitly on culture (e.g., Hui, 1988; Chan, 1994; Yamaguchi, 1994; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto and Norasakkunkit, 1997), Hofstede's model became the most popular one because of its ability in organizing cultural differences into overarching patterns which facilitated comparative and cross-cultural research (Oyserman et al., 2002). In his famous studies, Hofstede (1980; 1983; 1991) argued that there were four major dimensions that could be used to classify societies according to their cultural attributes: individualism-collectivism, power-distance, masculinity-femininity, and uncertainty-avoidance. Among these four dimensions, especially individualism and collectivism caused concern in behavioral sciences. The reason of getting so much interest was not only because of their widespread usage of these critical attributes in explaining cultural differences of various societies, but also their difficulty in measurement. Hofstede (1980) defined individualism *"as a focus on rights above duties, a concern for oneself and immediate family, an emphasis on personal autonomy and self-fulfillment, and the basting on one's personal accomplishments"*. Individualism was conceptualized as the opposite of collectivism (Hui, 1988) and the core element of individualism is the assumption that *"individuals are independent of one another"* (Oyserman et al., 2002). In the majority of the studies related to issue, the most salient feature of individualism has valued personal independence. Personal independence involves some subcomponents such as personal achievement, self knowledge, uniqueness, privacy, clear communication and competition (Shulruf, Hattie and Dixon, 2007). Most of the academics (e.g., Kim, Triandis, Kagitcibasi, Choi, and Yoon, 1994;

Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, and Gelfand, 1995; Andersen, Reznik, and Chen, 1997; Holtgraves, 1997; Chiou, 2001) agree that individualists are more likely to prioritize the self and consider themselves as unique and are likely to have a direct communication style including a *"higher likelihood of using I more than we"* (Shulruf et al., 2007).

When collectivism and its subcomponents were explored, it can be seen that the majority of the studies related collectivism to a sense of duty to group, relatedness to others, seeking others' advice, harmony and working with the group (Shulruf et al., 2007). Oyserman et al. (2002) states the core element of collectivism with the assumption that *"groups bind and mutually obligate individuals"*. According to Shulruf et al. (2007), *"collectivists identify themselves as members of a group to which they belong and are more likely to internalize the group's goals and values and give these higher priority"*. The common view about the communication style of the collectivists is characterized by a tendency to use indirect language and the desire to keep harmony within the group (Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1996; Kwan, Bond and Singelis, 1997; Oyserman et al., 2002).

Measurement of individualism and collectivism has always been a controversial issue in social psychology. Moreover, Oyserman et al. (2002) claimed that there was no current measurement tool that might assess the critical attributes of individualism and collectivism. Hofstede (1980) measured these two dimensions at the country level rather than at the individual level and categorized western societies as individualistic whereas Africa, Middle East, East Asia and South Africa as collectivistic. Most of the social scientists engaged in the issue (Freeberg and Stein, 1996; Rhee, Uleman and Lee, 1996; Inglehart, 1997; Sampson, 2001) also supported Hofstede by assuming that individualism is more prevalent in industrialized Western societies than in other societies, especially more traditional societies in developing countries. Inglehart (1997)

explained this situation with Protestantism and the process of civic emancipation in Western societies. According to Sampson (2001), Protestantism and civic emancipation process championed the role of individual choice, personal freedom and self-actualization in Western societies. So, with this level of analysis, the United States and the European countries are commonly assumed as higher in individualism and lower in collectivism than any other countries in the world. But this choice of the level of analysis has been criticized by some academics (e.g. Baskerville, 2003; Oyserman et al., 2002; Spector, Cooper and Sparks, 2001) who noted that the lack of stability of his findings influenced by the economic and historical circumstances of the years in which the study was carried out and stated the necessity of another scale to measure individualism-collectivism.

Assessment of Individualism and Collectivism

The first effort to develop a new scale in measuring individualism and collectivism came from Hui in 1988. Hui (1988) used a 63-item questionnaire for measuring the constructs such as, social interest, need for approval, obligation-intention correspondence, and responsibility sharing, but the scale did not have high estimates of reliability. Singelis et al.'s (1995) a 32-item measure of individualism and collectivism scale followed Hui's scale. Although Singelis et al.'s (1995) scale showed a higher reliability compared to Hui's, both scales were faulted by having the responses of the individuals based on the attitudes, values and beliefs of their daily lives. Schwarz and Oyserman (2001) suggested that "*respondents may not be able to provide valid reports in such a generalized manner as their responses may be sensitive to differences in contexts*". Schwarz and Oyserman (2001) also stated that "*collectivism and individualism might be expressed differently across contexts*". The recent effort to establish a reliable and easy-to-use measurement tool for individualism and collectivism, which avo-

ids weaknesses of previous tools (Oyserman et al., 2002; Heine, Lehman, Peng and Greenholtz, 2002) came from Shulruf et al. in 2007. Shulruf et al. (2007) attempted to avoid cultural deprivation bias and the confounding influence of familialism in developing their scale. The instrument, based on the major dimensions outlined in the Oyserman et al.'s (2002) meta-analysis, was called as Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale (AICS). Having redefined the sub-components of the individualism and collectivism, the scale indicated three dimensions of individualism: competitiveness, uniqueness and responsibility. The measure also showed three dimensions of collectivism: harmony, advice, closeness.

Method

The development of the measurement tool for individualism and collectivism was based on the Shulruf, Hattie and Dixon's (2007) study. In the present study a total of 28 items were used and randomly ordered in the scale. The instrument used a 5 point Likert type interval scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) in order to measure individualism and collectivism. The whole scale indicated .75 Cronbach-Alpha reliability coefficients.

Sample

The sample was drawn both from undergraduate students and from various business sectors. A total of 2720 respondents participated in the study. Of the 800 (29%) participants who reported themselves as students mostly were studying at several faculties at Yeditepe University in Istanbul. 1920 participants (71%) were white collar employees. The total sample was composed of 1314 females (48.3%) and 1406 males (51.7%). The age range was quite large: 217 (8%) were between 17 and 20 years of age, 1556 (57%) were between 21 and 30, 489 (18%) were between 31 and 40, 291 (11%) were between 41 and 50 and 164 (6%) were older than 50. The mean age was 30.

Results

Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation was conducted to understand the factor structure of the items. The initial factor analysis of the 28 items explained six factors. Whilst the first factor included the items relating to competition, the second factor included the items pertaining to advice seeking, mostly from family members. The items related to uniqueness were loaded on the third factor and the ones related to harmony were loaded on the fourth factor. The fifth factor included items relating to responsibility and the sixth factor consisted of items expressing belonging and feeling duty to a group. A total of seven items never related, nor were they loaded to any further factor. For this reason, these seven items were excluded from further analyses. Further factor analysis with the remaining 21 items clearly loaded on six factors. The reliability analysis of these 21 items revealed a satisfactory Cronbach-Alpha coefficient with .72. These six factors can be grouped into two higher-order categories. Three of these factors related to individualism (Competitiveness, Uniqueness, and Responsibility) and the other three factors related to collectivism (Advice, Harmony, Closeness). The Cronbach-Alpha reliability coefficients for each factor were .80 for Competitiveness, .73 for Advice, .60 for Uniqueness, .55 for Harmony, .53 for Responsibility, and .50 for Closeness. The factor pattern and correlation matrices are shown in Table 1. and Table 2., respectively. The correlations between the factors indicate that each dimension is distinct and making a unique contribution to the overall pattern.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to investigate the validity of AICS as a measurement tool for assessing individualism-collectivism in Turkish cultural context. The important finding from the factor analysis was the existence of six distinct factors, three relating to collectivism (Advice, Harmony, Closeness) and three to individualism (Competitiveness, Uniqueness, Responsibility).

The factor Uniqueness included four items, although the reliability was less than expected, factor loading scores can be meaningfully interpreted. The privacy items (e.g., "I like my privacy") were expected to load on this factor, but this did not occur. The final model included items clearly related to Uniqueness as a personal attribute (e.g., "I see myself as 'my own person'") and excluded items implying separation from the society (e.g., "No matter what a group decide it is important that I remain true to my self"). Uniqueness dimension was consistent with Oyserman et al.'s (2002) implication that it is well established as one of the critical attributes relating to individualists (Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1995; Triandis and Gelfand, 1998).

Three items loaded on the Responsibility factor, and these items related to different aspects of responsibility, such as accountability ("I take responsibility to my own actions") self-sacrifice ("It is my duty to take care of my family even when I have to sacrifice what I want"), and autonomy ("Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me").

The items in the Harmony factor were related to avoiding conflicts. The tendency to avoid conflicts with others relates to compliance and obedience to the rules of the social structure, along with consideration of the social status and relationships with others. The inclusion of items such as "In interaction with superiors, I am always polite," "It is important to consider the needs of those who work above me," and "It is important to make a good impression on one's manager" provides strong support to the sense of avoidance of conflicts both in family and work context.

The items loaded under the Closeness factor items related to duty and privacy. Closeness related to the wish to share feelings ("I reveal personal things about myself") and/or the group duties ("I help acquaintances, even if it is inconvenient"). This is in line with previous studies that defined collectivists as people who value belonging to the

Table 1.
Factor Analysis of Auckland Individualism-Collectivism Scale

	Factor Loadings					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Factor 1: COMPETITIVENESS						
I enjoy working in situations involving competition with others	.800					
Competition is the law of nature	.765					
I define myself as a competitive person	.761					
Without competition, it is not possible to have a good society	.758					
Factor 2: ADVICE						
I consult my parents before making an important decision		.780				
I discuss job or study-related problems with my parents		.764				
I consult my family before making an important decision		.705				
Before making a major trip, I consult with ... my family and many friends		.598				
Factor 3: UNIQUENESS						
I consider myself as a unique person separate from others			.678			
I enjoy being unique and different from others			.645			
It is important for me to act as an independent person			.612			
When faced with ... problem it is better to decide for myself than ... advice of others			.528			
Factor 4: HARMONY						
In interacting with superiors, I am always polite				.690		
It is important to consider the needs of those who work above me				.514		
It is important to make a good impression on one's manager				.502		
Factor 5: RESPONSIBILITY						
It is my duty to take care of my family even when I have to sacrifice what I want					.719	
I take responsibility for my own actions					.641	
Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me					.613	
Factor 6: CLOSENESS						
To me pleasure is spending time with others						.578
I reveal personal things about myself						.560
I help acquaintances, even if it is inconvenient						.537
Percentage of Explained Variance	14.49	10.36	6.82	6.31	4.97	4.38
Total Variance						47.33
Factor's Cronbach-Alpha Reliability Coefficient	.80	.73	.60	.55	.53	.50
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy						.80
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square Sphericity						13356.01*

*P<.001

Table 2.
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Between the Factors

Factors	N	Mean	Dev.	St.						
				1	2	3	4	5	6	
1 Competitiveness	2717	3.69	.90	.90	—					
2 Advice	2713	3.19	.83	.03	—					
3 Uniqueness	2715	3.44	.73	.21**	-.02	—				
4 Harmony	2718	4.02	.69	.20**	.26**	.10**	—			
5 Responsibility 2717	4.37	.63	.28**	.14**	.17**	.37**	—			
6 Closeness	2718	3.05	.71	.06	.23**	.11**	.08*	.02	—	

*P<0.05 **P<0.01

group (Fiske, 1992; Hofstede, 1980; Kim et al., 1994; Markus and Kitayama, 1991) and who are sensitive to other in-group members and take into account the needs of others (Triandis, 1996).

The items in the Competitiveness factor did not include goal items. Competitiveness was part of the individualism scales. It seems that both individualists and collectivists can respond to the goal items in different ways, which often overlap each other. It is noted that the final set of items only related to Competitiveness. Seeking advice, avoiding conflicts, liking competition, sense of uniqueness, and sense of responsibility are all personal traits that do not depend on social situations.

The measurement tool used in this study is found to be a reliable measure for collectivism and individualism. However, the focus of the investigation was on the subscales of the instrument rather than on the collectivism and individualism dimensions. The reason for that was because collectivism and individualism could not be used as a reliable measure to distinguish between cultures, as the results from different studies are inconclusive (Fiske, 2002; Heine et al., 2002; Oyserman et al., 2002; Voronov and Singer, 2002). For example, in their meta-analysis, Oyserman et al. (2002) found that there was no statistically significant difference in individualism between European Americans

and Indonesians or between Australians and Germans. Moreover, European Americans were found to be lower in individualism than more than half of the countries in Latin America. Furthermore, Oyserman et al. (2002) found that European Americans were higher on collectivism than were residents from New Zealand, France, Singapore, Tanzania, Egypt, Costa Rica, Japan, and Venezuela and were not significantly different in collectivism from Koreans.

Triandis (2001) reviewed a number of studies that did not find significant differences on collectivism or individualism scales (e.g., Filipino vs. U.S. students did not differ on collectivism scale). Triandis (2001:920) stated that "we need to study the constructs, taking the domain into account, and examining how acculturation results in different patterns of individualism and collectivism in each society".

As a result, the AICS can be considered as an easy-to-use and reliable tool for assessing collectivism and individualism. The AICS is related more to frequency of behavior and thus is less affected by context issues. The present study shows an example of extensive variety of population based on a sample of 2720 participants.

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