A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON OF SELF-MONITORING

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This study examined the goodness of fit of three alternative models of self-monitoring to data collected in five cultures (two individualistic and three collectivistic cultures) and the influence of individualism-collectivism on self-monitoring. It was predicted that the 18-item unidimensional self-monitoring scale is the best fit among the three and individualistic cultures exhibit higher self-monitoring than collectivistic cultures. Data were collected from respondents in the United States, Australia (individualistic cultures) and Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan (collectivistic cultures). Results supported the predictions. The data suggest, however, that it is necessary to develop self-monitoring measures which are sensitive across cultures.

SNYDER (1974) characterizes self-monitoring as "self-observation and self-control guided by situational cues to social appropriateness" (p. 526). He goes on to argue that "the self-monitoring individual is one who, out of concern for social appropriateness, is particularly sensitive to the expression and self-presentation of others in social situations and uses those cues as guidelines for monitoring his (or her) own self-presentation" (p. 528).

Snyder (1974) developed a 25-item instrument to measure self-monitoring that includes true-false descriptive statements. He assumed that the self-monitoring scale is unidimensional. This assumption, however, has been called into question by several studies. Briggs, Cheek, and Buss (1980), for example, found three factors in the scale that they labeled acting, extroversion, and other-directedness. Tobey and Tunnel (1981) found the same factors in the United States, and Iwabuchi, Tanaka, and Nakazata (1982) found similar factors in Japan, but the items loading on the factors varied somewhat. Gabrenya and Arkin (1980), in contrast, discovered four factors: theatrical acting ability, sociability/social anxiety, other-directedness, and speaking ability. Dillard, Hunter, and Burgoon's (in press) research also revealed four factors: extraversion, sociability, other-directedness, and acting. These findings are consistent with Briggs and Cheek's (1986) argument that the self-monitoring scale is not unidimensional, but rather there are at least three factors to self-monitoring.

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Snyder and Gangestad (1986) argued that studies finding more than one factor have used rotated factor structures, rather than unrotated structures, which are appropriate when the scale is unidimensional. They suggested a "new" 18-item version of the self-monitoring scale that accounts for a majority of the common variance (62% with three factors extracted) and has higher reliability (.70 *alpha*) than the original 25-item instrument. Gudykunst, Yang, and Nishida's (1987) cross-cultural study of self-monitoring revealed that the 18-item version of the self-monitoring scale provided the best fit across cultures (United States, Japan, and Korea) when compared to the 25-item one dimensional and three-factor solutions. This suggests Hypothesis 1: the 18-item unidimensional scale is the best fit to data, the 25-item version is the next best fit, and the 25-item three-factor instrument is the least best fit.

Gudykunst et al. (1987) argued that individualism should influence self-monitoring. Cultures high on individualism focus on the self, not others. In individualistic cultures, knowing the context is not necessary to predict others' behavior. Cultures low on individualism (i.e., collectivist cultures), in contrast, value conformity to ingroups and group memberships. In collectivistic cultures, knowing the context and social status of the other person is essential to predicting his or her behavior.

On the surface, it might appear that highly individualistic cultures would reinforce low self-monitoring, and collectivistic cultures would reinforce high self-monitoring (see Snyder, 1987, for a statement of this position). This, however, is not the case if Snyder's (1974) conceptualization and measure of self-monitoring are used. Snyder (1979) reviewed research on self-monitoring, concluding that high self-monitors imagine what the *prototypic* person for the situation would be and try to be that person, while low self-monitors "draw upon an enduring self-image or self-conception that represents knowledge of her or his characteristic actions in the behavioral domains most relevant to the situation" (p. 103). Members of collectivistic cultures' self-conceptions include their relationships with others present in the situation and the context influences how they define themselves. People in collectivistic cultures therefore, must take the context and status relationships into consideration when deciding how to behave in a particular situation. This suggests that behavior in collectivistic cultures is not based on how a *prototypic* person would behave in the situation. In other words, people in collectivistic culture are not high self-monitors given Snyder's conceptualization and measurement of this concept.

Results of Gudykunst, et al. (1987) supported this conclusion. They found that respondents in the United States sample reported significantly higher levels of self-monitoring than those in the Japanese and the Korean samples and that these two samples did not differ significantly in level of self-monitoring. Consistent with their predictions, members of cultures high on the individualism dimension engaged in more self-monitoring than individuals from cultures low on this dimension (i.e., collectivistic cultures). Hypothesis 2, therefore, predicts that individualism influences self-monitoring. Given the scores on this dimension, self-monitoring should be higher in the United States and Australia than in Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

METHOD

Respondents for the study included 224 students (110 males and 114 females) from a large southwestern university in the United States, 194 students (70 males and 124 females) from a moderate-sized Australian university, 221 students (117 males and 104 females) from a moderate-sized Japanese university, 211 students (102 males and 109 females) from a large university in Hong Kong, and 192 students (85 males and 107 females) from a moderate-sized university in Taiwan. The average ages of the respondents in the five samples were: United

States = 22.17, Australia = 21.05, Japan = 19.67, Hong Kong = 19.15, and Taiwan = 21.80. There were no significant differences among the samples on any of the demographic variables measured.

Snyder's (1974) 25-item self-monitoring scale was included as part of a larger questionnaire. The scale was translated into Japanese and Chinese and back-translated to ensure equivalency. The items were presented using Snyder's original true-false format.

RESULTS

The dimensional structure of self-monitoring was assessed by confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1984). Table 1 presents the items for the self-monitoring scale. Three alternative models were compared. The previous studies of the scale's construct validity (Briggs et al., 1980;, Dillard et al., 1984; Gabrenya & Arkin, 1980; Iwabuchi, Tanaka, & Nakagata, 1982; Tobey & Tunnel, 1981) reported different item loadings for the various factors found. Rather than compare the specific factors found in each of the previous studies, the first three studies were compared for common items. Items common to at least two of the three studies were utilized. This resulted in five items (12, 14, 21, 22, 23) defining the extraversion factors, 10 items (2, 3, 7, 9, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 25) defining other-directedness, and four items (5, 8, 18, 20) defining the acting dimension. The first model tested, therefore, was a correlated three-factor model. The first alternative model was the unidimensional 25-item model suggested by Snyder (1974) and the final model was the unidimensional 18-item model presented by Snyder and Gangestad (1986).

The three-factor model provided an acceptable fit across cultures: United States — χ^2 = 518.08, df = 278, χ^2/df = 1.86, GFI = .85; Australia — χ^2 = 488.12, df = 278, χ^2/df = 1.76, GFI = .84; Japan — χ^2 = 601.36, df = 278, χ^2/df = 2.16, GFI = .82; Hong Kong — χ^2 = 518.46, df = 278, χ^2/df = 1.86, GFI = .83; and Taiwan — χ^2 = 499.13, df = 278, χ^2/df = 1.80, GFI = .82. Correlations between the factors were: United States — .03 to -.73; Australia — -.06 to -.40; Japan — .31 to -.64; Hong Kong — .26 to -.89; and Taiwan — .06 to -.45.

The 25-item one-factor model also was an acceptable fit across cultures: United States — χ^2 = 505.84, df = 275, χ^2/df = 1.84, GFI = .83; Australia — χ^2 = 566.89, df = 275, χ^2/df = 2.06, GFI = .79; Japan — χ^2 = 541.27, df = 275, χ^2/df = 1.97, GFI = .83;, Hong Kong — χ^2 = 477.15, df = 275, χ^2/df = 1.74, GFI = .81; and Taiwan — χ^2 = 482.47, df = 275, χ^2/df = 1.75, GFI = .81.

The 18-item one-factor model also yielded an acceptable fit across cultures: United States — χ^2 = 265.53, df = 135, χ^2/df = 1.97, GFI = .87; Australia — χ^2 = 330.60, df = 135, χ^2/df = 2.45, GFI = .82; Japan — χ^2 = 245.43, df = 135, χ^2/df = 1.82, GFI = .89; Hong Kong — χ^2 = 218.54, df = 135, χ^2/df = 1.62, GFI = .88; and Taiwan — χ^2 = 271.70, df = 135, χ^2/df = 2.01, GFI = .85. The results for this solution are summarized in Table 1.

In order to compare models, a difference in χ^2 test was computed. The difference in χ^2 test (χ^2_d) is computed by subtracting the χ^2 for a second model ($\chi^2_d = \chi^2_1 - \chi^2_2$). The degrees of freedom for the χ^2_d are computed in a similar fashion ($df_d = df_1 - df_2$).

The three alternative models were compared. In the United States, the 18-item one-factor model was a significantly better fit to the data than the 25-item one-factor model (χ^2_d = 240.31, 140 df, $p < .001$) and the three-factor model (χ^2_d = 252.55, 143 df, $p < .001$). The 25-item one-factor model was a significantly better fit than the three-factor model (χ^2_d = 12.24, 3 df, $p < .01$). Comparison of three alternative models for the Australian sample revealed that the 18-item one-factor model provided a significantly better fit to the data than the 25-item one-factor model (χ^2_d = 236.29, 140 df, $p < .001$) and the three-factor model (χ^2_d = 157.52, 143 df, $p < .001$). The three-

TABLE 1
Standardized Maximum-Likelihood Solution for the 18 Item One-Factor Analysis

18 Items [a]	U.S.	AUSTRALIA	JAPAN	HONG KONG	TAIWAN
1. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people.[b]	-.15	.20	-.17	-.24	.18
2. My behavior is usually an expression of my true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs. (OD)	—	—	—	—	—
3. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to say things that others will like. (OD)[b]	-.05	.04	-.24	-.25	.20
4. I can only argue for ideas which I already believe.[b]	-.10	.11	-.05	-.13	.06
5. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information. (A)	.23	-.17	.10	.12	-.10
6. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain people.	.24	-.17	.25	.23	-.25
7. When I am uncertain how to act in a social situation, I look to the behavior of others for cues. (OD)	—	—	—	—	—
8. I would probably make a good actor. (A)	.29	-.30	-.25	.33	-.29
9. I rarely need the advice of my friends to choose movies, books, or music. (OD)[b]	—	—	—	—	—
10. I sometimes appear to others to be experiencing deeper emotions than I actually am.	—	—	—	—	—
11. I laugh more when I watch a comedy with others than when alone.	—	—	—	—	—
12. In a group of people I am rarely the center of attention. (EX)[b]	-.28	.26	-.17	-.26	.14
13. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons. (OD)[b]	.13	.01	.12	.16	-.16
14. I am not particularly good at making other people like me. (EX)[b]	-.16	-.11	-.18	-.24	.15
15. Even if I am not enjoying myself, I often pretend to be having a good time. (OD)	—	—	—	—	—
16. I am not always the person I appear to be. (OD)	.06	-.01	.05	.09	-.09
17. I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please someone else or win their favor.(OD)[6]	-.05	-.05	-.16	-.12	.09
18. I have considered being an entertainer. (A)	.22	-.17	.28	.05	-.11
19. In order to get along and be liked, I tend to be what people expect me to be rather than anything else. (OD)	—	—	—	—	—
20. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting. (A)	-.21	-.29	-.26	-.25	.14
21. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations. (EX)[b]	-.14	.17	-.15	-.23	.15
22. At a party I let others keep the jokes and stories going. (EX)[b]	-.22	.27	-.02	-.11	.02
23. I feel a bit awkward in company and do not show up quite so well as I should. (EX)[b]	-.15	.20	-.18	-.17	.14
24. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for the right end).	.15	-.14	.14	.17	-.20
25. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them. (OD)	.09	-.05	.15	.06	-.01
Goodness-of-fit index	.87	.82	.89	.88	.85
χ^2	265.53	330.60	245.43	218.54	271.70
Degrees of freedom (df)	135	135	135	135	135
χ^2 /df	1.97	2.45	1.82	1.62	2.01

a. The factor to which each item was assigned in the three factor model is given in parentheses after the item: OD = other directedness; A = acting; and EX = extraversion. Items not loading on a factor were fixed at zero in this and the three factor analysis.

b. Items reversed for scoring.

factor model provided a significantly better fit than the 25-item one-factor model ($\chi^2_d = 78.77$, 3 df, $p < .001$). The 18-item one-factor model also was a significantly better fit to the data than the 25-item one-factor model ($\chi^2_d = 295.84$, 140 df, $p < .001$) and the three-factor model ($\chi^2_d = 355.93$, 143 df, $p < .001$) in the Japanese sample. The 25-item one-factor model also was a significantly better fit than the three-factor model ($\chi^2_d = 60.09$, 3 df, $p < .001$) in the Japanese sample. Comparisons of the three models for Hong Kong suggested that the 18-item one-factor model provided a significantly better fit to the data than the 25-item one-factor model ($\chi^2_d = 258.61$, 140 df, $p < .001$) and the three-factor model ($\chi^2_d = 299.92$, 143 df, $p < .001$). The 25-item one-factor model provided a significantly better fit than the three-factor model ($\chi^2_d = 41.31$, 3 df, $p < .001$) in the Hong Kong sample. Results for Taiwan indicated that the 18-item one-factor model was a significantly better fit to the data than the 25-item one-factor model ($\chi^2_d = 210.77$, 140 df, $p < .001$) and the three-factor model ($\chi^2_d = 227.43$, 143 df, $p < .001$). The 25-item one-factor model was a significantly better fit than the three-factor model ($\chi^2_d = 16.66$, 3 df, $p < .001$) in the Taiwan sample.

To summarize, the 18-item one-factor model provided the best fit to the data across cultures (Note: To conserve space only the solutions for this model are presented. Results for the 25-item one dimension and three-factor solutions are available from the first author). The 25-item one-factor model provided the next best fit across cultures and the three-factor model was the least best fit (except Australian culture). Reliability coefficients for the 18-item (ranging from .62 to .74) and 25-item (ranging from .62 to .74) one-factor scales tended to be slightly higher than those for the three factors (ranging from .39 to .60).

Analysis of variance and multivariate analysis of variance tests were computed to examine differences in self-monitoring across cultures. The results revealed significant differences by culture: the 18-item one-factor model [$F(4,1011) = 27.95$, $p < .001$, $n^2 = .10$]; the 25-item one-factor model [$F(4,1011) = 10.62$, $p < .001$, $n^2 = .04$]; and the three-factor model [Wilk's lambda = .79, $F[12,2664] = 20.75$, $p < .001$]. The means in the United States and Australian samples were higher than the means in the Japanese, Hong Kong and Taiwan samples (see Table 2). No significant differences, however, emerged among the Japanese, Hong Kong and Taiwan samples nor between the United States and Australian samples.

DISCUSSION

The results support Hypotheses 1 and 2. The 18-item one-factor model provided the best fit among the three alternative models across cultures (two individualistic cultures and three collectivistic cultures). Respondents in the U.S. and the Australian samples reported significantly higher levels of self-monitoring than either the Japanese, Hong Kong, or Taiwan samples and respondents in those three samples did not report significantly different levels

TABLE 2
Means and Standard Deviations by Cultures

Scale	United States		Australia		Japan		Hong Kong		Taiwan	
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD
Total (25) self-monitoring	14.15	3.97	13.75	3.87	13.68	4.05	12.40	4.42	12.03	3.68
Total (18) self-monitoring	11.37	3.50	10.63	3.30	9.76	3.42	8.92	3.72	8.16	3.09
Other-directedness	4.96	1.93	5.11	2.06	6.12	1.93	5.15	2.26	5.02	2.03
Acting	2.01	1.27	1.67	1.34	1.27	1.22	1.48	1.10	1.32	1.07
Extraversion	4.23	1.44	4.04	1.53	3.10	1.18	2.87	1.44	2.88	1.34

of self-monitoring. These findings are consistent with predictions derived from Hofstede's (1980) analysis and Gudykunst, Yang and Nishida's (1987) cross-cultural study. It must be noted, however, that the differences in the means are, at least in part, a result of the measurement scale used.

Snyder's (1974, 1979) conceptualization of self-monitoring and the measure he developed are not sensitive to the aspects of self-monitoring which are important in collectivistic cultures; i.e.,the context and the status of the individuals present. Berry (1969) and Triandis, Malpass and Davidson (1973) refer to the imposition of a measure developed in one culture on other cultures as an "imposed etic" or "pseudoetic" analysis. The study of self-monitoring across cultures using Snyder's measure is problematic because it focuses on aspects of self which predominate in individualistic cultures such as the United States and Australia but which do not predominate in collectivistic cultures such as Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The findings from the analysis of variance tests are attributable directly to the nature of the measurement. Members of collectivistic cultures do engage in a significant amount of self-monitoring, but the self-monitoring in which they engage is not tapped by Snyder's measure. It, therefore, is necessary to develop a "derived etic" measure of self-monitoring which includes items that deal with the self in reference to ingroups and in social contexts, especially status relationships. Lennox and Wolfe's (1984) revised self-monitoring scale appears to include some items which tap the context, but this scale has not been studied across cultures to date. Future research should compare Lennox and Wolfe's measure, Snyder's measure, and additional items designed to tap self-monitoring in collectivistic cultures with the goal being to develop a derived-etic measure of self-monitoring that can be used in cross-cultural research.

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