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Unpacking Cultural Orientations: Representations of the Person and the Self

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December, 2012

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Sussex

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree. However, the thesis incorporates to the extent indicated below, material already submitted as part of required coursework for the degree of MRes Psychological Methods in Psychology which was awarded by the University of Sussex.

The MRes dissertation reported data from six nations (Ethiopia, Georgia, Italy, Lebanon, Romania, and UK) which were analysed in separate single-country and multigroup analyses. These data were included in a pooled dataset including 16 national samples which was analysed in pan-cultural analyses in Study 3 of the present thesis. These analyses revealed different results from the MRes dissertation, and different conclusions were drawn.

Signature:.....

Preface

This work was supported by a doctoral studentship (grant reference: ES/G015074/1) awarded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC, UK) to the author, and Studies 1 to 5 formed part of the cross-cultural research project *Motivated Identity Construction in Cultural Context* (ESRC funded: RES-062-23-1300). Maja Becker was in charge of coordinating this project but I took over this role for five months during her maternity leave. This involved liaising with collaborators and organising data collection, setting deadlines and targets, overlooking the budget, working on translations, and collating and checking the data.

This thesis is therefore the product of a range of collaborations. My specific contribution to the research reported in this thesis is outlined below:

Study design. I developed the contextualism and self-construal measures and the hypotheses reported in this thesis with the exception of the item pool for the Pilot Study in Study 1 which Vivian Vignoles and Spike Lee generated. My analyses of this pilot data allowed me to refine the theoretical definition and measurement of contextualism. These measures were one part of the overall large-scale cross-cultural research project. The main part, based on within-person identity ratings, were not designed by me but were developed and analysed by Vivian Vignoles and Maja Becker and form the basis for other publications (see Becker et al., 2012).

Data collection. I collected all UK data with the help of Maja Becker (Study 1) and Matt Easterbrook (Study 2, 4, and 5). I also collected the Swedish data (Study 2, 4 and 5) with the help of Maja Becker. Data from outside of the UK (with the exception of Sweden) was not collected or entered by me, but by numerous international collaborators who make up the Culture and Identity Research Network. Data for the

Pilot Study in Study 1 were collected by Tanuja Gadre and Vivian Vignoles. I collected the UK data for Study 6 and recruited and coordinated international collaborators who collected and entered data locally.

Analysis. I conducted all analyses reported in this thesis.

Write-up. This thesis is entirely written by me.

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University of Sussex

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Unpacking Cultural Orientations: Representations of the Person and the Self

Summary

This thesis aims to disentangle the concept of culture; more specifically it identifies different facets of cultural orientations. It looks at how cultural and national groups differ on these dimensions and their impact on individuals and societies. It is argued that we need a more nuanced and multifaceted understanding of culture that goes beyond focusing on values.

Chapter 1 discusses definitions of culture and identifies three significant facets of culture—values, beliefs and constructions of the self. It is noted that research into the latter two facets is far less developed. Chapter 2 outlines research into cross-cultural variation in beliefs, more specifically beliefs about personhood, and notes that little is known about beliefs that define individualism-collectivism (I-C). Chapter 3 reviews self-construal theory and highlights a range of remaining issues which point to the need to explore self-construals further. Chapter 4 provides a methodological overview of the research. Chapter 5 reports results from two large-scale cross-cultural questionnaire studies and presents the construct, and a measure, of contextualism, referring to beliefs about the importance of the context in understanding people. Contextualism is shown to be a facet of cultural collectivism and a predictor of national variation in ingroup favouritism, trust and corruption. Chapter 6 presents a new seven-dimensional model of self-construals, which can be organised into three higher-order dimensions at the cultural level of analysis: self-differentiation, other-focus and self-containment.

Variation in self-differentiation is shown to be best explained by differences in I-C, other-focus by differences in national wealth and self-containment by religious heritage. Based on a smaller study in four nations, Chapter 7 investigates the seven self-construal dimensions at the individual level and tests how they differentially predict outcomes related to socio-emotional adjustment. Chapter 8 summarises the findings and discusses implications and directions for future research.

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Chapter 1

General Introduction

This thesis is about culture. In particular, it aims to identify valid and useful ways of characterising individuals and societies along cultural dimensions. This involves trying to disentangle the concept of culture by looking at its different facets, including beliefs and constructions of the self; different levels, most importantly individual and national level; and different dimensions, including, but not exclusively, individualism-collectivism (I-C). This more nuanced understanding of cultural differences could be helpful not only to guide future research into the impact of culture on psychological processes and behaviour, but also in a more general sense help reduce cultural stereotypes.

The research reported here is based on two large multinational studies as well as a smaller four-nation study. The two multinational studies were part of a collaborative research project including a total of 38 nations and both student and adult samples, which provided an unusually diverse dataset. This starting-point allowed me to ask a range of interesting questions about cultural variation, the origin of such variation as well as its consequences. I hope that the research presented here will answer most of these questions, as well as open up avenues for further questions to be asked.

This introductory chapter will first discuss definitions of culture and raise several important issues in relation to these. It will then distinguish three facets of culture—values, beliefs, and constructions of the self—and finally I will outline research aims.

1.1 Defining culture

Although culture has become a very popular and well-researched topic in psychology and the social sciences more generally, its definition and operationalisation are often vague and diffuse, and often vary depending on theoretical standpoints. Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1963) found 164 distinct definitions of culture and this number is likely to have increased substantially since they did their review. Although definitions vary widely, most seem to agree that culture is something which is shared, multifaceted and relatively stable (Taras, Rowney, & Steel, 2009). Nonetheless, differences in how culture is defined highlight a range of issues, both conceptual and methodological, which are very relevant to the current thesis. The most salient of these issues are discussed below (see also Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, and Sam (2011) for longer discussions of some of these issues).

1.1.1 Culture as objective or subjective

Early anthropological definitions of culture included a focus on observable behaviour and artefacts. For instance, Boas (1930) suggested that “culture embraces all the manifestations of social behaviour of a community, the reactions of the individual as affected by the habits of the group in which he lives, and the product of human activities as determined by these habits” (p. 79). In cross-cultural psychology, however—mirroring the growing focus on cognitive processes in psychology more generally—the focus shifted towards shared meanings and symbols (Berry et al., 2011; Smith, Bond, & Kağitçibaşı, 2006). For example, Geertz (1973) defined culture as “historically transmitted patterns of meanings embodied in symbols” (p. 89). An even more cognitive position is taken by Hofstede (2001) who suggests culture is “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of

people from another” (p. 9). Although cross-cultural psychology moved more towards cognitive definitions, this has not necessarily been the case in other disciplines, such as anthropology. This development nonetheless highlights the question of whether culture should be conceived of as something objective, out there in the world, or as something subjective in the minds of individuals. Most seem to now agree that culture involves interpretation and shared understandings—for instance, behaviour observed without reference to the meaning of that behaviour can hardly be described as “cultural”.

More recently, the debate has centred around whether objective aspects of the environment, such as national affluence, should be included in the concept of culture. A purely subjective perspective would suggest that these are antecedents of culture, thus separate from how culture is defined (e.g. Hofstede, 1980). From a different perspective, these objective aspects can also be considered outcomes of culture and are therefore an integral part of how we understand culture (e.g. Weber, 1904; see Hofstede, 2006; Javidan, House, Dorfman, Hanges, & de Luque, 2006; Smith, 2006; for a discussion). The present research views culture as subjective orientations, or ways of interpreting and understanding the world and the self, that are shared among people in a society or social group (Smith et al., 2006). It considers objective aspects of the environment as potential antecedents, shaping how people interpret the world, but also acknowledges the reciprocal relationship where cultural orientations can shape the objective environment (Smith, 2006).

1.1.2 Culture as unique or universal

A further question that arises when trying to define culture is the extent to which it is something that is unique to a particular group or society or whether there are universal ways of describing cultures. The former perspective was endorsed by the early

anthropologist Boas (1930) who argued for *cultural relativism*—the idea that each culture is unique and can only be understood within its own context, making cultures incomparable. A slightly less radical position is taken by the indigenous psychology movement, which investigates concepts and processes rooted in a particular context but also uses these to compare with other contexts (Kim & Berry, 1993). A more universal approach to investigating culture was initiated by Hofstede (1980) who analysed questionnaire data from participants in initially around 40 nations and based on this large dataset identified four cultural dimensions which described his national samples. This latter approach makes very different assumptions of what culture is—it assumes that there are cultural dimensions that are valid and meaningful universally, even though cultures vary in their positions on each dimension.

The present research falls within this latter approach to culture. Recognising the merit and immense value of indigenous research, it does not consider these two approaches mutually exclusive. Rather, they should be considered complementary and research questions should guide the choice between them. If, as in the present research, the aim is to achieve a greater understanding of how cultures differ in terms of certain beliefs and constructions of the self and the consequences of these cultural orientations, it is necessary to identify common ways of conceptualising and measuring these orientations. This allows for meaningful comparisons and identification of cross-cultural patterns, which can help to explain observed differences in behaviour and psychological functioning.

This approach is, however, not without difficulties. In the search for universal concepts and dimensions, questions about cross-cultural validity are particularly salient. Berry (1969, 1989) made the distinction between emic research, which is based on local meanings within a certain cultural group, and etic research, which assumes that there are

universal concepts that can be measured anywhere. He warned against blindly applying constructs and instruments in new contexts without assessing their validity in these contexts (*imposed etic*). Rather, he argued, concepts and instruments need to be modified to fit the local contexts and once some common features have been established, comparisons between cultures can be made (*derived etic*). Thus, this thesis focuses on identifying cross-culturally appropriate constructs and measures, which includes a range of tests of cross-cultural invariance. It should be noted, however, that although cross-cultural research may be based on a derived etic approach including a large number of cultures, this does not mean that the concepts and processes can be considered universal. Achieving truly universal models would involve modifying them in accordance with *all* existing cultures, which is beyond the scope of most research projects (Berry, 1989). On the other hand, by including a wide range of nations and cultural groups, some of which are normally under-represented in the psychological literature, the present research provides a more culturally diverse picture than is normally found in social psychological research.

1.1.3 Culture as the property of individuals vs. the property of groups

A third question refers to whether culture should be thought of as something belonging to the individual or as the property of social groups, such as societies or nations. Anthropology has traditionally involved a greater focus on the collective level with investigations into traditions, rituals, norms, and belief systems of specific groups (Eriksen, 2004). Psychology, on the other hand, underwent a gradual shift away from an early focus on groups (e.g. Wilhelm Wundt, 1913) to an emphasis on the independent and self-contained individual (e.g. Allport, 1920/1972; see Greenwood, 2004 for a discussion). It has been argued that this shift mirrored a general trend towards

individualism in North America (Sampson, 1977). Cross-cultural psychology has the potential to bridge this gap by simultaneously studying individuals and social contexts, as well as the interactions between the two. By studying both levels of analysis, culture can therefore be thought of as being both the property of individuals and social groups.

Nonetheless, the dual focus on individuals and groups adds complexity to the field of study. Hofstede (1980) pointed out the danger of the ecological fallacy—that is assuming that relationships or dimensions that exist at the cultural level, also exist at the individual level of analyses. Similarly, he warned about the reversed ecological fallacy—that is assuming that relationships or dimensions that exist at individual level, also exist at the cultural level. Hofstede was clear that his cultural dimensions (see Section 1.2.1) only applied to the cultural level of analysis. Still, it is not uncommon for levels of analyses to be confounded in cross-cultural research, which can lead to seemingly contradictory and inconsistent findings (Smith et al., 2006). Thus, the present research adopts the dual focus on individuals and groups and includes investigations of similarities and differences across levels.

It should be pointed out that although nations or groups are used as the unit of analysis in many parts of this thesis, it is not assumed that these are necessarily homogenous and uniform. Rather, culture is seen as continually contested and resisted, generating great individual variation within cultures. Nonetheless, this thesis suggests that some systematic agreement exists within a nation or cultural group which differentiates it from other nations or groups.

1.1.4 Cultures vs. nations

When defining culture, it also needs to be distinguished from similar concepts such as social systems (Rohner, 1984). Rohner defines culture as shared meaning

systems, whereas social systems refer to the patterns of interactions and social relationships that are found within “culturally organised populations” (p. 127), such as nations. Thus, a social system may have a shared culture but culture cannot be reduced to a social system. Nonetheless, it has become relatively common in cross-cultural research to use nation as a proxy for culture, or to explain differences between national groups in terms of culture, often based on Hofstede’s scores of individualism-collectivism (I-C), without actually measuring cultural orientations (Smith et al., 2006). This is arguably problematic since culture is simply inferred from national categories, which potentially reinforces cultural stereotypes (Matsumoto, 1999). Given that nations can differ on a range of variables, it is not clear whether it is actually a *cultural* difference that has been observed and which cultural dimension could explain the observed findings (Smith et al., 2006).

The nation has also become a common unit of analysis in cross-cultural research when cultural orientations are measured. This could be regarded as potentially problematic since it does not take account of the large diversity within many nations, and nations are sometimes formed along arbitrary political lines (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011; Smith et al., 2006). Nonetheless, in a recent study, Minkov and Hofstede (2011) found that within countries, regions tended to cluster along national lines rather than being intermixed with regions from other nations, suggesting within-nation similarity and between-nation distinctiveness. Moreover, using the nation as the unit of analyses makes it possible to utilize existing databases and national indices and to investigate nation-level nomological networks (Smith, 2004a). It could therefore be argued that the nation provides a meaningful and useful unit of culture and the present research has utilized this approach. Nonetheless, in order to explore potentially important within-

nation diversity, the second large multinational research project also included different cultural groups within many nations.

1.2 Culture as values, beliefs and representations of the self

The notion of culture as shared meaning systems allows great scope in a wide range of research areas and methods. However, this definition could also be considered vague and difficult to operationalise. It has been argued that culture to some extent has become a catch-all term, used to explain a wide range of phenomena, but which only gives the illusion of being a powerful explanatory variable (Eriksen, 2004). Thus, it is suggested that we need a more fine-grained and nuanced understanding of culture.

Brewer and Chen (2007) provide one answer to how culture can be unpacked. They suggest that cultures provide answers to three fundamental questions: questions about the self (self-representations), questions about the world (beliefs) and questions about what one should aspire to (values). These three facets mirror the three building blocks of psychology: the self-concept, cognition, and motivation. Values give us information about what is desired in a culture, whereas beliefs provide information about what is regarded as true or false, and self-representations tell us how people understand themselves (Smith et al., 2006). Triandis (1993) suggests that the different facets of culture are organized around common themes, or cultural syndromes, such as I-C. The present research adopts this view. Culture is conceived of as a multifaceted construct, including values, beliefs and constructions of the self, which together form broad cultural syndromes.

1.2.1 Values

Arguably because of the influential work by Hofstede (1980), research into values has become the most common approach to culture (Taras et al., 2009). However, interest in values has a long history. For example, Weber (1905) explained the societal move towards capitalism in terms of protestant values. A more formal theory of values was developed by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961). They suggested that all societies face a limited number of fundamental human problems: humans' relations with time, nature, each other, basic human motives and whether humans are inherently good or bad. They argued that a set number of solutions to these problems exist and the solutions and answers that are preferred in a society reflect the underlying values of that society. They explored the value orientations of five different cultural groups in South-West USA through interviews and using examples of real-life situations and based on these findings, they were able to draw the value profiles of each cultural group, identifying how they were similar and different.

A different approach to values was adopted by Rokeach (1973), who developed the Rokeach Value Survey (RVS). This model of values consists of 18 terminal values, referring to desired end-states (such as true friendship, family security, and equality) and 18 instrumental values, referring to desired modes of behaviour (such as cheerfulness, logic, and obedience). This model and measure of values has been widely used in a range of disciplines and there are strong parallels with the model of values later developed by Schwartz (1992, 2004).

Nonetheless, as noted above, it was possibly the influence of Hofstede (1980) that most notably brought attention to values in cross-cultural psychology. In secondary analysis of employee surveys at the multinational company "Hermes" (later identified as IBM) in eventually over 70 nations, he established four different value dimensions which distinguish cultures: individualism, which defines societies where the individual

is loosely rather than closely connected to their social group; power distance, referring to societies where there is an acceptance of unequal distribution of power; uncertainty avoidance, referring to societies where there is low acceptance of uncertainty and ambiguity; and finally masculinity, referring to societies where there is a preference for achievement, assertiveness and material success. Individualism has by far received the most attention and has generated a vast amount of research, and it continues to be very popular. Later Hofstede (2001) added a fifth dimension, long term orientation, as a result of the work by The Chinese Culture Connection (1987) who investigated values from a Chinese perspective. As noted above, Hofstede's dimensions refer only to the cultural level of analysis and were not designed to characterize individuals. However, later research has treated individualism as an individual-level construct, which has generated confusion around the construct.

Although very influential, Hofstede's (1980) research suffers from some limitations. The original goal of the research was to study the work context within the organisation, hence, the items used to create the dimensions do not match Hofstede's later descriptions of what the dimensions mean. It should also be noted that Hofstede found power distance and individualism to be highly negatively correlated, but he separated them on theoretical grounds. This raises questions of how distinct they really are. Moreover, most of the data was collected more than 40 years ago, which raises the question of whether the nation scores are still valid.

An alternative to Hofstede's (1980) research was provided by the GLOBE project who surveyed around 17,000 middle-managers in 62 societies around the world (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). This ambitious project investigated nine dimensions of values and practices, most of which were derived from Hofstede's research, as well as leadership styles. Interestingly, GLOBE's values are not correlated

with Hofstede's dimensions, which could be due to the fact that their values were measured in terms of the desired behaviour of other people, rather than own preferred end state (Smith, 2006). This could also be the reason why many of their values and practices dimensions are negatively related, and generally their measures of practices are more closely related to other existing indices. Nonetheless, the GLOBE data provide an update on Hofstede's (1980) well-cited cultural indices, using theoretically-based measures.

A different approach to values was developed by Schwartz (1992, 2004). He identified an individual-level value structure of 10 value types or domains (self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, tradition, conformity, benevolence, universalism), defined as guiding principles in people's lives. These are organised into two higher-order bipolar dimensions, namely self-transcendence/self-enhancement and openness to change/conservation. He has found support for this structure in more than 75 nations. At the nation level he identified a similar, but not identical, structure which included seven value types that are organised into three bipolar dimensions: autonomy-embeddedness, hierarchy-egalitarianism, and mastery-harmony. Notably, several studies show that autonomy (vs. embeddedness) is conceptually and empirically similar to the individual-level dimension of openness to change/conservation (e.g., Fischer, 2011; Schwartz, 2004). Although not originally designed to measure individualism-collectivism (I-C), national mean scores on autonomy (vs. embeddedness) are correlated with Hofstede's (1980) and House et al.'s (2004) indices of I-C (Gheorghiu, Vignoles, & Smith, 2009). Nevertheless, perhaps reflecting its greater theoretical precision, autonomy (vs. embeddedness) can offer additional predictive value to other measures of I-C (e.g., Knafo, Schwartz, & Levine, 2009).

1.2.2 Beliefs

The belief facet of culture has received much less attention in the literature. Nonetheless, some important work has been done by Bond and Leung (Bond, Leung, Tong, et al., 2004; Leung et al., 2002) who conducted extensive research in over 40 countries into general beliefs, or “social axioms”. Social axioms refer to broad expectancies about the social and physical world. At the individual level, they identified five different belief dimensions: social cynicism, social complexity, reward for application, religiosity, and fate control. These beliefs have been shown to predict a range of psychological and behavioural outcomes such as modesty (Bond, Lun, Chan, Chan, & Wong, 2012), norm-directed behaviour (Kurman, 2011), and vulnerability to suicide (Lam, Bond, Chen, & Wu, 2010). At the nation-level, on the other hand, they found two dimensions: societal cynicism, which mirrors the individual-level dimension social cynicism, and dynamic externality, which incorporates the other four individual-level dimensions.

Social axioms refer to very broad beliefs about the world, which span a range of different domains. Less research has gone into investigating belief dimensions within established cultural syndromes, such as I-C. Despite the great popularity of I-C in the literature, its belief facet has rarely been investigated. I-C has often been criticized as too broad and ill-defined (Earley & Gibson, 1998; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997; Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002), and Brewer and Chen (2007) suggest that disentangling its different facets will generate more precise predictions and more consistent findings. Thus, there appears to be scope for further investigations into beliefs in relation to I-C more specifically.

1.2.3 Self-construals

The “self” orientation to culture has proved highly generative, on the other hand, and has dominated conceptualizations of culture alongside values (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997). Markus and Kitayama (1991) proposed that people in individualist cultures will tend to construe themselves as relatively *independent* from others, whereas those in collectivist cultures will tend to construe themselves as relatively *interdependent* or closely connected with others. It has since become common practice to conceive of and measure self-construals in terms of two separate dimensions, independence and interdependence (Gudykunst, Matsumoto, Ting-Toomey, & Nishida, 1996; Singelis, 1994). Markus and Kitayama’s theory has been interpreted as suggesting that self-construals mediate the influence of culture on behaviour (Matsumoto, 1999); however, over time, self-construals have often become synonymous with I-C orientation, not the least in terms of how they are measured. This development has meant that self-construals are rarely considered outside of the I-C framework. Moreover, self-construal theory and research has also been subject to some notable criticisms: overreliance on comparisons between North America and East Asia (Cross, Hardin, & Gercek-Swing, 2011), lack of cultural differences consistent with the theory (Matsumoto, 1999), lack of support for a two-dimensional model (Levine et al., 2003), and lack of adequate measures (Levine et al., 2003; Smith, 2011). Thus, although a lot of cross-cultural research has already been conducted into self-construals, several important questions remain with regards to how self-construals should best be conceptualised and measured and how they vary across cultures.

1.3 Research aims

The aim of the present research was to disentangle the concept of culture and provide greater understanding of how nations and social groups differ on measures of

cultural orientations. Building on Brewer and Chen (2007), the present thesis identifies three significant facets of culture: values, beliefs and representations of the self.

Research into values is now at an advanced stage with a clear model of different value domains and how these differ across cultures (Schwartz, 1992, 2004). However, research into beliefs and self-construals is far less developed.

Although Bond, Leung and colleagues (Bond, Leung, Tong, et al., 2004; Leung et al., 2002) have provided a rich picture of different types of beliefs across cultures, little is known about beliefs which define I-C. Given that this is one of the most prominent constructs in cross-cultural psychology, disentangling its different facets seems like a worthwhile endeavour which could potentially lead to more precise predictions of cultural influence. Thus, this thesis aimed to develop a belief dimension which would tap into the cultural syndrome of I-C. It aimed to develop a cross-culturally valid measure of this belief dimension that could be used to describe both individuals and cultures (see Study 1, Chapter 5), and assess its usefulness as a predictor of societal processes (see Study 2, Chapter 5).

Research into self-construals, on the other hand, has been dominated by the I-C dichotomy and they are often considered synonymous with I-C (e.g. Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). Nonetheless, as noted above, several problems remain with self-construal theory, including lack of support for a two-dimensional model. Thus, this thesis aimed to refine the existing model of self-construals using large and diverse datasets which reach well beyond the standard West vs. East comparisons (see Study 3 and 4, Chapter 6). Moreover, it investigated how national samples differed in terms of their construction of the self and which national and societal variables can explain this variation (see Study 5, Chapter 6). Finally, it aimed to improve on existing measures of self-construals, test the validity of this new measure, as well as investigate how the

refined model relates to a range of variables related to socio-emotional adjustment (see Study 6, Chapter 7).

Chapter 2

The Person and the Context¹

This chapter looks in detail at one of the three facets of culture identified by Brewer and Chen (2007)—beliefs. In particular, it seeks to identify what type of beliefs would be considered an important part of the cultural syndrome I-C. I highlight the importance of the person and its relation to the social context in how I-C is defined and by referring to anthropological accounts, implicit person theories, and attribution research, I propose the construct of contextualism, referring specifically to beliefs about importance of the context in understanding people.

2.1 Individualism-Collectivism and Beliefs

The central theme of individualism is the conception of the individuals as autonomous from groups; the central theme of collectivism is the conception of individuals as aspects of groups or collectives (Triandis, Chan, Bhawuk, Iwao, & Sinha, 1995, p. 462).

As noted above, I-C is one of the most prominent constructs in cross-cultural psychology, providing a parsimonious and compelling framework through which cultural variation can be understood and predicted (Hofstede, 1980; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997; Oyserman et al., 2002; Triandis, 1995). This framework has generated a vast amount of research and continues to attract attention. However, questions have been raised regarding the validity and usefulness of I-C (Earley & Gibson, 1998; Oyserman et al.,

¹ This chapter is closely adapted from parts of Owe et al. (2013).

2002). Critics have argued that the construct is too broad and ill-defined and that the different facets of cross-cultural variation, such as self-representations, values and beliefs, are confounded under its umbrella (Brewer & Chen, 2007; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997). This causes problems with measurement, and limits the precision with which predictions of cultural influence can be made, underlining the need for a more fine-grained approach that unpacks this broad dimension and teases apart its different facets. As noted above, the focus in I-C research has so far been on values and self-construals, leaving the belief component largely unexplored.

As illustrated by the quotation above, diverging beliefs about the extent to which individuals are separate from, or closely connected to, the social context have been portrayed as a defining feature of I-C (Triandis, 1995; Triandis et al., 1995). Thus, a core belief dimension within I-C is likely to involve beliefs about the person and its relation to the social context.

2.2 Anthropological accounts

Since the beginnings of social scientific interest in cross-cultural differences, theorists and researchers have often observed that members of different cultures around the world (and in different historical periods) seem to have diverging beliefs or conceptions about the nature of personhood (Geertz, 1975; Mauss, 1938/1985; Shweder & Bourne, 1984). Mauss (1938/1985) described a historical transformation of notions of the person from being defined by roles in society and positions in the family in native Australian and North American societies, through a person defined by legal and moral responsibilities in ancient Rome and Greece, to a person defined by individual consciousness in the Enlightenment. Anthropological accounts across cultures also highlight great diversity in how the person is conceived. La Fontaine (1985) describes

the Lugbara people of Uganda who define personhood as the infusion of the *adro* spirit which determines a person's desires and wishes, the Tallensi people of Ghana among which a person's identity is determined by his or her place in society, and the Gahuku-Gama people of New Guinea who lack a concept of the person altogether. Rather, this latter group sees individuals only in terms of structured roles or distinct personalities. She contrasts these conceptions with the Western notion of personhood and argues that the latter is driven by legal principles of the nation state. These principles are based on individuals as citizens, autonomous equal units, with the same rights and responsibilities. Thus, the Western conception makes a clear distinction between the person and his or her social role. Individuals are equal as persons with equal opportunities, but their social roles are unequal since these roles give some people more power than others.

Similarly, Geertz (1975) suggested that: "the Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe [...] is, however incorrigible it may seem to us, a rather peculiar idea within the context of the world's cultures" (p. 48). He described how in Java notions of the person are defined by a contrast between the "inside", a person's emotional life, and the "outside", a person's actions and speech, whereas in Bali persons are defined by fixed roles, like characters in a play. Finally, in Moroccan culture people are defined relative to their contexts, such as their tribe, place of living, their family background or occupation. Individual distinctiveness is therefore achieved through the combination of a range of different contextual attributes. It is interesting to note that the idea of the person as engaging in performance can also be found in the writings of the North American sociologist Goffman (1956). He argued that social interaction can be thought of as a theatre and people in everyday life as actors in a play. According to Goffman,

performance in social interaction is a conscious process with the aim of avoiding embarrassment, a way of managing impressions. He argued that there also exist a hidden or private part where individuals do not play a role. Thus, Goffman's theory differs from Geertz's (1975) description of the Bali identity since in the latter people were fully defined in terms of characters in a play whereas Goffman appears to hold on to the idea that the person's traits and characteristics will determine his or her performance.

Shweder and Bourne (1984) found that the way that people thought about other people differed across cultures; Indian participants referred to contextual and relational features when asked to describe a close acquaintance, whereas Americans provided abstract and context-free accounts. Thus, the main difference they identified referred to the importance of the context in defining people.

These accounts paint a picture where the person, on one hand, is defined by roles, positions in society and the context, and, on the other hand, as context-free and autonomous. Moreover, the variation in these perspectives seems to map on to current understandings of variation in I-C. Nonetheless, although research into social perception has pointed to similar findings (e.g. Norenzayan, Choi, & Nisbett, 2002) these personhood beliefs have rarely been investigated, as is discussed below.

2.3 Personhood Beliefs

2.3.1 Implicit person theories and essentialism

Within the psychological literature, beliefs about personhood can be found in research into implicit person theories (Levy, Plaks, Hong, Chiu, & Dweck, 2001) and essentialism (Haslam, Bastian, & Bissett, 2004). Dweck and colleagues (Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995; Erdley & Dweck, 1993; Levy et al., 2001) have suggested that people's

implicit theories about human nature can be divided into entity theories, which assume personality is fixed, and incremental theories, which regard traits and attributes as malleable. In a large body of research, they have demonstrated that holding these different sets of beliefs has wide ranging consequences. For instance, compared to incremental theorists, entity theorists have been shown to make more rigid social judgements (Erdley & Dweck, 1993), endorse stereotypes to a greater extent (Levy, Stroessner, & Dweck, 1998), and be less likely to use constructive conflict strategies (Kammrath & Dweck, 2006).

Recently, Haslam, Bastian, Bain, and Kashima (2006) have argued that implicit person theories should be considered within the wider framework of essentialism. This framework involves a coherent set of beliefs that people can be understood in terms of underlying essences which determines their identity. These beliefs include that traits and attributes are immutable, that people can be classified into discrete categories and that such categories are highly informative about the person. Although cross-cultural differences in implicit person theories and essentialism have been found, the pattern of differences does not map neatly onto previously found differences in I-C across nations (cf. Chiu, Hong, & Dweck, 1997; Church et al., 2003, 2005; Norenzayan et al., 2002). Research into entitativity (Kashima et al., 2005) has also revealed a similar pattern across cultures, with individuals generally believed to be more real entities than social groups. Similarly, Yamaguchi (2001) argues that people universally have a need for a sense of control and self-efficacy, but that its shape and form varies with a focus on personal control in Western cultures and collective control, for example through participation in a group, in East Asian cultures.

2.3.2 Attribution research

A clearer pattern of cross-cultural differences has been found among beliefs about causes of behaviour, where Americans have typically been found to make more dispositional attributions, referring to traits and attributes of the actor, whereas Indian and Chinese people have been found more likely to invoke contextual explanations (Miller, 1984; Morris & Peng, 1994). Such findings have led to a widely held notion that people in the West will endorse *lay dispositionism* (Ross & Nisbett, 1991)—that is, the tendency to explain behaviour in terms of traits—to a greater extent than non-Western, particularly East-Asian, people (Kitayama, Park, Sevincer, Karasawa, & Uskul, 2009). However, several studies show that East-Asians can make dispositional judgments to a similar extent to Americans (Choi & Nisbett, 1998; Krull et al., 1999; Norenzayan et al., 2002), which has lead Choi, Nisbett, and Norenzayan (1999) to conclude that dispositionism is cross-culturally widespread. They argue that differences in social perception may stem not from differences in dispositionism, but rather from East Asians' greater endorsement of “situationism”, which they define as the tendency to explain behaviour in terms of the context.

2.3.3 Traits vs. context

Beliefs about the importance of traits have also been investigated by Church and colleagues (2003), who contrast implicit trait beliefs with what they call implicit contextual beliefs. These beliefs refer to the stability, consistency and predictability of traits, and to the possibility of inferring traits from behaviour. Church et al. (2005, 2006) found that Americans tend to score higher on implicit trait beliefs and lower on implicit contextual beliefs than do Malays, Mexicans, Asian Australians, Filipinos, and Japanese. Nevertheless, most of these cultural groups still endorsed trait theories more strongly than contextual theories.

Thus, members of collectivist cultures do not typically seem to espouse a de-traited concept of the person. What may be more distinctive is the tendency of members of individualist cultures to espouse a de-contextualized concept of the person (Shweder & Bourne, 1984). Church et al. (2003) defined contextual theories as the reverse of dispositionism, i.e., that traits are unimportant. However, the widespread endorsement of dispositionism arguably makes this conceptualization problematic.

2.3.4 Contextualism

It is clear from the above review that the importance of the context is a reoccurring theme when studying variations in conceptions of the person across cultures and that this variation seems to roughly map onto our understanding of I-C. Nonetheless, beliefs about the importance of the context are rarely investigated without being defined in opposition to the importance of traits. Therefore, I propose the construct of contextualism, which specifically refers to the perceived importance of the context in understanding people. This includes social and relational contexts, such as family, social groups and social positions, but also physical environments. It is suggested that contextualism comprises an important facet of I-C and taps a largely unexplored side of this cultural dimension.

The theoretical and operational definition of contextualism differs from that of Church et al. by focusing instead on people's beliefs about the importance of context in its own right and its role in defining a person. It also differs from concepts of essentialism and entitativity (Haslam et al., 2004; Kashima et al., 2005), since contextualism is not concerned with whether people have a fixed and underlying nature, but refers to the type of factors that are believed to be important in making a person who he or she is.

2.4 The person and the self

Before moving on to the next chapter which outlines theory and research into self-construals, it is worth noting how beliefs about the person and constructions of the self differ. Although this distinction is likely to vary depending on theoretical perspectives and may not always be vital, this thesis adopts the distinction made by Mauss (1938/1985). He differentiated between *personne* (person), which refers to representations of the person within society, and *moi* (the self), which refers to an individual's own awareness of their unique identity and his or hers relation to other people. Thus, this thesis investigates constructions of personhood, i.e. beliefs about what defines a person, and constructions of selfhood, referring to people's own understanding of who they are within their social relationships. Beliefs about people in general often differ from beliefs about the self, as is well established in attribution research (Watson, 1982). Given that they do not necessarily coincide, self-construals and beliefs about people in general should be treated as different constructs and their convergence should be investigated empirically.

2.5 Conclusion

By looking at how I-C is defined as well as anthropological and social psychological research into personhood beliefs, this chapter has aimed to identify beliefs that are part of the cultural syndrome collectivism. This review of the literature suggests that variation in beliefs about the person and its relation to the context may broadly follow the same pattern as I-C and therefore provide an interesting starting-point. I have put forward the construct of contextualism, which refers to beliefs about the context in its own right, rather than as the opposite of the importance of traits and

dispositions. In Chapter 5, I develop a scale to measure contextualism which will be validated in terms of its reliability, invariance across cultures and across levels of analysis, and its convergence with other indicators of I-C (Study 1). I investigate how it varies across national samples and how it predicts societal processes such as ingroup favouritism and corruption, above and beyond values and self-construals (Study 2).

Chapter 3

Constructing the Self

Alongside values and beliefs, Brewer and Chen (2007) identified constructions of the self as an important facet of culture. This chapter discusses the most prominent theory of the self in cross-cultural psychology—Markus and Kitayama's (1991) theory of self-construals. After outlining their theory and its impact, it will discuss a range of issues that have arisen in this literature that question the validity of the current model of self-construals and highlight the need for more research in this area.

3.1 Markus and Kitayama's theory

3.1.1 Independence and interdependence

Just over two decades ago, Markus and Kitayama (1991) published their classic paper on culture and the self, which suggested that people in different parts of the world tend to construct the self in two fundamentally different ways. They proposed that Western cultures promote an independent construal of the self, whereas non-Western—in particular East Asian cultures—emphasize an interdependent view of the self. The independent self-construal was defined as separate from the social context, bounded, unitary, and stable. A person with an independent self-construal would strive for self-expression, uniqueness and self-actualization, acting autonomously, based on his/her own thoughts and feelings, and pursuing his/her own goals. The interdependent self-construal, on the other hand, was defined as closely connected to the social context and therefore flexible, fluid, and varying across contexts. Important goals for a person with an interdependent self-construal would be to fit in and maintain harmony with relevant

others, which means acting based on expectations and social norms, rather than personal wishes and preferences. Thus, they argued, when the self is construed as interdependent, personal autonomy will be secondary in importance to maintaining relationships, and other people's goals will be internalized as one's own goals (see also Markus & Kitayama, 2010).

3.1.2 Impact of their theory

Markus and Kitayama's paper had a major impact on the field of social psychology, by drawing attention to cultural diversity and providing tools for theorizing about it. It challenged many ethnocentric assumptions within self and identity research and opened up the possibility of examining alternative and more diverse formulations of the self (Cross et al., 2011). In contrast to much of the cross-cultural research at the time, it provided an explanatory framework for making sense of cultural differences (Matsumoto, 1999). Moreover, the theory provided a useful "conceptual bridge" between culture and individual psychological processes, helping social cognitive researchers to engage with emerging knowledge about macro-level societal differences in I-C (Triandis, 1995). Markus and Kitayama's discussion of culture and the self has therefore become extremely influential and well-cited, and self-construals have been used to explain a wide range of psychological variables and behaviours, including cognitive styles, wellbeing, social anxiety, self-regulation, self-esteem, communication styles, and pro-social behaviour, to name only a few (see Cross et al., 2011; Gudykunst & Lee, 2003; Smith, 2011, for reviews). They have therefore become a useful tool for investigating differences in cognition, affect, motivation and behaviour (Cross et al., 2011). However, as noted in Section 1.2.3, self-construal theory and research has also been subject to some notable criticisms: overreliance on comparisons between North

America and East Asia (Cross et al., 2011), lack of cultural differences consistent with the theory (Matsumoto, 1999), lack of support for a two-dimensional model (Levine et al., 2003), and lack of adequate measures (Levine et al., 2003; Smith, 2011).

3.2 Self-construals Across Cultures

3.2.1 West vs. East focus

Although Markus and Kitayama's (1991) theory has been highly influential, empirical support for some of its key postulates has been rather mixed. Markus and Kitayama (1991) relied on a review of anthropological and cross-cultural sources to illustrate the proposed differences in self-construals. They referred to many parts of the world, but their main emphasis was on a contrast between the US and East Asia, in particular Japan. Several of their claims have received little empirical attention—for example, that the interdependent self is characteristic of African and Latin American cultures (Cross et al., 2011; Matsumoto, 1999). This emphasis on differences between North America and East Asia has continued within the self-construal literature, and therefore little is known still about how the self is constructed in other parts of the world (Cross et al., 2011). It is possible that this narrow focus has restricted theorizing around self-construals and consequently may have limited the explanatory potential of the constructs.

3.2.2 Inconsistent findings

Moreover, where self-construals have been measured directly, the results often do not map on to the cross-cultural pattern of differences suggested by Markus and Kitayama (1991). Self-construals have traditionally been measured in two different ways: the Twenty Statements Test (TST; Kuhn & McPartland, 1954), in which

participants freely list up to 20 things about themselves, and Likert-type scales, most commonly the scales devised by Singelis (1994) and Gudykunst et al. (1996). In a review of studies using the TST, Oyserman et al. (2002) concluded that there is only weak support for the notion that Americans differ from East-Asians in the proportions of independent and interdependent self-descriptions. Similarly, studies using the Likert-type scales have demonstrated divergent and inconsistent results which provide very limited support for Markus and Kitayama's original predictions (Levine et al., 2003; Matsumoto, 1999, for reviews).

Admittedly, these inconsistencies could be related to a range of factors such as overreliance on student samples, failure to control for acquiescence response bias (Schimmack, Oishi, & Diener, 2005), focus on explicit rather than implicit independence and interdependence² (Kitayama et al., 2009), reference group effects³ (Heine, Lehman, Peng, & Greenholtz, 2002), and item wordings that are too decontextualized and abstract, which would be particularly unsuitable for people with an interdependent self (Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998). However, it has also been argued that the dimensions on which cultural groups differ may be more complex than the simple distinction between independence and interdependence (Brewer & Chen, 2007; Hardin, Leong, & Bhagwat, 2004; Oyserman et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2006).

² I return to this issue in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.1.

³ Although often highlighted in the literature as a potential threat to the validity of observed cross-cultural differences, a recent study by Möttus et al. (2012) showed that differences in reference standards are small and do not have a substantial effect on national mean scores. In relation to the present research, the systematic cross-cultural pattern as well as the correlations with societal variables identified are unlikely to have arisen as a product of reference group effects (see Fischer & Schwartz, 2011).

3.3 Multiple Dimensions of Self-construals

3.3.1 Independent, relational and collective self-construals

Self-construals are most commonly conceptualized and measured as two independent dimensions (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Singelis, 1994) or as one bipolar dimension (Kitayama et al., 2009) and the former model of self-construals has come to dominate the literature. However, some have suggested that independence and interdependence needs to be unpacked. Kağıtçıbaşı (2005) argues that the tendency within psychology to confound autonomy and relatedness is misguided. This is frequently the case when independence is conceptualised and measured; separateness and autonomy are often used interchangeably. Instead she proposes a model in which these are orthogonal dimensions. Hence, she argues it is possible to endorse both autonomy and relatedness. Kağıtçıbaşı (2005) refers to research in Turkey which shows that improvement in economic conditions leads to less utilitarian reliance on the child, which in turn promotes autonomy of the child. However, she argues that there is still a psychological interdependence within the family. Hence, autonomy does not necessarily mean separateness.

Others have argued that interdependence needs to be considered at different levels of inclusiveness, distinguishing between relational and collective interdependence (Brewer & Chen, 2007; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2000; Kashima & Hardie, 2000). These researchers base the dimensions of self-construals on the targets of social relationships—close others for relational self-construal, and groups for collective self-construal. Harb and Smith (2008) provide a further distinction, dividing the relational and collective self-construals into horizontal dimensions, reflecting equal relationships, and vertical dimensions, reflecting hierarchical

relationships.⁴ These perspectives share the idea that different types of relationships have differing importance for the self across cultures. For example, Cross et al. (2000) suggest that North Americans, in particular women, define the self in terms of close relationships, whereas East Asians are more likely to define the self in terms of group memberships (but see Yuki, 2003).

3.3.2 Different domains of independence and interdependence

Others have argued for the importance of considering different domains or facets of independence and interdependence. For instance, Noguchi (2007) found that, whereas American participants scored higher than the Japanese on self-focus and Japanese participants scored higher than Americans on other-focus, as Markus and Kitayama's (1991) theory would predict, Americans still scored higher on helping others. This suggests that the pattern of results depends on which facet of independence and interdependence is considered.

Several other studies have also indicated that self-construals are multidimensional (Christopher, Norris, D'Souza, & Tiernan, 2011; Guo, Schwartz, & McCabe, 2008; Hardin et al., 2004; Levine et al., 2003; Milfont, 2005; Sato & McCann, 1998). Hardin et al. (2004) identified six different domains: four facets of independence that they labelled autonomy/assertiveness, individualism, behavioural consistency, and primacy of self, and two facets of interdependence that they labelled esteem for group and relational interdependence. They demonstrated that European Americans and Asian Americans differed on autonomy/assertiveness and primacy of self, whereas the two groups did not differ on the higher-order factor of independence. They also found that the six separate dimensions had incremental explanatory power compared to using only

⁴ Harb and Smith's (2008) model includes six self-construals: personal self, relational-vertical, relational-horizontal, collective-vertical, collective-horizontal, and humanity.

the two higher-order dimensions when explaining social anxiety (Hardin, 2006). Hardin et al.'s studies are important as they point to the potential value of considering multiple dimensions of self-construals. However, the meaning of factors they identified is far from clear. For instance, the factor which they label individualism includes a range of different themes: enjoying being unique, acting independently, importance of personal identity, respecting people that are modest, and having lively imagination. Moreover, the distinction between esteem for group and relational interdependence is not very clear since both include items referring to giving something up for one's group and sharing of one's fate with others. It should also be noted that although Hardin and colleagues' research (Hardin et al., 2004; Hardin, 2006) involved different ethnic groups, their participants were still all North American and their model has received mixed cross-cultural support (cf. Christopher et al., 2011; Milfont, 2005). In order to be more confident about the underlying structure of self-construals, it seems that more cross-cultural research is needed which incorporates a much wider range of cultures.

One such attempt was provided by Fernández, Paez, and González (2005) who, using data from student samples in 29 nations and a shortened version of Singelis' (1994) self-construal scale, identified four dimensions of self-construals. These were labelled group loyalty, uniqueness, low context and relational independence. Although some of these resemble the factors identified by Hardin et al. (2004), some items that were found to load on the same factor in Hardin et al.'s model, loaded on different factors in Fernández et al.'s model and vice versa. It is also possible that the factor structure that they extracted was influenced by the fact that they only used 13 items. For instance, none of the items that make up Hardin et al.'s primacy of self factor were included in their study. Moreover, the authors did not account for the multilevel

structure in their data and it is possible that their individual-level analyses were influenced by nation-level variation.

These studies raise the question of whether there are different ways of being independent and interdependent, which should be considered separately, even though there still seems to be some lack of clarity of what the different domains are. Investigating different domains of independence and interdependence may provide a clearer pattern of cross-cultural differences (Fiske, 2002). For example, it may be that striving for self-reliance on the one hand and striving for uniqueness on the other are in fact separate facets in which the self is defined in different ways. These separate facets may be differentially endorsed in particular cultures, and thus measures that confound these different facets may be unable to provide a clear picture of self-construals across cultures—perhaps explaining some of the inconsistent findings in the literature. Hardin and colleagues' studies (Hardin et al., 2004; Hardin, 2006) point to the usefulness of looking at separate domains, however, their starting-point in terms of samples was too limited. Fernández et al.'s (2005) study provides an advancement in terms of their large cross-cultural dataset but used a restricted item pool and failed to account for the multilevel structure of the data. Hence, questions still remain with regards to how the different facets should be conceptualized. The current research aims to answer these questions, using two large and diverse cross-cultural datasets, and a wider range of self-construal items.

3.4 Self-Construals at the Cultural level

3.4.1 Social constructions of selfhood

Although self-construals have typically been viewed—and measured—as individual-level constructs, I would argue that self-construals can also be

conceptualized and measured at a cultural level of analysis. Given that the self-concept is an inherent part of the individual, the notion of characterizing cultures along self-construal dimensions may seem foreign. Nonetheless, individuals' self-construals are here considered to be grounded in social constructions of selfhood. These constructions are shared representations of the self and its relation to other people, which are created and maintained through interaction and practices within a culture (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Moscovici, 1988; Oyserman & Markus, 1998). These ideas or images about the self could include for instance that individuals strive for uniqueness or that they are highly committed to their group. This does not, however, imply conformity or uniformity in representations of the self within a culture—the social constructions may be internalized or resisted by individuals, generating substantial variation in individuals' construal of the self within any given cultural context. Nevertheless, it suggests that some systematic agreement exists within a culture which differentiates it from other cultures. Thus, I argue that constructions of selfhood can be described at a cultural level of analysis, and it is expected that these will be important dimensions on which to characterize cultures.

3.4.2 Differences across levels

Investigating self-construals at a cultural level requires a sample of cultures that is large enough to use culture as a level of analysis, rather than the two- or three-nation comparisons that are more common in self-construal research. Relationships can then be investigated using cultures, rather than individuals, as the unit of analyses. This avoids the danger of committing the ecological fallacy or the reverse ecological fallacy, considering that processes and relationships at these two levels of analysis can be very different (see Hofstede, 1980; Smith et al., 2006). Studies have found different

structures at the individual and cultural levels of analysis in several domains of cultural orientation. As noted above in Section 1.2.2, Leung et al. (2002) identified five dimensions of social axioms at the individual level, whereas at the cultural level the axioms were organized into a two-dimensional structure (Bond, Leung, Tong, et al., 2004). Similarly, Schwartz (1992, 2004) identified 10 different value types at the individual level, but found a somewhat different structure with only seven distinct value types at the cultural level. To my knowledge, however, no previous research has investigated self-construals at the cultural level. Hence, whether or not individuals and cultural groups can be positioned on the same self-construal dimensions remains an open empirical question.

3.5 Self-construals and I-C

3.5.1 Self-construals as a product of I-C

Although research into self-construals has been very generative in terms of identifying the consequences of different constructions of the self, it has shed less light on why self-construals differ across cultures (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). One of the most common explanations for differences in self-construals is I-C. However, the relationship between self-construals and I-C is ambiguous and conceptions of this relationship vary substantially in the literature. Some describe cultural-level I-C as causing differences in self-construals (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Kim, Aune, Hunter, Kim, & Kim, 2001; Park & Levine, 1999; Singelis & Brown, 1995), whereas others consider self-construals as synonymous with I-C (Oyserman et al., 2002). Still others draw the distinction in terms of levels of analysis, defining independence and interdependence as the individual-level ‘equivalent’ of cultural-level I-C (Smith, 2011). The situation is further complicated by the fact that the same items that are used to measure independence and interdependence

are also often used to measure I-C. However, as noted above, the present research argues that I-C includes more facets than just different social constructions of selfhood, notably also values and beliefs. Hence, I-C is not reducible to differences in self-construals, as argued above in Chapter 1.

3.5.2 Other antecedents of self-construals

Moreover, even though self-construals may vary meaningfully between individualistic and collectivistic societies, it is still not clear whether I-C is sufficient to account for variability in different constructions of the self. Georgas, Van de Vijver, and Berry (2004) found that psychological variables such as values and wellbeing were most strongly predicted by national wealth and religious heritage (see also Inglehart & Baker, 2000, and a longer discussion in Chapter 6, Section 6.3) and it is possible that these variables also predict self-construals above and beyond the influence of I-C. So far, there has been a tendency in the literature to rely on names of nations to infer culture and make sense of differences in self-construals, often based on comparisons of a small number of nations (but see Fernández et al., 2005). These studies can typically tell us that self-construals in, for example, the USA and Japan are different, but they do not tell us anything about why they differ—whether it is differences in I-C, economic development, religion, or other possible important nation-level variables (Georgas et al., 2004). Recently, there has been some interesting research into explanations of differences in self-construals. Kitayama, Ishii, Imada, Takemura, and Ramaswamy (2006) found that levels of independence in Japan could be explained in terms of voluntary settlement in the northern frontier and Oishi (2010) has shown that residential mobility promotes independence. Nonetheless, much more research is needed into the factors responsible for the observed differences between cultural groups.

3.6 Conclusion

It is clear from the above review that several issues remain in relation to self-construal theory and research. Although there have been indications of multidimensionality, it is still not clear along which dimensions self-construals are best conceptualized. Moreover, little is known about how self-construals vary beyond the North American and East Asian comparison and why they vary. In the present thesis, I aimed to address the issues. In Chapter 6, data from two large and culturally diverse sets of national samples is reported, including many national groups that are normally not featured in the self-construal literature. The structure of self-construals was tested in exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses among high-school students (Study 3) and among adults using an improved measure (Study 4). In Study 5, I investigated the cross-cultural variation in constructions of the self and sought to explain this variation in terms of cultural and societal antecedents. Finally, in Chapter 7, I investigate how self-construals relate to a range of variables related to socio-emotional adjustment (Study 6).

Chapter 4

Methodological Overview

The aim of the research presented in this thesis was to explore dimensions of cultural variation and validate these constructs and measures in terms of their reliability, cross-cultural and cross-level invariance, and convergent validity. Variation of national samples and predictive validity were also explored. This chapter outlines the methodological approach I took in order to achieve these aims. Firstly, it will provide an overview of the three research projects that the studies in this thesis are based on. It will then discuss more general methodological considerations for cross-cultural research.

4.1 Research project overview

4.1.1 Research project no. 1

This was an international collaborative research project into identity motives and sources of motive satisfaction (see the Culture and Identity Research Network, 2012). It was a questionnaire study in 19 nations, which was centrally coordinated by the University of Sussex research team, including Vivian Vignoles, Maja Becker, Rupert Brown, Peter Smith, Matt Easterbrook, and myself. Maja Becker was the main coordinator of the project but I worked on theory and questionnaire development for the measures I was developing as well as translations, UK data collection, data screening, analyses, and report writing of these measures. I also supported her in other areas of the research. Our international collaborators collected and entered data locally, which was then collated and analysed by the Sussex research team.

This project was longitudinal and involved two waves of data collection, roughly four months apart. Measures investigating identity motives were repeated in order to address issues of causality (see Becker et al., 2012) whereas the individual difference variables which this thesis is based on were only measured once (details of measures can be found in sections 5.2.1.2 and 6.1.1.2). The participants were high-school students who participated in the research during normal teaching time and a total of 5,241 students took part in the study (details of samples can be found in Chapter 5, Table 5.1). Overall participation is higher for upper secondary education than for university education (UNESCO, 2010), suggesting that these samples were somewhat more representative of their respective cultures than university students, which are more common in cross-cultural research.

Study 1 and Study 3 in the present thesis is based on data from this research project.

4.1.2 Research project no. 2

The second research project was an extension of the first and was conducted in 36 nations but with only one wave of data collection. The organisation of the project was the same as the first, but with a larger number of international collaborators. The questionnaire included mostly the same measures as in the first project, even though some scales were slightly modified (see Section 5.3.1.2 and 6.2.1.2). Rather than students, we sampled non-student adults in this second research project. Given that the overall aim of the research was to achieve a greater understanding of cultural variation, we considered it important to go beyond student samples since these are likely to be less representative of their cultures than adults. The adult samples were opportunity samples, recruited through a variety of means including a snowballing technique among the

researchers' social networks, through community groups and non-governmental organizations, and with help of university students who collected data from their relatives. Thus, our adult samples were not representative of their respective nations and were not matched in any way. Nonetheless, the diversity of our samples should be considered a strength of this research since it has a greater chance of reflecting true cultural variation than the more common approach of using university students.

Moreover, the second research project also sampled different cultural groups within nations. As noted above, one criticism of cross-cultural research has been the overreliance on nations as the unit of analysis. Although there are indications that this is a meaningful and useful approach (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011; Smith, 2004a), we wanted to go further and incorporated also different groups within nations. These cultural groups were defined in terms of what was relevant in the local context, hence, the groups were sometimes geographical, sometimes ethnic or sometimes religious (see details in Chapter 6, Table 6.4). In one group, highlanders in Ethiopia, some participants were semi-literate or illiterate and they were helped reading the questions by the research assistants.

Study 2, 4 and 5 in the present thesis is based on data from this second research project.

4.1.3 Research project no. 3

The third research project was a much smaller questionnaire study, including four national samples from Malaysia, Romania, Thailand and the UK. These samples were chosen for practical reasons but they fit in to the common practice in the literature of comparing Western and East Asian countries, as well as adding a slightly different perspective from an ex-communist European sample. The study was conducted among

university and high-school students (see details Section 7.1.1.1). I was in charge of the coordination of the project and three international collaborators conducted the data collection outside of the UK.

Study 6 in the present thesis is based on data from this third research project.

4.2 Methodological considerations

4.2.1 Translations

Most cross-cultural research involves translation of some form or another. This is often a difficult and time-consuming process which involves close scrutiny of the translated and the original material. A common practice which we adopted in all of the studies presented here is the process of back-translation (Brislin, 1970). This involves translating the original material to the other language, then independently translating it back to the original. The two original language versions are then compared and any discrepancies are highlighted. Through discussions, the translation or the original are then improved to resolve inconsistencies. In the present research, a lot of effort was made to achieve an optimal translation which would best reflect the original meaning in all languages. This often involved lengthy discussions and compromises, where the original sometimes had to be simplified to allow more straightforward translation. Back-translation provides a valuable tool for checking accuracy and comparability of different language version. Without such tests, it would be impossible to get a sense of whether observed differences are due to substantial cultural differences or different meanings attributed to the questionnaire items.

Nonetheless, I also tried to go beyond using only back-translation and aimed to adopt a decentered approach (more details in Section 6.2.1.2). Such an approach holds translatability and comparability of meaning at the forefront even at the stage of item

generation and avoids words or expressions that are specific to one language or culture. Aiming to construct scales that not only would be easy to translate but also easy to understand, in particular among non-Western participants, I discussed items with native speakers of several other languages and generated many versions which were improved based on input and feedback. The aim was to avoid culturally biased material in the questionnaires and allow for emic input, even though I recognise that this input could have been much greater.

4.2.2 Acquiescence response bias

Another issue in cross-cultural research is acquiescence response bias, which refers to the tendency to agree with items, regardless of their content. This bias has been found to be more pronounced in collectivistic cultures (Smith, 2004b), and can lead to spurious and misleading results (Schimmack et al., 2005). The present research therefore adopted several strategies to reduce this problem. Firstly, unlike many well-used cross-cultural scales (e.g. Singelis, 1994), reversed items were included as much as possible. Secondly, where appropriate, I controlled for acquiescence by modelling it as a separate factor within a structural equation framework (Welkenhuysen-Gybels, Billiet, & Cambré, 2003, see details in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2.1). Thirdly, where modelling an acquiescence factor was not feasible, item scores were ipsatized for each individual. This involved taking the mean across all items for each individual and subtracting this mean from each item (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005).

4.2.3 Cross-cultural invariance analysis

As noted above in Section 1.1.2, a further issue in cross-cultural research refers to the cross-cultural validity of instruments. Alongside back-translation and decentring

of questionnaire material, I used cross-cultural measurement invariance as a way to test comparability. This involved tests of whether the measures had a comparable meaning across the nations sampled, so that subsequent analysis of national differences was not ‘comparing apples with oranges’—that is, observed differences could be attributed to genuine differences among the samples rather than methodological artefacts (Chen, 2008; Fischer & Fontaine, 2011). Establishing measurement invariance involves several steps: firstly, the measurement model is tested in each group separately, with the aim of identifying a subset of items that show the same factor structure in each group, with all indicators related to the factor in the expected manner—known as *configural invariance*. Secondly, in a model which analyzes all samples simultaneously, loadings are constrained to be equal and the impact on model fit is assessed. If the fit of the constrained model remains acceptable, it is preferred to the unconstrained model because it is more parsimonious, and the hypothesis of metric invariance can be considered tenable (Davidov, Schmidt, & Schwartz, 2008; Little, Card, Slegers, & Ledford, 2007).⁵ *Metric invariance* signifies that variance in each item is related to the same extent in each sample to variance in the underlying construct. This implies that the construct has a comparable meaning across samples, and that one can validly compare correlational patterns across samples. Thirdly, the intercepts are constrained to be equal and if the fit remain acceptable, scalar invariance can be considered tenable. *Scalar*

⁵ Invariance has traditionally been assessed by the difference in the chi-square statistic between the unconstrained and the constrained model. However, given its sensitivity to sample size, it is unsuitable for large samples. The alternative criterion of a change in CFI smaller than or equal to .01 (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002) has often been used by researchers comparing a small numbers of groups. Note, however, that this criterion was based on a simulation study with only two groups and little is known about its suitability for analyses with a larger number of groups. Indeed, this criterion has not typically been used in studies with many cultural groups (e.g. Davidov, Schmidt, & Schwartz, 2008; Fischer et al., 2009; Franke & Nadler, 2008; Spini, 2003).

invariance signifies that absolute scores on each item are related to the same absolute levels of the underlying construct, and thus group means can be validly compared (Chen, 2008). By testing the validity of the measures cross-culturally and adjusting them to fit also in local contexts, the present research aimed for a “derived etic” approach (see Section 1.1.2 above).

4.2.4 Cross-level invariance analysis

As was also noted above, the need to distinguish between levels of analysis is very important in cross-cultural research in order to avoid the ecological fallacy and the reversed ecological fallacy (Hofstede, 1980). The large datasets included in the present research made it possible to simultaneously investigate structures and processes at both the individual and cultural level. In order to test whether the dimensions of cultural orientations exist at both levels of analysis and whether they have comparable meaning, I tested for *multilevel isomorphism*. This involves testing whether a comparable structure can be identified at both levels, with similar strengths of relationships between the items and the underlying construct. If established, isomorphism signifies that the internal structure that characterizes individuals can also be applied to nations (for discussion see Fischer, 2009). It should be noted, however, that even though a construct may have comparable meaning across levels, it does not mean that it necessarily will have the same antecedents and consequences.

These analyses were conducted in multilevel analyses, which require a sample of nations. Kreft and De Leeuw (1998) have suggested that 20 groups are sufficient at the highest level. The multilevel analyses in Study 1 involved a nation-level sample size very close to this (19 national samples) and in Study 4 I used 64 cultural groups, hence, I can be relatively confident in the accuracy of the analyses.

4.2.5 Nomological networks and outcomes

In order to further investigate the validity and usefulness of the dimensions of cultural orientation identified in the present research, nomological networks and potential outcomes were also investigated. This allowed for a greater understanding of the meaning of the constructs as well as illuminated how they can be useful in understanding societal and individual processes.

For the nation-level analyses, I consulted relevant existing databases and previous research in order to identify suitable variables. These included societal variables such as national wealth, inequality, corruption, democracy and urbanisation, as well as ecological variables such as climate. I also sourced nation-level scores on ingroup favouritism (Van de Vliert, 2010), religiosity (The World Values Survey Association, 2011), Hofstede's (1980) four cultural dimensions, monumentalism (vs. flexumility; Minkov, 2007), social axioms (Bond, Leung, Tong, et al., 2004), and tightness (Gelfand et al., 2011) among others. This approach is not without problems, however. Firstly, the overlap of nations included in the present research and the existing databases was often far from perfect, which reduced the sample size and may therefore have increased Type 2 error. Secondly, the samples on which the existing data are based are likely to be very different from the present research (e.g. business managers vs. students), which limits the conclusions that can be drawn. Nonetheless, these analyses are valuable since they highlight nation-level patterns and make it possible to relate more clearly to previous research.

For the individual-level analyses in Study 6, I looked at how self-construals relate to a range of variables related to socio-emotional adjustment. The main aim of these analyses was to get a sense of how the different ways of constructing the self can be useful in predicting different outcomes, by showing a unique pattern of correlations.

The outcomes included life-satisfaction, depression, social anxiety, self-efficacy, self-esteem, coping strategies, narcissism, and authenticity. These outcomes were chosen because they refer to healthy and constructive psychological functioning (or lack thereof), in which different constructions of the self are likely to play a part. Emotional, rather cognitive, outcomes have received less attention in self-construal research, hence, this particular focus could potentially add something to the literature (Cross et al., 2011). This study provided only some initial results, however, and there is a lot of scope for building on these in future research.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the three research projects that this thesis is based on and has discussed several methodological issues which arise in cross-cultural research. It is clear that multinational studies pose many challenges, including translations, acquiescence response bias, invariance across cultures and levels of analysis, and use of nation-level indices which are based on very different types of samples. Nonetheless, multinational studies also have the potential to add to the literature in unique ways. In particular, the possibility of investigating both individual and cultural-level process opens up for a whole set of questions which two-or three nation studies cannot even begin to answer. The present research involved two large multinational research projects which combined included samples from all inhabited continents. Thus, we included samples that are normally underrepresented in the social psychological literature, such as African, South American and the Middle Eastern samples. This diverse dataset allowed me ask a range of questions about cultural variation and I believe the answers to these questions would have been very different without this diversity.

Chapter 5

Contextualism as an Important Facet of Individualism-Collectivism⁶

The aim of this chapter is to investigate a belief component of I-C. As discussed in Chapter 2, this is likely to involve beliefs about the individual's relation to the social context. Thus, I propose the construct of contextualism, defined as the perceived importance of the context in understanding people. This chapter presents two studies describing the development and validation of a scale measuring contextualism, investigating its correlates at both individual and cultural levels of analysis, and its incremental predictive validity. Based on an exploratory pilot study in India and the UK, a scale was developed which in Study 1 was refined and tested across 19 nations. In Study 2, it was investigated whether nation-level contextualism predicts additional variance in cultural variables, after controlling for differences in values and self-construals, across 35 nations.

5.1. Pilot

An initial pool of items was piloted among respondents in India and the UK (Vignoles, Owe, Lee, & Gadre, 2010). These items referred to the importance of a range of different contexts, including relational, group, societal and physical contexts, in defining a person. Matsumoto, Yoo, and Fontaine (2009) have found that in

⁶ This chapter is closely adapted from parts of Owe et al. (2013).

collectivistic cultures, behaviour tends to vary more across different contexts than in individualistic cultures, and they call this variation context differentiation. We wanted to investigate whether the conceptualization of contextualism was distinct from beliefs about the variability of behaviour across contexts and we therefore included items also referring to this facet. Items tapping dispositional attributes were also included in order to investigate whether these would load negatively on items tapping the importance of the social context, in order to test the idea that the importance of the context was better to consider in its own right. A pan-cultural factor analysis showed that items referring to the importance of the context in defining a person factored together whereas they did not factor with items referring to beliefs in context differentiation, demonstrating that these are independent dimensions. Nor did items tapping dispositional attributes negatively load on the importance of the context dimension. We also tested correlations between contextualism and dimensions of essentialism (Haslam et al., 2004), which were small, suggesting that these variables are indeed measuring different things. Similarly, we found contextualism to be unrelated to the perceived stability, consistency and predictability of traits, as well as to the possibility of inferring traits from behaviour (Church et al., 2003).

5.2. Study 1: Introducing and Validating Contextualism

In Study 1, the contextualism measure was refined using data from participants in 19 nations. The internal structure of the scale and its cross-cultural equivalence were tested through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), including separate analyses for each group, multigroup analyses, and multilevel analyses. Variation in contextualism among cultures and individuals was then investigated, and it was expected that

contextualism beliefs would be higher in those nations identified as more collectivist in previous cross-cultural research (House et al., 2004).

The confusion in the literature around the I-C construct can be attributed in part to the confounding of different levels of analysis; hence an important task in disentangling I-C lies in specifying differences and similarities between levels. I therefore examined the relationship between contextualism beliefs and other supposed facets of I-C at both individual and cultural levels of analysis. It was expected that contextualism beliefs would be correlated with relevant dimensions of values (autonomy vs. embeddedness) and self-construals (independent vs. interdependent self-construals) at the cultural level, as they have been theorized as elements of the same cultural syndrome (Triandis, 1993). At the individual level, however, there was little reason to expect these constructs to be correlated, as a person's beliefs, values and representations of the self do not necessarily go together consistently and often show very little overlap (Bond, Leung, Au, Tong, & Chemonges-Nielson, 2004), although there is recent evidence of longitudinal reciprocal relationships between values and beliefs (Goodwin, Polek, & Bardi, 2012).

5.2.1. Method

5.2.1.1 Participants and procedure

A total of 5,241 participants across 19 nations completed the questionnaire. Sample sizes ranged from 104 (Namibia) to 737 (Brazil). Table 5.1 reports demographic details. In most countries, participants were high-school students, who took part in the study during teaching time.⁷

⁷ Participants in the Philippines were university students, as they had a similar age range to high-school students in other countries.

Table 5.1 Demographic Details, Fit Indices, Reliabilities and Means for Each National Sample Study 1

Country	N	Mean age	SD	% females	Language	χ^2	df	CFI	RMSEA	α	Means		
											C	A	I
Belgium	251	18.22	1.09	68	French	14.90*	7	.97	.07	.73	3.04	1.32	1.17
Brazil	737	17.43	3.62	61	Portuguese	9.23	7	1.00	.02	.63	3.23	1.23	0.66
Chile	401	16.81	0.63	47	Spanish	15.50*	7	.98	.06	.72	2.73	1.14	0.87
China	227	16.33	0.67	48	Chinese	13.20	7	.97	.06	.65	2.94	0.48	-
Colombia	205	16.40	0.89	42	Spanish	10.50	7	.98	.05	.64	2.90	1.40	0.59
Estonia	234	17.72	0.71	59	Estonian	14.63*	7	.97	.07	.69	3.36	1.20	1.16
Ethiopia	250	18.47	0.94	45	Amharic	9.58	7	.98	.04	.40	3.62	0.15	- 0.12
Georgia	250	17.03	0.41	58	Georgian	34.37***	7	.90	.13	.64	2.92	0.60	0.74
Hungary	239	17.34	0.86	52	Hungarian	3.15	7	1.00	.00	.69	2.77	1.22	1.19
Italy	325	18.65	0.79	52	Italian	13.36	7	.98	.05	.72	3.19	0.48	1.01
Lebanon	300	17.86	0.54	46	Arabic	17.22*	7	.94	.07	.57	3.09	0.56	0.92
Namibia	104	17.69	0.96	62	English	19.23**	7	.81	.13	.59	2.75	- 0.04	-
Oman	251	17.11	0.83	49	Arabic	9.19	7	.99	.04	.62	3.23	- 0.06	0.47
Philippines	301	17.77	1.60	66	English	20.00**	7	.97	.08	.75	3.92	0.14	0.55
Poland	250	18.07	0.59	57	Polish	37.23***	7	.94	.13	.79	2.85	0.92	0.81
Romania	221	17.95	0.86	49	Romanian	18.91**	7	.95	.09	.64	2.98	0.69	1.00
Spain	242	17.25	0.83	54	Spanish	8.82	7	1.00	.03	.77	2.78	1.32	0.57
Turkey	197	17.09	0.72	50	Turkish	3.51	7	1.00	.00	.46	3.41	0.12	-
UK	256	17.69	0.96	76	English	3.98	7	1.00	.00	.74	2.83	1.31	0.81
Overall	5241	17.51	1.70	55						.69	3.08	0.75	0.78

Note. CFI = Comparative fit index; RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation; C = contextualism; A = autonomy (vs. embeddedness); I = independence/interdependence.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

5.2.1.2 Instruments

Contextualism. There were 14 items tapping the importance of a range of different contexts: family, social groups, position in society, the place one comes from, occupation, where one lives, social position, role in society and educational achievement (see Appendix A). Items were rated on six-point scales ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 6 (*completely agree*).

Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ). A short version of the PVQ (Schwartz, 2007) was used to measure the bipolar dimension openness to change (vs. conservation; 12 items) at the individual level and autonomy (vs. embeddedness) at the nation level (aggregated national means of 10 items).⁸ This latter dimension is closely related to I-C (Gheorghiu et al., 2009). Items gave a short description of a person with gender matched to the participant, e.g. “*Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to her. She likes to do things in her own original way.*” Participants rated how similar each person was to themselves, from 1 (*very much like me*) to 6 (*not at all like me*). These scores were reversed so that higher numbers indicated greater value endorsement. Reliability was acceptable at the individual level ($\alpha = .60$) and good at the nation level ($\alpha = .78$).

Self-construal scale. Twenty-three items from Gudykunst and colleagues’ (Gudykunst et al., 1996) self-construal scale were used. Data for this scale were collected in the second wave of the first multinational research project. Hence, a subset of participants (3,552 participants in 16 nations) completed this scale. We included 14

⁸ The short version of the PVQ, with a total of 21 items, is not optimal for measuring autonomy (vs. embeddedness), as ideally one would use more items. However, given that acceptable reliability was established in these studies, the decision was made to include it. Two fewer items were used at the cultural level as there is a potential shift in meaning of these items across levels (Schwartz, personal communication, March 1, 2011).

items tapping independence (e.g., “*I should be judged on my own merit*”) and nine interdependence items (e.g., “*It is important to consult close friends and get their ideas before making decisions*”).⁹ Items were rated from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*). Since this scale is not balanced, items were ipsatized order to remove acquiescence. Initial analyses revealed poor reliabilities for the two original dimensions. The items were therefore combined into a single bipolar scale measuring independence (vs. interdependence), which showed adequate individual-level reliability ($\alpha = .63$) and good nation-level reliability ($\alpha = .81$).¹⁰

Nation-level ingroup collectivism. As an additional measure of nation-level I-C, I used the GLOBE project’s nation-scores for ingroup collectivism practices (House et al., 2004).¹¹

5.2.2 Results and Discussion

5.2.2.1 Refining and testing the contextualism scale

Before testing the main predictions, the psychometric properties of the scale were evaluated, especially its suitability for cross-cultural and multilevel analyses. In doing so, the scale was refined, eliminating items that failed to perform comparably across our cultural samples. Thus, it was ensured that the scale had a comparable meaning across the nations sampled. To do this, I ran a series of CFAs, using AMOS

⁹ For reasons of space, two items that seemed irrelevant to high-school students were excluded and four items were excluded because of conceptual redundancy.

¹⁰ These analyses were conducted prior to the development of the new self-construal model in Chapter 6. I tried unidimensional and bidimensional structures here because these have been most commonly used in previous literature (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Singelis, 1994).

¹¹ House et al. (2004) created four different collectivism measures. However, their measure of ingroup collectivism practices is closest to the construct of I-C as defined and measured elsewhere in cross-cultural psychology (House et al., 2004; see also Smith, 2006).

16.0 for single-group and multigroup analyses and Mplus Version 5 for multilevel analyses. The measurement model included two factors: contextualism was represented as a single latent factor, but I also modeled variation in acquiescent responding with an uncorrelated method factor that loaded onto every item at a fixed value of 1 (Welkenhuysen-Gybels et al., 2003). Model fit was assessed using the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). Values of CFI above .90 and RMSEA up to .08 are seen as acceptable (Kline, 2005).

Achieving configural invariance. First, the aim was to refine the scale to include only cross-culturally valid items. Initial analyses with the 14 items provided a poor fit in most samples, with several items not loading as expected in some countries. Items with non-significant loadings in any one of the national groups were removed, with just one exception, to create a balanced scale with six items (see Appendix A). Item 3 loaded non-significantly in Ethiopia, but was retained in order to keep the scale balanced. Modification indices suggested a strong association between items 8 and 14 in most groups, and residuals of these two items were therefore allowed to covary. The model showed good fit in 16 samples, marginal fit in the Georgian and Polish samples and poor fit in the Namibian sample (which had the smallest sample size; see Table 5.1). The fit of the model in these three samples could however be improved substantially if one more residual covariance was added in each group.¹² Reliabilities were acceptable in most nations (see Table 5.1).

Testing metric and scalar invariance. I then created a six-item model as a multigroup model, again including a method factor, analyzing data from all samples

¹² Adding a covariance in the Georgian sample between the residuals of item 3 and 11, in the Polish sample between item 13 and 14 and in the Namibian sample between item 13 and 11, improved model fit in these samples to an acceptable level.

Table 5.2 Multigroup and Multilevel Invariance Analysis Study 1

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	CFI	RMSEA	RMSEA 90% CI	
					LL	UL
Model 1, configural invariance	276.64***	133	.97	.06	.05	.07
Model 2, factor loadings constrained	469.45***	223	.95	.07	.06	.07
Model 3, factor loadings and intercepts constrained	1091.59***	295	.85	.10	.09	.11
Model 4, factor loadings and 5 intercepts constrained	781.66***	277	.90	.08	.07	.09
Model 5, multilevel baseline model.	104.02***	15	.98	.03	-	-
Model 6, multilevel model with cross-level constraints on factor loadings	139.77***	21	.98	.03	-	-

Note. CFI = Comparative fit index; RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation. CI = Confidence intervals; LL = Lower level; UL = Upper level. Multilevel analyses did not provide confidence intervals for RMSEA.

*** $p < .001$.

simultaneously (see Table 5.2, Model 1), and I tested the impact on model fit of constraining first the factor loadings (for metric invariance: Model 2) and then the intercepts (for scalar variance: Model 3) to be equal across samples. As outlined in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.3 above, if the fit of the constrained model remains acceptable, it is preferred to the unconstrained model because it is more parsimonious, and the hypothesis of invariance can be considered tenable (Davidov et al., 2008; Little et al., 2007). As shown in Table 5.2, Model 2 provided a good fit, supporting the hypothesis of metric invariance. However, Model 3 showed a relatively poor fit. Modification indices suggested that just one intercept (item 3) was problematic, and this intercept only was therefore allowed to vary across groups, thus testing for ‘partial intercept invariance’ (Byrne, Shavelson, & Muthén, 1989; Model 4). The fit of this model was acceptable, indicating that scalar invariance of the remaining five items was tenable. Baumgartner

and Steenkamp (1998) have proposed that as few as two invariant intercepts may be sufficient in order to make cross-cultural mean comparisons. With five invariant intercepts, it seems safe to make such comparisons with the contextualism scale.¹³

Properties of the scale as a nation-level measure. The analyses above treat the contextualism scale as an individual-level measure, confirming that the scale can be used validly to characterize individual differences in beliefs, as well as sample mean differences, in cross-cultural comparative research. However, it was argued above that contextualism can also be viewed as a culture-level construct (see Hofstede, 1980). The scale was therefore also tested for multilevel isomorphism, which signifies that the internal structure that characterizes individuals can also be applied to nations. First, I ran a multilevel CFA, specifying the same model from previous analyses at both individual and nation levels, except that no residual covariance was included at the nation level. This model showed excellent fit (see Table 5.2, Model 5). The factor loadings were then constrained to be equal across levels (Model 6). The fit of the constrained model remained excellent, which indicates that multilevel isomorphism is tenable.¹⁴ Thus, the same factor structure can be found at both individual and nation

¹³ In the process of refining the scale, eight items were eliminated as they were not cross-culturally comparable. Although the remaining combination of six items showed the highest level of invariance, it may be desirable to expand the scale in order to include a wider range of different contexts. Therefore, I also investigated an eight item version, which in addition to the six items included “*One can understand a person well without knowing about where he/she lives*” and “*To understand a person well, it is essential to know about his/her role in society*”, both of which had been found to be non-significant in Ethiopia and the latter also in Colombia. This eight-item version showed a slightly lower level of invariance. Most notably, three intercepts had to be allowed to vary in order to achieve intercept invariance. Nonetheless, depending on the nations involved and the level of invariance required, this eight-item version can be used by future researchers wanting to measure contextualism.

¹⁴ Given the non-invariant intercepts of item 3 in the multigroup analysis, I looked carefully at this item in the multilevel analysis. It had a larger nation-level error variance compared to other items but freeing its cross-level constraint did not improve model fit. So the loading of the item was similar at both levels of analysis.

levels, and the association between each indicator and the underlying construct is similar across levels. Hence, the scale appears to have a comparable meaning whether applied to individuals or nations, although as was noted in Section 4.2.4, this does not mean that nation-level and individual-level variation in contextualism necessarily will have the same antecedents or consequences. Reliability at the nation level was excellent ($\alpha = .87$).

5.2.2.2 Variation in contextualism among nations and individuals

To test the extent of variation among our samples, I estimated the intraclass correlation (ICC)—defined as the proportion of total variance found at the nation level rather than the individual level (Hox, 2002). Contextualism had an ICC of .11 ($p < .001$)¹⁵ indicating that an estimated 11% of the variance is found between nations. This is in line with ICCs for the other indicators of I-C: .13 for openness (vs. conservation) values and .11 for independence (vs. interdependence; both $p < .001$). This is also consistent with ICC coefficients in other large cross-cultural value research, which has found on average 11-12% of variance at the cultural level (Fischer & Schwartz, 2011). As can be seen in Table 5.1, the Philippine sample had the highest mean of contextualism, followed by the Ethiopian and Turkish samples. Notably, the Namibian sample scored second to lowest on both contextualism and autonomy (vs. embeddedness). Although perhaps surprising given that these variables are theoretically opposed, it should be noted that House et al. (2004) found Namibians to be low on ingroup collectivism, mirroring the present findings of contextualism.

Nation-level correlations. Given the small sample size at the nation level and the very large sample size at the individual level, it is probably most appropriate to evaluate

¹⁵ *P*-values refer to the cultural level variance component. Statistical significance indicates that members of the same group are more similar to each other/more different from members of other groups than would be expected by chance.

correlations at both levels in terms of size, rather than focusing on p -values. The predicted nation-level relationships between contextualism and other indicators of I-C were confirmed by substantial negative correlations with autonomy (vs. embeddedness; $r_{n=19} = -.48, p < .05$) and independence (vs. interdependence; $r_{n=16} = -.44, p < .10$). Among those nations with available data, contextualism showed a positive correlation with ingroup collectivism ($r_{n=12} = .43, ns$). Although non-significant given the sample size, the magnitude of this correlation is striking, considering that the GLOBE project sampled middle-managers, who would have been differentially representative of their nations compared to our samples. Overall, contextualism correlated as well with the other indices of I-C (mean $|r| = .45$) as these indices correlated with each other (mean $|r| = .35$). Autonomy (vs. embeddedness) correlated strongly with independence (vs. interdependence; $r_{n=16} = .49, p < .10$) but less strongly with ingroup collectivism ($r_{n=12} = -.19, ns$), which in turn was moderately related to independence (vs. interdependence; $r_{n=9} = -.37, ns$). Taken together, these nation-level correlations support the view of contextualism as a facet of collectivism.

Individual-level correlations. Prior to analyses, all variables were standardized within nations. This removes nation-level differences and analyses at this level are therefore ‘within-nations’. As predicted, correlations between contextualism and openness (vs. conservation) and independence (vs. interdependence) were small ($r_{n=5209} = -.11, p < .01$; $r_{n=4555} = .01, ns$, respectively).¹⁶ In contrast, the correlation between openness (vs. conservation) and independence (vs. interdependence) was slightly larger ($r_{n=4564} = .21, p < .01$). This is consistent with earlier findings using this self-construal scale (Gudykunst et al., 1996). Overall, however, the different facets of I-C did not converge at the individual level.

¹⁶ These correlations remained small ($r < .20$) when I computed disattenuated correlations, which are adjusted for unreliability.

5.3 Study 2: Contextualism as a Predictor of Societal Processes

Study 1 provided evidence for the cross-cultural validity of the contextualism scale and its nomological network, which indicated that nation-level contextualism can be considered a facet of collectivism. In Study 2, I investigated its predictive validity—that is, whether or not contextualism is useful as an explanatory construct. The focus here is on contextualism as a cultural construct, as it was shown to be part of I-C at this level, and does not extend to individual-level contextualism. I investigate to what extent nation-level contextualism can explain cross-cultural differences in relevant outcomes and whether it will add any explanatory power over and above values and self-construals.

It has been suggested that in collectivist cultures, the distinction between ingroups and outgroups is sharper than in individualist cultures (Triandis, 1972). This pattern could arguably be explained in part by the different sets of beliefs about people that are generally held within the culture. Contextualism beliefs refer to the importance of contexts, such as family, social groups and social positions, in understanding people. With emphasis on these contextual factors, people in highly contextualist nations are likely to differentiate between people and engage in differential treatment of others based on these factors. In contrast, in nations where a decontextualized conception of persons is emphasized, less weight will be given to contextual factors, and therefore people are more likely to be treated based on their own personal attributes, rather than based on their social position or connections. Contextualism may therefore contribute to our understanding of a range of processes in which people are treated differently based on their group memberships. Thus, I investigated the role of contextualism in relation to three variables where sharper distinctions are made between different groups of people:

ingroup favouritism, differential trust of ingroup and outgroup members, and corruption.

Although the relationship between I-C and ingroup bias appears somewhat complex at the individual level (for a discussion see Smith & Long, 2006), it is likely that cultures that emphasize the importance of family and social groups will also promote a more favourable evaluation of these groups compared to other groups. Similarly, given the importance of group boundaries in collectivistic cultures, it is also likely that there will be significantly more trust towards ingroups than towards outgroups, especially in cultures high on contextualism, compared to cultures in which contextualist beliefs are not highly endorsed.¹⁷ Moreover, in corrupt societies, certain groups are given preferential treatment in distribution of power or resources, often based on social status or relational ties. I suggest that strong endorsement of beliefs in the importance of social positions, social groups and family in how people are defined, will promote a climate where such tendencies are seen as more natural. Finally, although beliefs, values and self-construals appear to all be part of cultural-level I-C and are correlated at the nation level, a majority of the variance is still not shared which suggests they are tapping somewhat different aspects. Hence, it was expected that contextualism would predict these outcomes while controlling for values and self-construal at the nation level.

¹⁷ A related perspective on cultural differences in trust comes from Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) who make a distinction between unconditional trust based on expectations of goodwill, and assurance, or conditional 'trust', which is a function of individuals' social relationships. They suggest that collectivistic cultures are low on the former but high on the latter (see also Gheorghiu et al., 2009).

5.3.1 Method

5.3.1.1 Participants and procedure

The same measures as in Study 1 were included in the second large cross-cultural study. This was a larger study with 35 nations¹⁸ (see Table 5.3) and rather than high-school students, it included adult samples. A total of 8652 adults took part in the study, with samples sizes ranging from 71 (Thailand) to 566 (India). A variety of means were used to recruit opportunity samples of adults in different locations, including a snowballing technique among the researchers' social networks, through community groups and non-governmental organizations, and with help of university students who collected data from their relatives. Table 5.3 reports demographic details.

5.3.1.2 Instruments

Contextualism. I used the final six-item scale from Study 1 and investigated its equivalence across cultures once again. A multigroup model, again including a method factor, analyzing all samples simultaneously, showed a good model fit (CFI = .98, RMSEA = .07) and the fit remained good when all factor loadings were constrained (CFI = .97, RMSEA = .06), however not when all intercepts were constrained (CFI = .89, RMSEA = .09). Therefore, I tested for partial intercept invariance again by once more freeing the intercept of Item 3 which resulted in an acceptable fit (CFI = .92, RMSEA = .08). Hence, I was able to establish the same level of invariance as in the previous study with this increased number of samples. Moreover, the scale showed good overall reliability at the individual level ($\alpha = .75$) and excellent cultural level reliability ($\alpha = .90$).

¹⁸ We received data from Nigeria subsequent to conducting these analyses. Parallel analyses including this sample yielded identical conclusions to those reported here.

Table 5.3 Demographic Details and Means for National Samples Study 2

Country	<i>N</i>	Mean age	<i>SD</i>	% females	Language	C	Means A	I
Belgium	363	36.37	11.56	47	French	2.99	0.61	0.19
Brazil	500	32.68	12.96	57	Portuguese	3.57	0.60	0.01
Cameroon	100	26.07	6.10	57	English	3.15	- 0.72	- 0.07
Chile	300	41.64	14.10	57	Spanish	3.21	0.13	0.45
China	260	31.38	8.49	69	Chinese	3.85	- 0.41	- 0.04
Colombia	300	36.96	12.59	62	Spanish	3.17	0.36	0.48
Egypt	164	31.12	9.98	52	Arabic	3.45	- 0.47	- 0.19
Ethiopia	300	34.07	9.15	42	Amharic	4.22	- 0.02	0.13
Georgia	219	41.23	14.42	58	Georgian	3.55	- 0.56	- 0.32
Germany	257	40.04	15.11	59	German	3.35	0.03	0.23
Ghana	116	28.58	5.08	24	English	3.19	- 0.50	0.05
Hungary	243	35.54	12.48	47	Hungarian	3.32	0.26	0.35
Iceland	124	35.29	13.29	68	Icelandic	3.15	0.46	0.17
India	566	35.69	10.83	44	Hindi, English	3.53	- 0.29	- 0.26
Italy	173	39.01	13.13	71	Italian	3.47	- 0.78	0.02
Japan	284	43.83	15.34	62	Japanese	3.03	0.18	0.23
Lebanon	265	35.12	14.01	49	Arabic	3.27	0.04	0.26
Malaysia	150	28.05	7.92	63	Malay	3.79	- 0.32	0.00
Namibia	204	24.61	5.70	66	English	2.91	0.06	0.51
New Zealand	204	34.91	13.06	49	English	3.39	0.61	0.26
Norway	102	37.01	13.53	59	Norwegian	2.79	0.16	0.18
Oman	160	25.21	4.98	45	Arabic	3.36	- 0.31	- 0.09
Peru	154	35.52	15.04	58	Spanish	3.53	- 0.13	0.28
Philippines	308	28.58	11.22	51	English, Tausug	3.99	- 0.18	- 0.12
Romania	482	35.74	13.19	58	Romania	3.22	- 0.10	0.15
Russia	262	30.92	12.19	79	Russian	3.20	0.00	0.11
Singapore	110	34.95	12.74	54	English	3.73	0.02	- 0.02
South Africa	496	30.80	11.46	59	English	3.45	0.07	0.39
Spain	180	40.11	14.60	52	Spanish	3.40	0.37	0.02
Sweden	101	45.18	16.01	65	Swedish	3.11	0.63	0.07
Thailand	71	27.99	6.71	69	Thai	3.92	0.40	0.03
Turkey	248	39.83	10.46	61	Turkish	3.55	- 0.34	0.11
Uganda	444	34.62	6.35	51	English	3.70	- 0.15	- 0.04
UK	228	47.19	17.32	66	English	3.16	0.16	- 0.08
USA	214	31.60	13.26	66	English, Spanish	3.63	0.63	0.63
Overall	8652	35.02	12.99	56		3.41	0.02	0.12

Note. C = contextualism; A = autonomy (vs. embeddedness); I = independence (vs. interdependence).

Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ). I used the same short version of the PVQ as in Study 1 and the same dimension of autonomy (vs. embeddedness) as in the previous study ($\alpha = .65$).

Self-construal scale. The scale included in this study was slightly shorter than in Study 1 with eight items measuring independence and eight items measuring interdependence. As before, these were combined into a bipolar scale, independence (vs. interdependence). Because of the often complex sentence structure and their abstract and decontextualized nature, the original items from Gudykunst et al. (1996) were reworded (see Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1.2 for more details). For example “*It is important to maintain harmony within my group*” was reworded as “*You show your inner feelings even if it disturbs the harmony in your family*” (reversed). Moreover, rather than rating the items on *agree-disagree* scales, participants were asked “*How well does each of these statements describe you*”, which was rated on nine-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*exactly*). Individual-level scores were aggregated to the nation level ($\alpha = .59$).

Ingroup favouritism. Nation scores for ingroup favouritism were taken from Van de Vliert (2010), who demonstrated that nation-level compatriotism (from the World Value Survey, WVS¹⁹), nepotism (from World Economic Forum, 2004) and familism (from House et al., 2004) formed a common factor ($\alpha = .86$ among the nations sampled here).

Differentiated trust. The fifth wave of the WVS asks about levels of trust in people from different groups, including family, the neighbourhood, people one knows personally, people of another religion and people of another nationality (Welzel, 2010). These were rated on four-point scales ranging from 1 (*trust completely*) to 4 (*do not*

¹⁹ Information on question wording, fieldwork, samples, and available data sets is available at www.worldvaluessurvey.org.

trust at all) but these were reversed for ease of interpretation. A measure of the difference in trust between ingroups and outgroups was constructed by subtracting the mean of outgroup trust (other religion and nationality; $\alpha = .93$) from the mean of ingroup trust (family, neighbourhood and known personally; $\alpha = .78$).²⁰

Corruption. National scores of corruption were derived from the 2010 Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International, 2011). The index is calculated so that a low score means high corruption, but the scores were reversed so that high scores meant high corruption.

5.3.2 Results and Discussion

Means of contextualism, values and self-construals are shown in Table 5.3. Compared to in Study 1, these show a wider range, especially towards the ‘collectivist’ end of the scales. This could be a reflection of the more diverse set of nations and the adult rather than student samples. Intercorrelations of the variables are given in Table 5.4. Compared to in Study 1, contextualism appears to be more clearly distinct from values and self-construals, increasing the chances of finding differential effects of these variables. The difference between the two studies could be due to the fact that the different facets of I-C are more loosely connected in the more diverse adult sample. It should be noted, however, that contextualism still appears to be part of I-C, as it is still strongly correlated with ingroup collectivism (see Table 5.4).

In order to investigate whether nation-level contextualism predicts ingroup favouritism, differentiated trust and corruption while controlling for autonomy (vs.

²⁰ In addition to these five items, one item refers to ‘people you meet for the first time’. Since it is not clear whether this item refers to a member of the ingroup or the outgroup, I did not include it in the measure of differentiated trust. However, if included in outgroup trust, it does not substantially change the results.

Table 5.4 Correlations Among Variables in Study 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Contextualism	-					
2. Autonomy (vs. embeddedness)	-.21	-				
3. Independence (vs. interdependence)	-.33 [†]	.53**	-			
4. Ingroup favouritism	.56**	-.58***	-.41*	-		
5. Differentiated trust	.44*	-.55**	-.45*	.76***	-	
6. Corruption	.39*	-.57***	-.27	.83***	.64**	-
7. Ingroup collectivism	.54*	-.57**	-.47*	.94***	.80***	.73***

Note. All variables are at the nation level. $N = 35$ for correlations between contextualism, autonomy/embeddedness, independence/interdependence and corruption. $N = 33$ for correlations with ingroup favouritism. $N = 24$ for correlations with differentiated trust. $N = 21$ for correlations with ingroup collectivism.

The correlation between ingroup favouritism and ingroup collectivism is particularly high because of an overlap of items between one facet of ingroup favouritism (familism) and ingroup collectivism. Because of this overlap, we did not control for ingroup collectivism in the regression analyses.

[†] $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

embeddedness) and nation-level independence/interdependence, three separate hierarchical regression analyses were conducted. Each outcome was regressed on values and self-construals entered into the first step. Contextualism was then entered alongside values and self-construals in the second step, in order to assess whether it would explain additional variance. The results from these analyses are shown in Table 5.5. Values and self-construals explained 35% of the variance in ingroup favouritism, and adding contextualism explained an additional 18% of variance, $\Delta F(1,29) = 11.14$, $p < .01$. In line with predictions, contextualism was a significant predictor of ingroup favouritism ($\beta = .45$, $p < .01$). Hence, in nations where contextual attributes are generally considered to be important, ingroups also tend to be favoured. Similarly, values and self-construals

Table 5.5 Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Ingroup Favouritism, Differentiated Trust and Corruption Study 2

Predictor	Ingroup favouritism		Differentiated trust		Corruption	
	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β
Step 1	.35**		.34**		.32**	
Autonomy (vs. embeddedness)		-.50**		-.43†		-.59**
Independence (vs. interdependence)		-.15		-.23		.05
Step 2	.18**		.12*		.09*	
Autonomy (vs. embeddedness)		-.48**		-.40†		-.58**
Independence (vs. interdependence)		-.02		-.19		.15
Contextualism		.45**		.35*		.32*
Total R^2	.53		.46		.41	
n	33		24		35	

Note. All variables are at the nation level.

† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

explained 34% of the variance in differentiated trust, and adding contextualism explained an additional 12% of variance, $\Delta F(1,20) = 4.38$, $p < .05$. As predicted, contextualism was a significant predictor of differentiated trust, ($\beta = .35$, $p < .05$), such that in nations high on contextualism, the difference between trust in ingroups and outgroups was larger. Finally, values and self-construals explained 32% of the variance in corruption scores, and adding contextualism explained an additional 9%, $\Delta F(1,31) = 4.78$, $p < .05$. Contextualism was a significant predictor of corruption ($\beta = .32$, $p < .05$)—the stronger the endorsement of contextualism beliefs in a nation, the higher the level of corruption, as predicted.

The above results highlight the importance of contextualism in cultural processes. Contextualism predicted ingroup favouritism, differentiated trust and

corruption, which confirms the notion that nation-level contextualism is related to sharper distinctions between people based on their contextual attributes and differential treatment based on these distinctions. However, it is important to keep in mind that these relationships were not tested at the individual level; the question of whether individual endorsement of contextualism beliefs is related to these outcomes still remains open. From these results we also cannot ascertain whether these results are a truly cultural phenomenon or the effect of aggregated individual processes, and multilevel analyses would be needed to disentangle these effects.

Contextualism was shown to be a significant predictor while controlling for values and self-construals, and it explained a substantial amount of incremental variance. Thus, although these cultural variables are interrelated, they are not synonymous. Rather they can complement each other as cultural measures, each tapping somewhat different aspects of culture. It should be noted, however, that although independence (vs. interdependence) was significantly correlated with ingroup favouritism and differentiated trust, it was never a significant predictor when entered at the same time as autonomy (vs. embeddedness). It appears these two variables share a substantial amount of variance and their explanatory power overlaps to some extent. In light of this, contextualism seems to be a more useful addition to values as a cultural-level predictor.²¹

5.4 General Discussion

A central theme within I-C refers to beliefs about individuals; still, this facet has rarely been explored. Moreover, although research has shown that variation in the importance of the context in person perception appears to map onto variation in I-C, no

²¹ It may be that the more differentiated model of self-construals presented in Chapter 6 will have greater explanatory power.

clear conceptualization and measurement of this variation has previously been put forward. I propose the construct of contextualism, defined as the importance of contextual attributes in understanding a person, to fill this gap in the literature. The operationalization of contextualism differs from previous measures of personhood beliefs in focusing on the context in its own right, rather than as the inverse of traitedness.

5.4.1 Contextualism as a Facet of Collectivism

I propose that contextualism should be considered an important facet of cultural collectivism. It was demonstrated that contextualism shows a similar proportion of nation-level variability to other supposed facets of I-C, such as values and self-construals, and the pattern of mean scores across nations appeared to broadly reflect differences in I-C. At the nation level it converges with indicators of I-C as strongly as they converge with each other. It should be noted, however, that the nation-level correlations were not so high as to suggest that these constructs are interchangeable. Low autonomy values cannot simply be equated with high contextualism, as illustrated by the Namibian sample in Study 1 which scored low on both dimensions. Similarly, the Cameroonian sample scored low on both dimensions and the Thai sample scored high on both dimensions in Study 2. Moreover, while scoring highest on independence (vs. interdependence), the sample from the USA also scored relatively high on contextualism. It is therefore important to measure I-C in terms of multiple facets, in order to capture the breadth and richness of this construct.

The importance of measuring these different facets separately was also demonstrated in Study 2. Nation-level contextualism was shown to predict incremental variance in ingroup favouritism, differentiated trust and corruption after controlling for

variation in values and self-construals. This confirms contextualism as a useful cultural construct which can contribute to our understanding of cultural processes and demonstrates the importance of considering cultural beliefs alongside the more common approach of studying values. This supports Brewer and Chen's (2007) assertion that more precise predictions can be made by disentangling different facets of I-C.

The need to disentangle I-C refers not only to its different facets but also to its different levels of analyses. In Study 1, I found that the different proposed facets of I-C covaried predictably at the nation level, and although they were more distinct in Study 2, a similar pattern was found among these more diverse samples. At the individual level, however, the corresponding correlations were mostly very small, supporting the notion that these variables are distinct. This is consistent with previous research that has identified small correlations between general beliefs and values and has shown that each makes its own unique contribution to predicting behaviour (Bond, Leung, Au, et al., 2004; Leung et al., 2007). The present results suggest that I-C does not form a coherent dimension of individual-level cultural orientation (see also Triandis, 1993). Instead, its different aspects need to be considered separately, and each will make its own contribution to the unpacking of cultural influences. Thus, although values, beliefs and self-representations are distinct at both levels, they are more meaningfully related as cultural constructs. It would therefore seem more reasonable to conceive of I-C as a cultural-level construct, as it was originally conceptualized (Hofstede, 1980).

5.4.2 The Contextualism Scale

The contextualism measure has excellent potential for use in cross-cultural research. It is brief, easy to administer, and includes a balance between positive and reverse-scored items—thus avoiding the problem of acquiescence bias. Controlling for

acquiescence is important in cross-cultural psychology (Schimmack et al., 2005), and yet many well-used cross-cultural scales include no reverse-scored items (e.g. Singelis, 1994). Tested across 19 and 35 nations with student and adult samples, the scale showed evidence of invariant factor loadings, and five of the six items showed invariant intercepts. Considering the very different cultural groups and many different languages involved in the study, this level of performance is at least comparable with other well-validated and well-used scales in the cross-cultural literature. Difficulty with invariance of intercepts is not unusual in cross-cultural research (e.g. Davidov et al., 2008; Spini, 2003). Nonetheless, freeing only one intercept still makes it possible to conduct cross-cultural comparisons, as this still leaves five invariant intercepts, well beyond Baumgartner and Steenkamp's (1998) benchmark of at least two invariant intercepts.

By comparing the internal structure at the individual and the nation levels, I was able to establish cross-level isomorphism for the scale. Thus, the belief dimension of contextualism is defined similarly at both levels of analysis. This is important considering arguments in the cross-cultural literature against assuming that culture-level constructs can necessarily be measured with the same meaning at the level of individual differences, and vice versa (reviewed by Smith et al., 2006). Although the same internal structure was found at both levels of analysis, it should be emphasized that this does not mean that individual-level and nation-level contextualism are the same thing. Individual-level contextualism refers to beliefs in the minds of individuals whereas nation-level contextualism refers to normative beliefs generally held within nations, and these are likely to have different antecedents and different psychological and behavioural consequences.

For example, one might speculate that contextualism beliefs will be differentially linked to reality at the two levels of analysis. It seems likely that nation-

level variation in contextualism beliefs will be associated with actual differences in societal functioning, such as social practices and institutions (Yamagishi, 2011). As illustrated by the outcomes predicted in Study 2, in some societies it really *does* matter more than in other societies what family one comes from or what social position one occupies, and one might expect that variation in normative beliefs about personhood will be influenced by these differences in societal functioning, as well as helping to sustain them. In contrast, to the extent that individuals within a nation are located within a common societal context, individual-level variation in contextualism beliefs should reflect different ways of thinking about the same world, rather than differences in the world that is thought about. Still, it should be acknowledged that individuals may encounter different social practices and institutions as a result of regional, ethnic or socioeconomic differences within a given nation, as well as idiosyncratic experiences; and these differences in the social reality faced by different individuals may also be linked to contextualism beliefs.

5.4.3 Limitations and Future Directions

Some limitations of these studies should be acknowledged. Although contextualism is regarded as a central belief dimension within I-C, it should be noted that there may be other types of beliefs that vary systematically between individualist and collectivist societies. Future research could explore these alternative belief dimensions and their relationship to contextualism, as well as values and self-construals. It may also be the case that beliefs about personhood vary depending on the target of the beliefs; for instance, one might perceive members of some groups in society in a relatively decontextualized manner and members of other groups in a more contextualized manner. Thus, future research should test to what extent contextualism

beliefs are uniform across different target groups in society. An especially important case of such variation may be when the target is the self. Hence, it might be interesting to adapt the items of the contextualism scale to refer to the self (e.g. “*To understand me well, it is essential to know about which social groups I am a member of.*”), in order to explore to what extent a contextualized view of the self is related with contextualist beliefs about others, as well as with more commonly used measures of cultural differences in self-construal.²²

The present research was able to demonstrate predictive validity of contextualism at the nation level of analysis, which highlights contextualism as a useful cultural construct. However, in order to completely disentangle individual and cultural-level effects, multilevel analyses are needed which investigate these simultaneously. As an example of this multilevel approach, Becker et al. (2012) found that culture-level variation in contextualism, but not individual-level variation, predicted people’s use of different sources of distinctiveness in constructing their identities (Vignoles, Chryssochoou, & Breakwell, 2000). Thus, it was the surrounding cultural climate of contextualism beliefs, rather than the degree to which an individual personally internalized those beliefs, that predicted this aspect of identity construction.

5.4.4 Conclusions

In conclusion, a central theme within I-C refers to beliefs about the person and this thesis proposes the construct of contextualism as tapping this mostly unexplored facet of I-C. In this chapter, I have shown that belief in the importance of the context in defining a person is a cross-culturally valid construct which can be applied to both individuals and cultures. At the nation level, it correlated with other proposed facets of

²² I would like to thank an anonymous reviewer of Owe et al. (2013) for these suggestions.

I-C as strongly as these facets correlated with each other and it could therefore be considered a part of cultural collectivism. Moreover, contextualism predicted incremental variance in cultural variables where sharp distinctions are made between people based on contextual attributes. These findings highlight the importance of contextualism as a cultural construct, which alongside values and self-construals can contribute to a greater understanding of I-C and allow more precise predictions of cultural influence.

Chapter 6

Self-construals beyond the West vs. East

Dichotomy

This chapter aims to build on Markus and Kitayama's (1991) original theoretical project by investigating the structure of explicit self-construals across a large number of cultures from many different parts of the world. By going beyond the narrow focus on North America and East Asia and two or three-nation comparisons, I aimed to shed new light on the theory and investigate new possibilities in relation to self-construals. Specifically, I investigated whether self-construals are best conceptualized in terms of two broad dimensions—independence and interdependence—or whether the variation in constructions of the self is more complex. Moreover, in nation-level analyses, I tested whether cross-cultural differences in self-construals could be explained adequately by I-C, or whether additional contextual and societal variables are needed to make sense of how self-construals vary.

Study 3 was conducted with over 3,000 high-school students in 16 nations. Given that 16 nations are not adequate for multilevel analysis, I first explored the structure of self-construals at the individual level only. In Study 4, we sampled over 8,000 non-student adults across 64 cultural groups, allowing me to test dimensionality at both the individual and cultural group level. In Study 5, using the same self-construal data as in Study 4, I investigated how 36 national samples differed in representations of the self and which nation-level variables can explain this variation. These studies included countries that have been underrepresented in the previous literature on self-

construals—and in psychology more generally (see Arnett, 2008; Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010)—and thus they provide an important step toward a more complete picture of self-construal around the world.

6.1 Study 3: Exploring Self-construals

Study 3 was designed to test the dimensionality of self-construals at the individual level using a cross-cultural dataset spanning 16 nations. In an early analysis of six national samples from the current data set (samples from the UK, Italy, Georgia, Ethiopia and Lebanon), Owe (2009) found seven dimensions of self-construals: uniqueness, consistency, self-reliance, self-direction, inclusion of others in the self, commitment to others, and harmony. However, it was not possible to establish a higher-order structure among these dimensions. Nonetheless, in order to ascertain whether this was also the case using the larger, more cross-culturally diverse dataset, I initially tested the common two-dimensional structure, including separate factors of independence and interdependence. Subsequently I tested alternative models: a one-dimensional bipolar structure (independence vs. interdependence) and a three-dimensional structure with factors of independence, relational-interdependence and collective-interdependence. These analyses were conducted in Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) while statistically modelling acquiescent response bias. In line with the earlier study using a subset of nations (Owe, 2009), and the previous literature, none of these models provided a satisfactory fit. Although the earlier study had suggested seven dimensions, I considered it most appropriate to more openly explore the structure at this stage with the larger sample, in order not to overlook important variation in the data. I therefore moved on to investigate multidimensional structures in exploratory factor analysis (EFA).

6.1.1 Method

6.1.1.1 Participants and procedure

The data for Study 3 was collected in the first large cross-cultural study involving high-school students²³ in the second wave. Thus, a total of 3,541 participants across 16 nations completed a pool of self-construal items (see Table 6.1 for demographic details).

6.1.1.2 Instruments

Self-construal items. The items were taken mainly from the scale devised by Gudykunst et al. (1996) since I had concerns about face-validity of items in the

Table 6.1 Demographic Details for Each National Sample in Study 3

Country	<i>N</i>	Mean age	<i>SD</i>	% females	Language
Belgium	252	18.17	1.11	57	French
Brazil	551	17.63	2.84	62	Portuguese
Chile	336	17.03	.56	46	Spanish
Colombia	123	16.64	.57	44	Spanish
Estonia	189	17.66	.71	62	Estonian
Ethiopia	236	18.48	.93	45	Amharic
Georgia	174	17.03	.40	55	Georgian
Hungary	177	17.30	.83	49	Hungarian
Italy	187	18.61	.70	62	Italian
Lebanon	208	17.84	.57	45	Arabic
Oman	181	16.91	1.83	45	Arabic
Philippines	218	18.19	1.31	71	English
Poland	121	17.84	.43	57	Polish
Romania	179	18.02	.84	48	Romanian
Spain	185	17.16	.76	54	Spanish
UK	224	17.63	.77	75	English
Overall	3541	17.63	1.50	56	

²³ Participants in the Philippines were university students, as they had a similar age range to high-school students in other countries. It should be noted that students attending university as opposed to high-school are likely to be at a different stage in life and may therefore construct their self in different ways. However, removing the Philippine sample from the analyses presented below revealed almost identical results and hence the decision was made to retain this sample in the analyses.

scale devised by Singelis (1994).²⁴ For example, it is not clear how the item “*I value being in good health above everything*” is tapping independence. Items designed to measure the relational self (Cross et al, 2000) were also included. Thus, the item-pool included items representing the independent, relational-interdependent and collective interdependent self-construals, as defined by Brewer and Chen (2007), and it included items from each of the multiple dimensions identified by Hardin et al. (2004) as well as by Fernández et al. (2005). In addition, some new items were constructed which were conceptual opposites of existing items, in order to reduce the problem of acquiescence response bias (Smith, 2009). For example, “*Being different from others makes me uncomfortable*” was included as the reverse of “*I enjoy being unique and different from others in many ways*”. Thus, the reverse items did not involve negatively phrased items, as these can be difficult to translate to some languages. The decision was made not to include items representing Harb and Smith’s (2008) six dimensional model of self-construals, nor Kashima and Hardie’s (2000) three-dimensional model, because the focus of the present research was on different domains of independence and interdependence, rather than on different targets of social relationships, and space limitations prevented use of both of these approaches. There were 38 items in total, which were rated on scales ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*). Four items were included in the first wave of data collection and the remaining items in the second wave were split between two parts of the questionnaire (23 towards the beginning and 11 towards the end), creating three different measurement occasions with different items in each occasion.

²⁴ As noted in Chapter 5, for reasons of space, we excluded two items that were not appropriate for high-school students and four items because of conceptual redundancy.

6.1.2 Results

6.1.2.1 Testing one-, two-, and three-factor models

Prior to analyses, all variables were standardized within nations in order to remove between-nation variability (Leung & Bond, 1989). As noted in Chapter 5 Section 5.2.2, this removes nation-level differences and the problem of clustering within nations, and analyses are therefore ‘within-nations’. Three models were tested in CFA using Mplus Version 6 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010): a one-factor model where all items loaded onto a common factor, a two-factor model of independence and interdependence and a three-factor model including independence, relational interdependence and collective interdependence. The variance of each latent variable was set to 1. In addition to the substantive factors, in each analysis variation in acquiescent responding was modelled with three method factors (one for each measurement occasion, in order to account for systematic variance associated with each occasion), which were uncorrelated with the substantive factors but allowed to covary with each other. These method factors loaded onto every item within each occasion at a fixed value of 1. Thus, each item was only related to one method factor (Welkenhuysen-Gybels et al., 2003). Model fit was assessed using the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), for which values above .90 indicate a reasonable fit, and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), for which values up to .05 are seen as good and values up to .08 as acceptable (Kline, 2005). If at least two out of three fit indices indicated good fit, the model would be regarded as acceptable.

Table 6.2 provides the fit indices for each of the three models. As is evident from the table, none of these models provided an adequate fit to the data. Even though values of RMSEA could be regarded as reasonable, values of CFI and TLI were far

Table 6.2 One-, Two-, and Three-Dimensional Models in Study 3

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMSEA 90% CI	
						LL	UL
One-dimensional model	7909.972***	659	.599	.572	.056	.055	.057
Two-dimensional model	6502.435***	658	.677	.655	.050	.049	.051
Three-dimensional model	6261.728***	656	.690	.668	.049	.048	.050

Note. CFI = Comparative fit index; RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation. CI = Confidence intervals; LL = Lower level; UL = Upper level.

*** $p < .001$.

from acceptable.²⁵ Moreover, a substantial proportion of the standardized factor loadings were below .30. From these results it is clear that independence and interdependence do not factor together in a simple one- or two-factor structure, nor does the tripartite structure adequately account for the patterns in the data. Thus, I moved on to explore more complex structures in EFA.

6.1.2.2 Exploratory factor analysis

In order to examine a multidimensional structure, all 38 items were submitted to EFA using principal axis factoring and oblique, direct oblimin rotation using SPSS 18. In order to remove acquiescence as well as any systematic variance associated with the clustering of items in separate measurement occasions, ipsatized item scores were created within measurement occasion for each individual. This involved taking the mean across all items within each occasion for each individual and subtracting this mean from each item (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). As before, all items were also standardized within nation. The scree plot showed two points of inflection, one after

²⁵ I found similar results using only items from the Gudykunst scale: the one-factor model had a CFI of .48, a TLI of .52 and a RMSEA of .08, and the two-factor model had a CFI of .75, TLI of .72, and RMSEA of .05.

Table 6.3 Factor Loadings for Six-Factor Solution from Exploratory Factor Analysis with Oblique Rotation in Study 3

Self-construal item	1	2	3	4	5	6
I prefer to be self-reliant rather than depend on others. ¹	.68	-.11	-.02	-.02	.05	-.11
I try not to depend on others. ¹	.64	.01	-.03	-.01	.00	-.04
I prefer to turn to other people for help rather than solely rely on myself.	-.50	-.02	-.03	.03	.03	-.02
It is important for me to act as an independent person. ^{1,2}	.47	-.04	.04	-.05	-.03	.12
I should decide my future on my own. ¹	.29	.07	.09	.18	.01	.01
Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me. ^{1,2}	.24	.14	-.04	.18	.06	.05
I take responsibility for my own actions. ¹	.23	.11	.22	.03	.06	-.02
I should be judged on my own merit. ¹	.16	.04	-.01	.09	-.02	.11
I consider my happiness separate from the happiness of my friends and family.	.01	-.54	-.07	.13	-.04	.07
If a person insults a member of my family or my friends, I feel personally insulted myself. ³	.06	.46	.00	.05	-.02	.01
When I think of myself, I often think of my close friends and family also. ³	-.09	.44	.15	-.02	.02	-.07
If a person hurts someone close to me, I feel personally hurt as well. ³	-.03	.43	-.02	-.02	.00	.01
My close relationships are unimportant to how I feel about myself. ³	-.01	-.34	.11	.03	-.03	-.01
I usually feel a strong sense of pride when someone close to me has an important accomplishment. ³	-.01	.33	.07	.02	.04	.08
I always support a group decision even when I know it is wrong. ¹	-.24	-.29	-.06	-.10	.00	-.06
I stick with my group even through difficulties. ¹	.12	.27	.08	-.15	.08	.02
It is important to consult close friends and get their ideas before making a decision. ¹	-.20	.23	-.08	-.05	.06	-.11
I always see myself in the same way, independently of who I am with. ²	.00	-.06	.55	.01	.00	.03
I sometimes feel like a different person when I am with different groups of people.	.00	.00	-.48	.03	-.01	.05

Self-construal item	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am the same person at home that I am at school/college. ²	-.09	.02	.46	.07	.00	-.07
My social surroundings may change, but I will still be the same person.	.01	-.03	.41	-.02	.01	.04
My perception of myself depends on who I am with.	-.20	-.07	-.40	.02	-.08	.00
I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group. ^{1, 2}	.02	-.03	-.06	-.56	.01	-.10
My relationships with others are more important than my personal accomplishments. ^{1, 2}	-.05	.03	-.04	-.50	.03	-.02
My personal accomplishments are more important than maintaining my social relationships.	-.05	-.32	.01	.46	-.05	-.03
I will stay in my group if they need me, even when I am not happy with the group. ^{1, 2}	-.09	-.08	.01	-.26	.03	-.05
My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me. ^{1, 2}	.17	.15	.03	.23	-.01	.19
I help people I know, even if it is inconvenient. ¹	.02	.12	.02	-.23	-.03	.03
If there is a conflict between my values and the values of groups of which I am a member, I follow my values. ¹	.13	.08	.12	.21	-.05	.15
It is important to maintain harmony within my group. ²	-.06	-.02	-.02	-.03	.69	.06
It is important to me that I respect decisions made by my groups. ^{1, 2}	-.03	-.01	-.01	-.05	.62	-.01
What happens to me is my own doing. ¹	.10	-.04	.06	.04	.17	.04
I am a unique person, separate from others. ¹	.01	-.16	-.05	-.04	-.05	.46
Being different from others makes me uncomfortable. ¹	-.04	-.12	-.22	.06	-.03	-.43
I enjoy being unique and different from others in many ways. ^{1, 2}	.06	-.03	-.02	.00	.05	.37
I avoid standing out among my friends.	.07	-.07	.00	-.02	.00	-.31
I am comfortable being singled out for praise and rewards. ^{1, 2}	.00	.00	-.05	.08	.02	.26
I try to abide by customs and conventions at school/college. ^{1, 2}	-.04	.15	-.04	.13	.08	-.15

Note. ¹ Items from Gudykunst et al. (1996); ² Items from Singelis (1994); ³ Items from Cross et al. (2000). Factor loadings > .30 are in boldface.

two factors and one after six factors. Given that a two-factor model had shown unsatisfactory fit in the previous analyses and that the six-factor solution provided a more easily interpretable solution than the two-factor solution, the six-factor solution was retained (see Table 6.3), which explained 22% of the variance.

This factor structure replicated the findings from the earlier study using the subset of nations, but with six rather than seven factors.²⁶ The first factor seemed to represent self-reliance (e.g. *“I prefer to be self-reliant rather than depend on others”*) and self-direction (e.g. *“It’s important for me to act as an independent person”*) and it was therefore labelled Self-reliance/Self-direction. The second factor was comprised mainly of items tapping the relational self and seemed to represent a close interconnectedness with other people (e.g. *“If a person insults a member of my family or my friends, I feel personally insulted myself”*), and it was therefore labelled Inclusion of Others in the Self. The third factor was made up of items related to consistency and lack of contextual influence on the self (e.g. *“I always see myself in the same way, independently of who I am with”*) and it was therefore labelled Consistency. The fourth factor seemed to be tapping commitment or dedication to other people, where others are more important than one’s own accomplishments and self-interest is weighted against the interest of others (e.g. *“I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group”*) and it was labelled Commitment to Others. The fifth factor seemed to represent a desire for harmonious relationships (e.g. *“It is important to maintain harmony within my group”*) and it was labelled Harmony. Finally the sixth factor seemed to be tapping desire for uniqueness and being different (e.g. *“I am a unique person, separate from others”*) and it was therefore labelled Uniqueness.

²⁶ Considering early analyses had indicated seven factors, I also extracted a seven factor solution in EFA. However, this structure did not provide an easily interpretable solution.

6.1.3 Discussion

The above analyses show that the dimensionality of self-construals cannot be represented by a simple two-dimensional structure of independence and interdependence, nor by a three dimensional structure. These findings are in line with those reported by Levine et al. (2003) who, using different self-construal scales in several cross-cultural samples, failed to achieve an acceptable fit for a two-dimensional model. Rather, the structure of self-construals was found to be multidimensional, spanning several different domains of self-representation. Six factors were identified, referring to different ways of seeing oneself and one's relations with other people: Self-reliance/Self-direction, Inclusion of Others in the Self, Consistency, Commitment to Others, Harmony, and Uniqueness.

Although the factors were named in this way, it should be emphasized that these are bipolar factors, and there is no inherent value in labelling each factor in the particular direction that was chosen. Moreover, rather than being viewed as subtypes of independence and subtypes of interdependence, each of the factors might be understood as opposing a pole that has typically been considered part of independence with a pole that has typically been considered part of interdependence. Thus, the factors also might be named self-direction/self-reliance vs. receptiveness to social influence/dependence on others; inclusion of others in the self vs. separateness of self and others; consistency vs. contextual variability; commitment to others vs. commitment to personal goals/self-centeredness; harmony vs. self-expression; and uniqueness vs. fitting in/similarity. The shorter names described above are used here primarily for ease of presentation.

Although I have named the factors differently, they show some resemblance to those reported by Hardin et al. (2004). Both models include dimensions referring to consistency (Hardin et al.'s Behavioural Consistency), to the weighing of self-interest

against the interest of others (my Commitment to Others and Hardin et al.'s Relational Interdependence), to maintaining harmonious relations (Hardin's et al.'s Esteem for Group), and to being different and standing out (Hardin et al.'s Autonomy/Assertiveness)²⁷. However, whereas Self-direction and Self-reliance formed a single factor in the present research, items referring to these facets were respectively divided into Primacy of Self and Individualism in their model. Four of the dimensions I identified also resemble Fernández et al.'s (2005) four factors. They too found a Uniqueness factor as well as a factor referring to consistency of the self (which they named Low Context). Moreover, their Relational Interdependence overlaps with the present Harmony factor and their Group Loyalty has a lot in common with the present Commitment to Others. However, as noted above in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.2, the meaning of the dimensions identified by Hardin et al. and Fernández et al. lack clarity in many respects. The latter findings were also based on a limited item-pool and failed to account for between-nation variability (Leung & Bond, 1989). The present research, on the other hand, based on a large cross-cultural dataset, identified a model with six clearly distinct dimensions with easily interpretable themes.

Nonetheless, several questions remained. The early analyses using the subset of the data from 6 nations (see Owe, 2009) had suggested seven rather than six factors, with Self-reliance and Self-direction making up two separate factors. Given this discrepancy, questions remained of how stable the six-factor solution was and whether it would be replicated with an even larger, more diverse sample. Moreover, the variance accounted for by the six factors was relatively small and the factors all included some

²⁷ The four items in Hardin et al.'s (2004) Autonomy/Assertiveness factor with loadings above .30 in their EFA six-factor solution refer to speaking up in class, being singled out for praise and rewards, avoiding arguments although one disagrees (reversed) and going along with what others want although one rather do something different (reversed). This factor could therefore be seen as tapping being different and standing out, which is similar to my Uniqueness factor.

items with very low loadings. Experience of working on the translations of the items had suggested that many of them had a complex sentence structure as well as expressing rather decontextualized and abstract concepts, often making them difficult to translate (Brislin, Lonner, & Thorndike, 1973). Research has shown that people who are not socialized into a Western cultural worldview are less familiar with abstract, decontextualized introspection about the self (see Smith, 2011), and therefore many of the original self-construal items may not be optimal for cross-cultural research. Thus, I was interested to see whether these items could be improved, in order to increase the precision with which the dimensions were measured.

Further outstanding questions included whether or not the individual-level structure would be replicated at the cultural-level of analysis and whether a higher-order structure could be identified to account for the relationships among the different dimensions. Study 4 was designed to address these questions.

6.2 Study 4: Structure of Self-construals at the Individual and Cultural level

The purpose of Study 4 was to test whether the multidimensional structure of self-construals identified in Study 3 could be replicated with a different type of analysis (CFA rather than EFA), among even more diverse samples and using an improved set of items. The multidimensional structure was compared against one-, two-, and three-dimensional models, in order to confirm that it provided a better representation of the data. Unlike Study 3, this study was conducted among non-student adults across a larger number of cultural groups. As noted above, given that an earlier analysis had suggested that Self-reliance and Self-direction may not factor together (Owe, 2009), I also tested a

model in which Self-reliance and Self-direction formed two separate factors, in addition to the six-factor model.

A further aim of Study 4 was to investigate the structure of self-construals at the cultural level. I tested whether the same dimensions that characterize individuals can also be used to characterize cultures, in other words I tested for multilevel isomorphism. Finally, I explored whether the multiple dimensions could be organized into a higher-order structure at both levels of analysis. A one-dimensional structure was tested, with all factors loading onto one bipolar higher-order dimension, and a two-dimensional structure, reflecting higher-order independence and interdependence. However, these higher-order models did not provide an acceptable fit to the data and I therefore explored alternative higher-order structures by inspecting the interrelationships between the first-order factors.

6.2.1 Method

6.2.1.1 Participants and procedure

Items were included in the second multinational research project into identity motives and motive satisfaction, which included 36 nations. However, rather than using nations as cultural groupings, we sampled different cultural groups within nations, where this was relevant and possible. As described in Chapter 4 Section 4.1.2, the nature of the different groups varied from nation to nation, such that in some cases the differences were geographical (e.g. Eastern and Western Germany), religious (e.g. Baptists and Orthodox Christians in Georgia) or ethnic (e.g. Basoga, Baganda and Bakiga in Uganda). The study included 8,292 adults from 64 different cultural groups

Table 6.4 Demographic Details in Study 4 and Study 5

Country	<i>N</i>	Cultural groups (<i>N</i>)	Mean age	<i>SD</i>	% fem.	Language	Religion
Belgium	337	Low SES (173); High SES (164)	35.85	11.50	48	French	Catholic
Brazil	482	South Brazil (147); Northeast Brazil (150); Central Brazil (185)	33.30	12.81	56	Portuguese	Catholic
Cameroon	100	Bafut (100)	26.07	6.10	67	English	Other Christian
Chile	286	Mapuche (148); Majority Chileans (138)	41.29	14.07	58	Spanish	Catholic
China	259	Eastern China (125); Western China (134)	31.36	8.50	68	Chinese	Buddhist/ Hindu
Colombia	299	Urban Colombians (149); Rural Colombians (150)	36.97	12.61	62	Spanish	Catholic
Egypt	140	Egyptians (140)	30.46	8.95	51	Arabic	Muslim
Ethiopia	289	Highlanders (146); Urban dwellers (143)	33.78	8.89	43	Amharic	Orthodox
Georgia	209	Orthodox (130); Baptists (79)	41.45	14.45	57	Georgian	Orthodox
Germany	244	Eastern Germany (146); Western Germany (98)	40.06	15.14	59	German	Protestant
Ghana	87	Ashanti (87)	27.21	3.52	19	English	Other Christian
Hungary	238	Majority Hungarians (147) Romas (91)	35.57	12.48	47	Hungarian	Catholic
Iceland	117	Icelanders (117)	35.08	13.20	69	Icelandic	Protestant
India	519	Trivandrum (150); Delhi Hindus (138); Delhi Muslims (138); Pondicherry (93)	35.56	10.82	45	Hindi, English	Buddhist/ Hindu
Italy	169	Urban Italians (82); Rural Italians (87)	39.01	13.10	70	Italian	Catholic

Country	<i>N</i>	Cultural groups (<i>N</i>)	Mean age	<i>SD</i>	% fem.	Language	Religion
Japan	277	Hokkaido island (73); Mainland Japan (204)	43.73	15.12	62	Japanese	Buddhist/ Hindu
Lebanon	230	West Beirut (106); East Beirut (124)	34.35	13.70	49	Arabic	Muslim
Malaysia	147	Malays (147)	28.00	7.95	63	Malay	Muslim
Namibia	199	Owambo (130); Damara (69)	24.69	5.74	66	English	Protestant
N. Zealand	185	Pakeha (185)	34.93	12.72	50	English	Protestant
Nigeria	94	Nigerians (94)	31.14	9.28	42	English	Muslim
Norway	96	Norwegians (96)	37.07	13.89	59	Norwegian	Protestant
Oman	154	Omanis (154)	25.38	4.89	46	Arabic	Muslim
Peru	151	Rural Peruvians (72); Urban Peruvians (79)	35.39	15.12	58	Spanish	Catholic
Philippines	303	Christians (149); Muslims (154)	28.47	10.93	51	English, Tausug	Catholic
Romania	473	Urban Romanians (318); Rural Romanians (155)	35.76	13.08	58	Romanian	Orthodox
Russia	233	Russians (108); Caucasians (125)	30.91	11.85	79	Russian	Orthodox
Singapore	98	Singaporeans (98)	33.86	12.57	53	English	Buddhist/ Hindu
S. Africa	481	South African Indians (272); South African Whites (209)	30.69	11.32	60	English	Protestant
Spain	173	Urban Spaniards (103); Rural Spaniards (70)	40.06	14.61	53	Spanish	Catholic
Sweden	97	Swedish people (97)	44.87	16.21	65	Swedish	Protestant
Thailand	71	Thai people (71)	27.99	6.71	69	Thai	Buddhist/ Hindu
Turkey	241	Alevis (113); Majority (128)	39.61	10.44	61	Turkish	Muslim

Country	<i>N</i>	Cultural groups (<i>N</i>)	Mean age	<i>SD</i>	% fem.	Language	Religion
Uganda	438	Baganda (150); Basoga (114) Bakiga/Banyankore (174)	34.79	6.02	51	English	Catholic
UK	211	Urban British people (122); Rural British people (89)	46.25	17.13	66	English	Protestant
USA	165	Colorado residents (90); Hispanics (75)	30.66	12.59	64	English, Spanish	Protestant
Overall	8292		34.87	12.82	56		

Note. SES = Social Economic Status

(see Table 6.4 for demographic details).²⁸ A variety of means were used to recruit opportunity samples of adults (see Section 5.3.1.1 in Chapter 5).

6.2.1.2 Instruments

Self-construal items. In line with the discussion above, the items were reworded in order to make them less decontextualized and abstract. Firstly, rather than presenting items on *agree-disagree* scales, I wanted to make the task of responding more concrete, and participants were thus asked “*How well does each of these statements describe you*” (see Schwartz, 2003, for a similar approach). Secondly, the items were reworded to refer to ‘*You*’ rather than ‘*I*’, in order to make the task feel less introspective and abstract (Smith, 2011). This wording was also chosen to make it more natural in interview situations where semi-literate participants were helped reading the questions by the research assistants. Thirdly, the wording of the items was changed in order to make them more meaningful to participants, for example “*It is important to maintain harmony within my group*” was reworded as “*You show your inner feelings even if it disturbs the harmony in your family*” (reversed). As can be seen in this example, many of the original items use the very general ‘my group’, which may not be very meaningful to respondents. Considering that the family is the most important group to most people (Fischer et al., 2009), items were reworded to refer instead to the family and in some cases to friends. The items were rated on nine-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*exactly*), with three intermediate anchor-points (see Appendix B). The goal was to use a decentered approach, which avoids words or expressions that are specific to one language or culture. Once an initial item pool had been generated in English, the items were translated to French, Swedish, and Turkish in order to test their translatability and the items were discussed with native speakers of these languages.

²⁸ Only participants who had lived in their respective country for more than 10 years and had lived there since before the age of 10 were included in these analyses

After some subsequent changes and improvements were made and some items were dropped, the items were translated to Romanian and an early version of the scale was piloted among 20 students in Romania who provided some feedback on the items. After some initial analysis, the resulting scale included 21 items with three items for each dimension, including three items each for Self-reliance and Self-direction, to account for both of these facets (see Appendix B for full list of items). The scale included a range of reversed items, in order to represent the bipolar nature of the factors and to be able to control more effectively for acquiescence response bias.

6.2.2 Results

The analyses were conducted in several stages. In first-order analyses, I initially tested the six-factor structure identified in Study 3 as well as a seven-factor structure in which Self-reliance and Self-direction were modelled as two separate factors, at the individual level only. These models were compared against one-, two- and three-factor models, in order to confirm the superiority of a multidimensional structure. The best fitting model was then also applied to the cultural level, in order to test for multilevel isomorphism. In second-order analyses, I then moved on to explore whether the separate dimensions could be organized in a meaningful higher-order structure at both the individual and cultural level. All analyses were conducted in Mplus Version 6 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010) and all models included an uncorrelated method factor, modelling acquiescence, which loaded onto every indicator at a fixed value of 1 (Welkenhuysen-Gybels et al., 2003). First-order factors were scaled by fixing the first indicator to 1 and second-order factors were scaled by fixing the variance of the factor to 1. In analyses at the individual level only, item scores were centred within cultural groups.

6.2.2.1 First-order analyses

As can be seen in Table 6.5, the seven-factor model (Model 2) provided a good fit to the data according to all three fit indices, whereas the fit of the six factor model (Model 1) was not acceptable.²⁹ These results indicate that Self-reliance and Self-direction are better considered as separate dimensions using this larger more diverse three-factor models (Models 3, 4, 5, respectively), which all showed poor fit to the data, replicating the findings in Study 1.³⁰ Thus, the seven-factor model was retained in further analyses.

Next, the seven-factor model was tested simultaneously at the individual level and at the cultural level (Model 6, see Table 6.5).³¹ This involved testing the same seven factors with the same indicators at both levels of analysis. At the cultural level, the indicators represent the latent random intercepts of the individual level indicators and

²⁹ These analyses were multilevel, although I modeled the seven dimensions only at the individual level, with item scores centered within cultural groups. Because of the large number of groups, it was not appropriate to test measurement invariance using the traditional multi-group approach (Selig, Card, & Little, 2008). However, any multilevel model assumes invariance unless the parameters are freed to be non-invariant by the introduction of random slopes (Selig et al., 2008). The fact that the model did not contain random slopes, i.e. the model assumed no variation in factor loadings, and it fitted the data well indicates that invariance is tenable (Davidov et al., 2008; Little, Card, Slegers, & Ledford, 2007).

³⁰ The two-dimensional model was specified in two different ways. In the first version, items from Self-direction, Self-reliance, Uniqueness and Consistency loaded on the Independence factor and items from Inclusion, Commitment and Harmony loaded on the Interdependence factor (shown in the table). I also tested a two-dimensional model where all the positive items from Self-direction, Self-reliance, Uniqueness and Consistency and all the reversed items from Inclusion, Commitment and Harmony loaded together on an Independence factor, and all the positive items from Inclusion, Commitment and Harmony and all reversed items from Self-direction, Self-reliance, Uniqueness and Consistency loaded together on an Interdependence factor. The fit of this alternative model was also unacceptable (CFI = .56, TLI = .51 and RMSEA = .08).

³¹ Because of initial problems with a negative residual variance at the cultural level, the residual variance of one item (item 18, see Appendix B) was set to 0 at the cultural level.

Table 6.5 Confirmatory Factor Analyses in Study 4

Model	χ^2	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
<i>First-order analyses</i>					
Model 1: Six-factor model	4053.910***	173	.844	.811	.052
Model 2: Seven-factor model	1833.341***	167	.933	.916	.035
Model 3: One-factor model	9695.615***	188	.619	.574	.078
Model 4: Two-factor model	8697.585***	187	.659	.617	.074
Model 5: Three-factor model	8250.886***	184	.676	.631	.073
Model 6: Multilevel seven-factor model	2206.650***	335	.927	.909	.026
Model 7: Multilevel seven-factor model loadings constrained	2313.213***	350	.924	.909	.026
<i>Second-order analyses</i>					
Model 8: Multilevel one-dimensional second-order model	3470.970***	380	.880	.867	.031
Model 9: Multilevel two-dimensional second-order model	3318.176***	380	.886	.874	.031
Model 10: Multilevel model with three higher-order dimensions at the cultural level.	2320.234***	362	.924	.912	.026

Note. CFI = Comparative fit index; RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation.

Mplus does not give confidence intervals for RMSEA in multilevel analyses.

*** $p < .001$.

these vary across cultural groups (Muthén & Muthén, 2010). This multilevel model fit the data well, with all items loading significantly on their respective factors at both levels. Hence, it was clear that the structure that characterizes individuals can also be applied to cultural groups. This model explained 35% of the variance at the individual level and 69% of the variance at the cultural level. I then proceeded to examine a stricter form of isomorphism, where the loadings were constrained to be equal across levels

(Model 7).³² This model also fit the data well, indicating that not only is the structure comparable, the association between each indicator and the underlying construct is similar across levels.

6.2.2.2 Second-order analyses

Next I investigated whether the seven first-order dimensions could be represented in a higher-order structure. Firstly, I tested whether a one-dimensional second-order structure at both levels of analysis would fit the data (Model 8, see Table 6.5).³³ This involved having all first-order factors as indicators of one second-order factor. A two-dimensional second-order structure of Independence and Interdependence was then tested. Higher-order Independence included Self-reliance, Self-direction, Consistency and Uniqueness as indicators and higher-order Interdependence included Inclusion, Commitment and Harmony, at both levels of analysis (Model 9).³⁴ Both models were tested while keeping the first-order loadings constrained across levels. As can be seen in Table 6.5, neither of these models achieved an acceptable fit. Moreover, both included non-significant loadings within the second-order structure. Thus, it was clear that neither model could account for the pattern of relationships among the factors. In particular, from inspecting the two-dimensional model, it became evident that Harmony did not factor with Inclusion and Commitment, and that Uniqueness and Self-direction did not factor with Self-reliance and Consistency at the cultural level.

³² At this stage two residual variances at the cultural level were set to 0, in order to avoid negative values (residual variances of items 18 and 8, see Appendix B).

³³ Four residual variances at the cultural level were set to 0 (item 18, item 1, item 15, and item 8 see Appendix B)

³⁴ In order to avoid negative residual values, six residual variances had to be set to 0 (item 1, item 15, item 8, Inclusion and Self-reliance at the cultural level and Self-direction at the individual level)

Table 6.6 Correlations among Latent Factors in Multilevel Analyses in Study 4.
Individual-level above the Diagonal; Cultural-level below the Diagonal.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Self-reliance	-	.33***	.07	.29***	-.03**	-.08***	.37***
2. Self-direction	.08	-	-.59***	.02	-.49***	-.47***	.39***
3. Inclusion	.79***	-.56**	-	.20***	.38***	.53***	-.18***
4. Consistency	.56***	.06	.23	-	-.14***	.15***	.03
5. Harmony	-.17	-.53**	.25	-.41**	-	.38***	-.37***
6. Commitment	.20**	-.35*	.69***	-.14	.03	-	-.27***
7. Uniqueness	.37*	.42**	-.05	.32*	-.81***	.18	-

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

In order to identify an alternative higher-order structure, the latent correlations were inspected at both levels of analysis (see Table 6.6). At the cultural level, a very high negative correlation between Harmony and Uniqueness suggested that these two factors may be part of the same higher-order dimension. Because Uniqueness is about being different and standing out and Harmony refers to conforming and fitting in, this makes theoretical sense. Hence, a third higher-order factor was created with these two dimensions as indicators. Given that Self-direction did not correlate with Self-reliance and Consistency at the cultural level but did correlate with the other four factors, it was allowed to cross-load onto the other two higher-order factors. Thus, the resulting higher-order model at the cultural level included three dimensions which were labelled accordingly: (a) Self-differentiation, which included Uniqueness, Harmony (reversed) and Self-direction; (b) Other-focus, which included Inclusion, Commitment and Self-

direction (reversed); and (c) Self-containment, which included Self-reliance and Consistency³⁵.

At the individual level, on the other hand, the pattern of correlations was less clear, with most dimensions only moderately interrelated (see Table 6.6). In order to make further sense of this, the correlations were investigated separately for each cultural group. These analyses revealed very divergent results. For instance, the correlation between Inclusion and Commitment ranged from $-.07$ in Ghana to $.53$ in Western China, with 19 out of 64 correlations below $.20$. Similarly, the correlation between Self-direction and Uniqueness ranged from $-.15$ among Indian Muslims to $.45$ in rural Spain, with 29 out of 64 correlations below $.20$. Given that the correlations varied to such a degree across cultural groups, it was not considered meaningful to impose a higher-order structure at this level. Rather, the manner in which the different dimensions relate to each other is likely to differ depending on culture, and it was therefore considered most appropriate to define individual-level self-construals in terms of seven dimensions.

Hence, I tested a model with seven first-order factors and no higher-order structure at the individual level, whereas at the cultural level the seven factors were organized into the three-dimensional higher-order structure described above, keeping the first-order loadings constrained across levels (Model 10). This model showed an acceptable fit and all second-order indicators were significant.³⁶ The higher-order

³⁵ It should be noted that the present concept of self-containment differs from that of (Sampson, 1977), who used the term self-contained individualism to describe the cultural ethos within American society and within psychology as a discipline. Sampson's portrayal of self-containment is more extreme, "needing or wanting no one" (p. 770), whereas the present construct of self-containment does not rule out important connections with other people. Rather, it refers more specifically to a self that is defined without reliance on other people or contextual influence.

³⁶ This model had four residual variances set to 0 at the cultural level (item 18, Inclusion, Uniqueness and Self-reliance). The only large cultural-level correlation not accounted for by this model was the substantial correlation between Inclusion and Self-

structure of Self-differentiation, Other-focus, and Self-containment therefore may be useful to describe self-construals at the cultural level, whereas at the individual level the seven first-order factors should be considered separately.

6.2.3 Discussion

Study 4 was designed to test, using a new set of self-construal items, whether the structure identified in Study 3 would apply to the more diverse adult samples and at the cultural-level of analysis, as well as whether a possible second-order structure could be identified. The results suggested that a similar, although not identical, structure could be replicated in Study 4. In particular, whereas Self-reliance and Self-direction had factored together in Study 3, these two dimensions were separate and not very highly correlated at either level of analysis among the adult samples in Study 4. The seven-factor model was found to fit the data well, whereas the one-, two-, and three-dimensional models did not, replicating the results from Study 3. Thus, a multidimensional model is needed to account for dimensions of self-construals at both individual and cultural levels of analysis.

Given that isomorphism of the first-order structure was established, it can be concluded that it has comparable meaning at the individual and cultural level. Hence, the same seven dimensions can be used to describe cultures as well as individuals, without committing the ecological or reversed ecological fallacy. However, although these structures were found to be comparable, it is important to note that this does not

reliance. In order to establish that I had indeed identified the best model, we also ran two alternative models, one where Inclusion loaded on the Self-containment factor, alongside Self-reliance and Consistency (AIC = 780447.00) and one model where Self-reliance and Inclusion formed a higher-order factor and Consistency was a separate first-order factor (AIC = 780445.820). Both of these fitted the data less well than the original model with three higher-order factors (AIC = 780431.07). Smaller AIC indicates better fit and was used here as these were non-nested models (Kline, 2005)

mean that they have the same meaning. At the individual level, these dimensions refer to different ways that the individual sees the self and its relation to others. At the cultural level, on the other hand, these dimensions are better thought of as referring to normative, social, and cultural constructions of selfhood.

At the cultural level, the multiple factors could also be organized into three higher-order dimensions: Self-differentiation, where emphasis is placed on being different and standing out (over conforming and fitting in); Other-focus, where emphasis is placed on being committed to others and sharing their happiness and sadness (over one's personal achievements and a sense of separateness from others); and Self-containment, referring to the self as complete in itself, independent from the context and from reliance on other people (over a self that depends on the context to shape its behaviour and on the assistance of others). Hence, dimensions which traditionally would be considered part of independence and interdependence did not all factor together. This demonstrates that self-construals cannot be organized into a simple one or two-dimensional structure. Rather, the structure reflects different dimensions of variation in how people construe themselves and their relations with others. I should emphasize that these three dimensions should not be used when investigating individuals' self-construals. Given that the first-order dimensions could not be organized in the three factor structure at the individual level, characterizing individuals along these dimensions would mean committing the ecological fallacy.

6.3 Study 5: Cross-National Variation and Antecedents of Self-construals

Study 4 showed that self-construals are organized into a multidimensional structure with seven different self-construal dimensions, referring to different ways of

seeing the self and its relation to other people. At the cultural level, these seven dimensions could be organized into three higher-order factors. Study 5 was designed to answer two main questions—how do our national samples differ on these higher-order dimensions, and why do they differ—by supplementing the self-construal data from Study 4 with additional measures from our study and from archival sources. *How* they differ was shown by estimating the extent of nation-level variation and by plotting the national samples on each of the three dimensions. The question of *why* they differ was investigated by testing a range of nation-level variables as potential predictors of variation among our national samples in self-differentiation, other-focus, and self-containment.

As noted in Chapter 3 Section 3.5.1, national differences in self-construals are commonly attributed to differences in I-C (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Kim et al., 1996; Singelis & Brown, 1995), with individualistic cultures thought to promote an independent view of the self and collectivistic cultures thought to promote an interdependent view of the self. However, this assumption is rarely tested. Some researchers have investigated this link using nation as a proxy for culture among a small number of nations (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Kim et al., 2001; Park & Levine, 1999; Singelis & Brown, 1995). This approach is problematic as it reinforces stereotypes by simply assuming that a nation is collectivistic or individualistic, when in fact national samples often do not vary as would be predicted (Matsumoto, 1999; Oyserman et al., 2002; Takano & Osaka, 1999). Perhaps because many measures of I-C and self-construals share the same items, few studies have attempted to investigate their relationship empirically. The present study avoids this problem by measuring I-C with multiple indicators that do not include self-construals across a large number of nations. To my knowledge, this is the first empirical test of the nation-level relationship between

I-C and self-construals with a relatively large nation-level sample size.³⁷ Given that three separate higher-order dimensions of self-construals had been identified, it seemed possible that they might not all be equally related to I-C. Nonetheless, based on an intuitive understanding of the three higher-order self-construal dimensions and the common view in the literature (Smith, 2011), three hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1: self-differentiation is higher in individualistic nations.

Hypothesis 2: other-focus is higher in collectivistic nations.

Hypothesis 3: self-containment is higher in individualistic nations.

There are also indications that other important factors may predict self-construals. Triandis (1989) suggested that in addition to individualism, cultural complexity and looseness (as opposed to tightness) promotes independence. Nonetheless, in a study investigating a range of different nation-level indicators, Georgas et al. (2004) found that the combined effects of national wealth and religion provided the most effective predictions of psychological variables such as values and wellbeing.

Different types of economic activity and modernization have been shown to have great impact on cultural orientations. For example, farming and fishing communities, where people have to work together to survive, appear to promote a social relatedness and interdependence, whereas herding, hunting and gathering societies promote independence (Berry, 1967; Uskul, Kitayama, & Nisbett, 2008). A similar distinction has been made between traditional and industrialized societies, where the latter appears to promote independence and autonomy (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Inkeles, 1977). Wealth has also experimentally been found to promote independence

³⁷ Fernández, Paez, & González (2005) looked at the relationships between dimensions of self-construals and Hofstede's (1980) individualism. However, this analysis was conducted at the individual level with disaggregated nation-level individualism scores and thus the probability estimates cannot be trusted (Hox, 2002)

and disjoint agency (Adams, Bruckmüller, & Decker, 2012). Based on this literature, the following additional hypotheses were therefore also tested:

Hypothesis 4: self-differentiation is higher in wealthier nations.

Hypothesis 5: other-focus is lower in wealthier nations.

Hypothesis 6: self-containment is higher in wealthier nations.

The second variable emphasized in Georgas et al.'s (2004) research was religion. Religious beliefs are important in defining what it means to be a person and what is good (Snibbe & Markus, 2002). Christianity, and Protestantism in particular, has often been linked to self-sufficiency, autonomy and a focus on the individual (Dumont, 1985; Sampson, 2000; Weber, 1904) and Sanchez-Burks (2005) has shown that the low relational focus in work settings in the United States can be explained by a Protestant ideology. In contrast, Ho (1995) describes a lack of focus on the individual self within four Eastern traditions, Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and Hinduism. Rather, the self is decentered and defined by, or at one with, social relationships, the universe and nature. Moving away from the West vs. East contrast, Sampson (2000) argues that the self within rabbinic Judaism is defined in the dialog with others. The self is not separated from others nor is it at one with others, but is formed instead in the space "in between". Hence, he argues that the rabbinic self is independent and interdependent at the same time. Furthermore, in an anthropological study of Thull, a Pakistani tribal community, Keiser (2003) describes a self which is rooted in a strong Muslim identity, defined by virtue, moral behaviour, honour, and revenge.

Although the relationships between religious traditions and constructions of the self are likely to be complex, some hypotheses were identified and tested based on the above discussion and an intuitive understanding of the three dimensions. These

predictions do not specifically include Protestantism since it was chosen as the reference group (see Section 6.3.2, footnote 45).

Hypothesis 7: self-differentiation is lower in Islamic nations.

Hypothesis 8: other-focus is higher in Islamic nations.

Hypothesis 9: self-containment is lower in Islamic nations.

Hypothesis 10: self-differentiation is lower in Buddhist/Hindu nations.

Hypothesis 11: other-focus is higher in Buddhist/Hindu nations.

Hypothesis 12: self-containment is lower in Buddhist/Hindu nations.

Inglehart and Baker (2000) suggest that national cultures have historically been shaped by religious institutions even though the number of people who actively practice religion is declining in many parts of the world. Thus, rather than looking at the religious compositions of our samples, I was interested in the influence of the dominant religious tradition within a country. Each national sample was therefore categorized based on the largest religion in that nation.

Finally, the additional predictive value of a range of other potential nation-level antecedents was explored. Van Herk and Poortinga (2011) suggest that in addition to affluence and religion, societal and political organization and dispositional attributes of the population are also important nation-level correlates. Variables relating to societal structure, such as inequality, ethnic and religious fractionalization, urbanization, and democracy, were therefore included. I also included a range of normative variables, reflecting nation-level value and belief systems. Moreover, research has found that the physical environment can also shape people's cultural orientations, for example climate (Van de Vliert, 2010) and prevalence of pathogens (Fincher, Thornhill, Murray, & Schaller, 2008). I therefore also included some potential environmental antecedents, in addition to the structural and normative correlates. For the sake of parsimony, variables

that are highly related to affluence, such as life-expectancy or educational levels, were not included. It should be pointed out that this part of the research was largely exploratory, with the goal of identifying the nomological network—potential relationship between cultural constructions of the self and characteristics of the national context, and I did not test any specific hypotheses involving these additional variables.

As noted in Chapter 4, Section 4.1.2, it should also be noted that our data was not representative of the nations sampled. We aimed to sample widely within each nation, including different cultural groups and wide age ranges where possible. Thus, the present research provides an improvement on the overreliance on undergraduate student samples in the cross-cultural literature. Nonetheless, the lack of representativeness precludes any strong conclusions about the prevailing self-construals within the nations included in the study. I return to this issue in Chapter 8.

6.3.1 Method

6.3.1.1 Participants and procedure

Participants in the second multinational research project also completed selected measures of cultural values and beliefs, which are described below, alongside the self-construal measure described in Study 4. The sample included participants from 36 nations (Table 6.4 reports demographic details). These data were supplemented by a variety of publicly available archival indices for the nations included, which are described below.³⁸

³⁸ Study 3 used nation as the unit of analysis, in order to be able to use existing indices of ecological and sociopolitical contexts, which are not available for specific cultural groups within nations, although I recognize that such analysis overlooks meaningful variation within nations. Multilevel analyses using nation as the level-2 unit confirmed the seven factor structure with the three higher-order dimensions also at the nation-level (CFI = .93, TLI = .91, and RMSEA = .03)

6.3.1.2 Instruments

Self-construal items. The same items as in Study 4 were aggregated to the nation level. Before they were aggregated, items were ipsatized within the scale for each individual in order to remove acquiescence, because the dimensions did not have a balanced set of positive and negative items (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). Because of its cross-loading on two of the higher-order dimensions, items measuring self-direction were not included in these measures. Reliabilities at the nation level were good (self-differentiation, six items: $\alpha = .77$; other-focus, six items: $\alpha = .82$; self-containment, six items: $\alpha = .84$).

Indicators of I-C. I used four indicators of I-C: two from archival sources and two from our own dataset. The archival measures included individualism values (Hofstede, 1980) and ingroup collectivism practices (House et al., 2004). Autonomy (vs. embeddedness) values (Schwartz, 2004) and contextualism beliefs (see Chapter 5) were also measured in the present dataset. Autonomy (vs. embeddedness) was measured in the same way as described in Study 1 and nation-level reliability for autonomy (vs. embeddedness) was acceptable (ten items³⁹, $\alpha = .79$). Contextualism was measured in the same way as described in Study 2 and nation-level reliability was good (six items, $\alpha = .90$). All indicators of I-C were used when exploring correlations. However, in the regression analyses I used only autonomy (vs. embeddedness) and contextualism because these were the only two indicators for which all 36 data-points existed.⁴⁰

³⁹ We included two items fewer than are normally used at the individual level as there is a potential shift in meaning of these items across levels (Shalom Schwartz, personal communication, March 1, 2011).

⁴⁰ Autonomy (vs. embeddedness) correlated $r = .36$ with Hofstede's (1980) individualism and $r = -.56$ with ingroup collectivism practices, and contextualism correlated $r = -.44$ with individualism and $r = .54$ with ingroup collectivism practices.

National affluence. This was measured by Gross National Income (GNI) per capita 2009 (World Bank, 2010) which was log-transformed in order to reduce skewness (see Van de Vliert, 2010, for a similar approach).

Religious variables. Based on Georgas et al. (2004), the national samples were categorized into the following religious categories: Christian Protestant, Christian Catholic, Christian Orthodox, other Christian, Muslim, Buddhist/Hindu. Given that there were insufficient numbers, a traditional beliefs category was not included. Following Georgas et al., the categorization was based on percentages of population belonging to the religious denominations (Central Intelligence Agency, 2011; see Table 6.4). Although official figures suggest very low adherence, China was categorized as Buddhist since there are indications that this is now one of the biggest religions (Xueying, 2009). Similarly, Russia was categorized as Orthodox, although estimates of official worshipers are low (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2012). Some nations did not have a clear majority religion. These included Germany (evenly split between Catholics and Protestants), which I categorized as Protestant since the data were collected in the more Protestant regions, and Uganda (even split between Catholics and Protestants), which I categorized as Catholic because of its greater historical influence (Pirouet, 1980). Some samples had substantial minority groups: Nigeria, which was categorized as Muslim, although there is a substantial Christian minority; Ethiopia, which was categorized as Orthodox, although there is a substantial Muslim minority; and Lebanon, which was categorized as Muslim, although there is a significant Christian minority. Parallel analyses were conducted categorizing these samples in the alternative ways (see footnote 46 in Section 6.3.2.2). A measure of religiosity was also included, taken from the World Values Survey database (The World Values Survey Association, 2011) and

originally measured by one item (*How important is God in your life?*), rated on a scale from 1 (*not at all important*) to 10 (*very important*).⁴¹

Structural variables. These included income inequality, measured by the GINI index (Central Intelligence Agency, 2011), where a high score denotes high inequality in a nation; ethnic and religious fractionalization, referring to the degree of ethnic and religious heterogeneity in a country (Alesina, Devleeschauwer, Easterly, Kurlat, & Wacziarg, 2003); urbanization, measured as the percentage of the population living in urban areas (United Nations, 2010); and democracy, measured as political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House, 2010), which are calculated on a scale from 1 (*highest level of freedom*) to 7 (*lowest level of freedom*), but here I reversed the scores for ease of interpretation.

Contextual threat variables. These included climate harshness, measured as the sum of absolute deviations from 22°C in the coldest and warmest months (Van de Vliert, 2010); vulnerability to natural disasters, measured as the average number of deaths per million inhabitants from floods, tropical cyclones, and droughts (Esty, Levy, Srebotnjak, & De Sherbinin, 2005); and historical and contemporary pathogen prevalence (Fincher et al., 2008).

Other normative variables. These included several archival sources: Hofstede's (1980) published indices of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity; and the two published nation-level dimensions of social axioms (Bond, Leung, Tong, et al., 2004)—dynamic externality, which combines beliefs about the importance of religion and fate with an emphasis on effort and control; and societal cynicism, which refers to

⁴¹ In order to maximize the available data, I used the aggregated data file which includes data from five waves (1981-2008). Information on fieldwork, samples, and available data sets is available at www.worldvaluessurvey.org.

negative beliefs about human nature and social institutions. I also included Minkov's (2007) three cultural dimensions: monumentalism (vs. flexumility), referring to a cultural tendency of pride, absolutist thinking, and inflexibility; indulgence (vs. restraint), referring to gratification of desires, personal freedom and leisure; and exclusionism (vs. universalism), referring to sharp distinctions between ingroup and outgroup and exclusion of outsiders. Inglehart & Baker's (2000) two value dimensions were also included: secular-rational vs. traditional values, which concerns orientations towards authorities such as religion, nation and the family, and self-expression vs. survival values, which contrast societies where quality of life is central with societies where physical and economic security is the focus. A further archival source used were Gelfand and colleagues' (2011) published nation scores for tightness (vs. looseness), which refers to the extent to which a nation has many strong norms and a low tolerance of deviant behaviour. Some additional variables were also taken from our own dataset: Schwartz's (2004) egalitarianism (vs. hierarchy) values (six items: $\alpha = .87$) and harmony (vs. mastery) values (three items: $\alpha = .58$)⁴², which were measured within the Portrait Values Questionnaire described above; and essentialist beliefs about personhood (Bastian & Haslam, 2007), measured in terms of immutability (e.g. "*You can't really change your deepest attributes*") on six-point scales (six items, $\alpha = .84$).

6.3.1.3 Analysis

The analyses were conducted in several stages. Firstly, I investigated how the national samples differed on the three self-construal dimensions. This included

⁴² The short version of the PVQ, with a total of 21 items, is not optimal for measuring Schwartz's (2004) cultural-level value dimensions, as ideally one would use more items. This is of particular concern for harmony (vs. mastery) which only included three items and had a lower reliability. The findings in relation to this dimension should therefore be treated with caution.

estimating the extent of nation-level variance and, in a simply descriptive manner, nation-level plots showing the three self-construal dimensions were inspected. This allowed me to identify how the dimensions relate to each other and to ascertain the presence of any geographical patterns among the samples. Second, using hierarchical multiple regression, I then tested whether I-C predicted difference in self-construals and whether national affluence and religion could account for incremental variance beyond that explained by I-C. Finally, a range of additional contextual variables were also explored and their potential importance for different conceptions of the self was assessed. These additional variables were taken from a range of different sources and the number of available data points varied greatly. Because of list-wise deletion of missing data, it would have left only a very small number of common data-points if they were tested in the same model. Hence, the exploratory variables were tested in separate models. The results from this part of the analyses should therefore be treated with some caution, given that these variables are likely to have some overlapping variance.

Although the focus of Study 5 was on the nation level, I continued to use multilevel analyses in order to control for compositional differences in our samples. By controlling for individual differences in gender, age and family wealth⁴³, I was able to rule out the possibility that the observed relationships were due to compositional differences in these characteristics among our national samples. Moreover, in order to control for overlapping effects among the self-construal dimensions, all three self-construals were tested in the same model. Analyses were conducted using Mplus Version 6 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010).

⁴³ This was measured by one item in our survey “*Compared to other people in [nation], how would you describe your family’s level of financial wealth?*” which was rated on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 (*very poor*) to 7 (*very rich*).

6.3.2 Results

6.3.2.1 National sample differences

In order to test the extent of variation among our national samples on the three self-construal dimensions, the intraclass correlations (ICC) were estimated. As outlined in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2.2, this refers to the proportion of total variance found at the nation level rather than the individual level (Hox, 2002). Self-differentiation had an ICC of .09 ($p < .001$)⁴⁴, other-focus had an ICC of .10 ($p < .001$), and self-containment had an ICC of .08 ($p < .001$), indicating that an estimated 8-10% of the variance is found between nations. This is above the recommended cut-off of .06 for aggregation of individual-level constructs to a higher-level (Gelfand et al., 2011) and is similar to what has been found in other large cross-cultural studies (see Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2.2). This suggests that self-construals differ systematically between nations and that they can be considered to exist at a collective level. Although these findings indicate that most of the variance is at the individual level, which also includes variance due to unreliability, studies have shown that even this smaller proportion of variance can meaningfully predict psychological outcomes (Becker et al., 2012; Gheorghiu et al., 2009). Next, the pattern of differences was investigated by inspecting national sample plots (Figures 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3).

Figure 6.1 plots self-differentiation against self-containment. In many ways, this plot confirms common notions of differences in self-construals—the US scored high on both dimensions, whereas many East Asian samples and samples from Cameroon and Uganda scored low on both dimensions. This pattern mirrors conceptualizations of I-C. However, this plot identifies three different groups of samples that scored low on self-

⁴⁴ *P*-values refer to the cultural-level variance component. Statistical significance indicates that members of the same group are more similar to each other/more different from members of other groups than would be expected by chance.



Figure 6.1 National means of self-differentiation and self-containment. Since self-differentiation is a bipolar dimension, the scores range around 0.



Figure 6.2 National means of self-differentiation and other-focus. Since self-differentiation is a bipolar dimension, the scores range around 0.

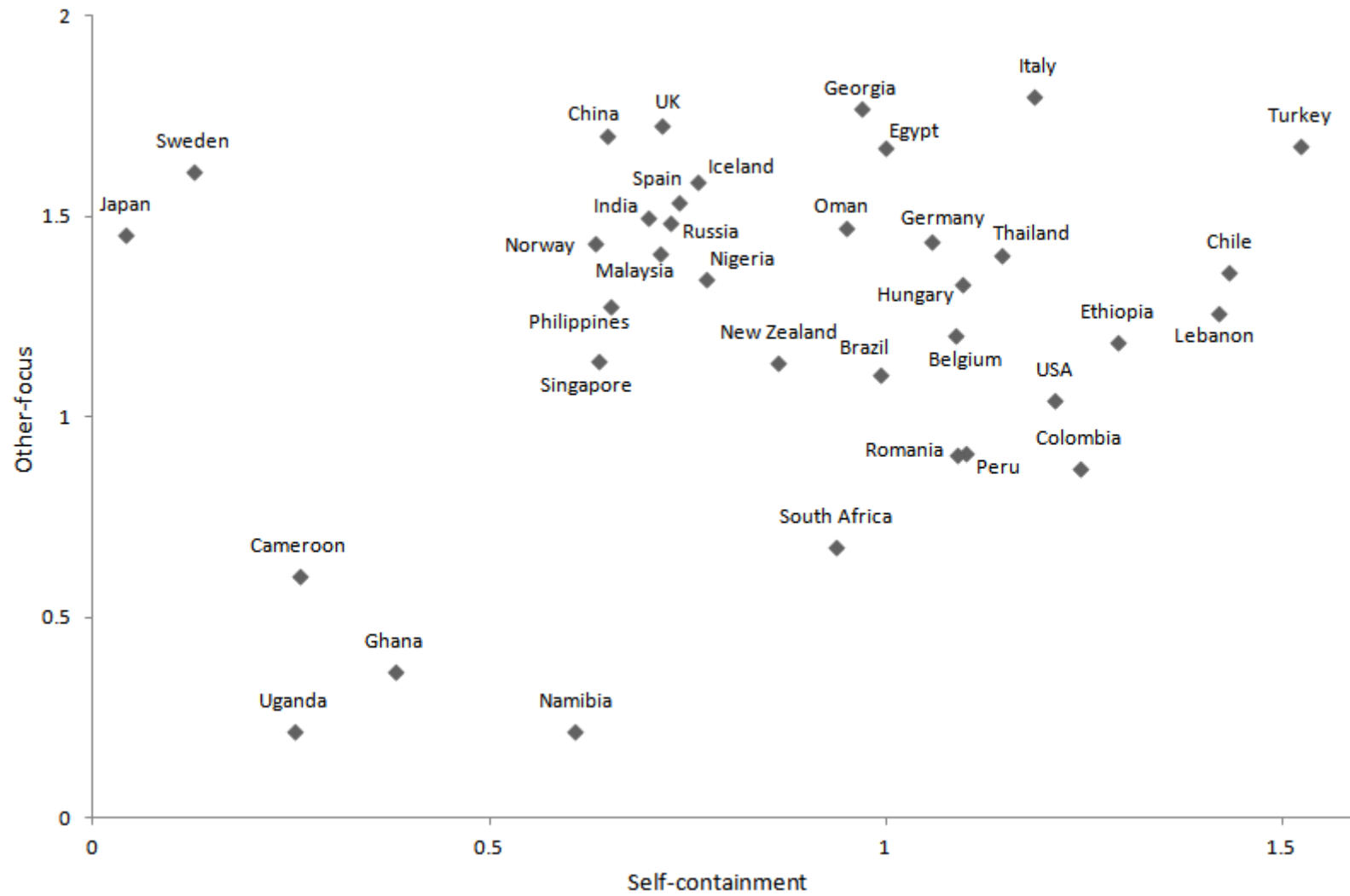


Figure 6.3 National means of self-containment and other-focus.

differentiation, but varied in their emphasis on self-containment—West and mid-African samples scored particularly low on self-containment, followed by East Asian samples and Middle Eastern samples scored high. In the same region as the Middle Eastern samples are also Ethiopia and Georgia, which traditionally are not considered part of the Middle East, but their geographical proximity to this area and their shared historical influence of Islam can explain their similarity to Middle Eastern samples. This pattern suggests that self-construals vary on more dimensions than I-C, which is highlighted by the inclusion of samples normally underrepresented in the self-construal literature. Interesting to note in this plot is also that two South American samples, Chile and Colombia, scored high on both dimensions and thus scored very similar to the US sample. Moreover, the Japanese and Swedish samples scored particularly low on self-containment but scored moderately high on self-differentiation.

Figure 6.2 plots other-focus against self-differentiation. Many Middle Eastern samples scored particularly high on other-focus and low on self-differentiation, closely followed by the South East Asian samples, whereas most European samples scored high on both. Samples from South America, the US, and New Zealand were found at an intermediate position on other-focus, while scoring high on self-differentiation. Finally, many African samples scored low on other-focus and moderate on self-differentiation. Figure 6.3 plots other-focus against self-containment. Most European and Middle Eastern samples scored high on both dimensions whereas many African samples scored low on both dimensions. Samples from the US, New Zealand and South America scored high on self-containment but as noted above, intermediate on other-focus.

6.3.2.2 Predictors of self-construals

Correlations between the self-construal dimensions and the nation-level variables are shown in Table 6.7. This table shows that self-differentiation was

Table 6.7 Relationships between the Three Higher-Order Self-construal Dimensions and Other National-level Variables in Study 5

	<i>N</i>	Correlations		
		Self-differentiation	Other-focus	Self-containment
Other-focus	36	-.14		
Self-containment	36	.09	.22	
GNI ¹	36	.67***	.42***	-.16
<i>Indicators of I-C</i>				
Individualism	26	.51**	.31†	-.21
Autonomy (vs. embeddedness)	36	.61***	-.07	.01
Contextualism	36	-.54***	.07	.29*
Ingroup collectivism practices	22	-.64***	.12	.35*
<i>Religious variables</i>				
Christianity	36	.50***	-.30*	.06
Islam	36	-.43**	.21	.34*
Catholicism ²	36	.07	-.09	.20
Protestantism ²	36	.37*	.08	-.28†
Orthodoxy ²	36	-.36**	.04	.16
Buddhism/Hinduism	36	-.10	.26†	-.32*
Other Christian ²	36	-.21	-.40**	-.23
Religiosity	30	-.40***	-.51***	.49***
<i>Structural variables</i>				
Inequality	33	-.17	-.49**	.29*
Urbanization	36	.55***	.31*	.00
Ethnic fractionalization	36	-.45***	-.65***	.20†
Religious fractionalization	36	-.16	-.34*	-.13
Political rights	36	.74***	.02	-.16
Civil liberties	36	.75***	.05	-.11
<i>Contextual threat variables</i>				
Climate harshness	36	.47**	.38*	-.01
Vulnerability to natural disasters	35	-.35*	-.10	.25†
Historical pathogen prevalence	30	-.74***	-.22	-.03
Contemporary pathogen prevalence	32	-.59***	-.32*	.24†
<i>Other normative variables</i>				
Power distance	26	-.68***	-.06	.26*
Uncertainty avoidance	26	.19	.02	.35*
Masculinity	26	.01	-.04	.04
Egalitarianism (vs. Hierarchy)	36	.56***	.33*	.12
Harmony (vs. Mastery)	36	.30*	.43**	.10
Tightness	17	-.58**	.31	-.24
Dynamic externality	25	-.81***	-.24	.16
Societal cynicism	25	-.36	-.02	.03

	<i>N</i>	Correlations		
		Self-differentiation	Other-focus	Self-containment
Essentialism	36	.05	.33*	.28†
Monumentalism (vs. Flexumility)	21	-.44**	-.28†	.53***
Indulgence (vs. Restraint)	23	.08	-.45*	.19
Self-expression vs. survival values	28	.59***	.26†	-.36**
Secular-rational vs. traditional values	28	.42**	.49***	-.48***

Note. Separate models were run for each nation-level variable because of differences in the number of nations with available data ¹ GNI was log-transformed in order to reduce skewness. ² Controlling for Christianity. Estimates shown are all at the nation level.

† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

related to a range of variables, whereas other-focus and self-containment showed a more differentiated pattern. In order to test which of these variables predicts differences in self-construals, these were entered in a series of regression analyses. Indicators of I-C were entered in the first step. Next, I tested whether affluence (Step 2) and religion (Step 3) would account for additional variance in addition to I-C. I used the Protestant group as the reference category against which other religious heritage groupings were compared.⁴⁵ Finally, the effects of the additional contextual variables were investigated (Step 4). As noted above, because of the exploratory nature of this final step and because many of these variables contained fewer than 36 data points with different nations missing for each variable, I tested each of these additional variables in separate models while still controlling for I-C, wealth and religion.

⁴⁵ Religion was entered in the form of five dummy variables (Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Buddhism/Hinduism, Islam and Other Christian) with the Protestant group used as a reference group. A significant result for the religious dummies should therefore be interpreted as a significant difference from Protestantism. I chose the Protestant group as the reference group for two reasons. Firstly, it was one of the largest groups and secondly, it reflects a common practice in the literature of comparing other cultures against the West (e.g. Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). I do not wish to portray Protestantism as normative but I considered it a useful reference point given the focus in the literature.

Table 6.8 Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Self-differentiation, Other-focus and Self-containment in Study 5

Predictor	<i>N</i>	Self-differentiation		Other-focus		Self-containment	
		ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β
Step 1	36	.52		.05		.08	
Autonomy (vs. embed.)			.52***		-.10		.13
Contextualism			-.40**		.18		.29†
Step 2	36	.05		.40		.01	
Autonomy (vs. embed.)			.39**		-.48**		.07
Contextualism			-.28*		.52***		.34†
GNI			.28†		.85***		.13
Step 3	36	.13		.13		.29	
Autonomy (vs. embed.)			.16		-.33*		.19
Contextualism			-.27*		.36*		.29
GNI			.27†		.77***		.12
Catholicism			.09		.10		.25
Orthodoxy			-.15		.25†		.26
Buddhism/Hinduism			-.16		.25†		-.18
Islam			-.36*		.38*		.43*
Other Christian			-.18		-.07		-.09
Total R^2		.70		.58		.38	
Step 4							
<i>Structural variables</i>							
Inequality	33	.01	.13	.08	-.34**	.03	.19
Urbanization	36	.00	-.03	.01	.18	.01	.20
Ethnic fractionalization	36	.00	-.06	.14	-.53***	.00	-.01
Religious fractionalization	36	.00	.03	.06	-.29*	.02	-.16
Political rights	36	.02	.28†	.00	.09	.01	.09
Civil liberties	36	.02	.25	.00	.07	.01	.10

	<i>N</i>	Self-differentiation		Other-focus		Self-containment	
Predictor		ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β
<i>Contextual threat variables</i>							
Climate harshness	36	.02	.20	.06	.36*	.02	.20
Vulnerability to natural disasters	35	.00	-.11	.00	.11	.00	.08
Historical pathogen prevalence	30	.01	-.27	.07	-.59*	.06	-.56†
Contemporary pathogen prevalence	32	.00	-.02	.03	-.33	.00	-.01
<i>Other normative variables</i>							
Religiosity	30	.01	.18	.09	-.46**	.09	.43*
Power distance	26	.03	-.45	.01	.03	.01	-.21
Uncertainty avoidance	26	.03	.27	.01	.16	.15	.57**
Masculinity	26	.00	.08	.02	-.13	.01	.09
Egalitarianism (vs. Hierarchy)	36	.00	.10	.08	.44**	.06	.37†
Harmony (vs. Mastery)	36	.00	.08	.09	.43**	.01	.07
Tightness	17	.02	-.38	.00	-.26	.01	-.22
Dynamic externality	25	.03	-.40	.03	-.44	.09	-.67*
Social cynicism	25	.01	.20	.00	.03	.03	.27
Essentialism	36	.03	.23†	.01	.14	.13	.48**
Monumentalism (vs. Flexumility)	21	.00	.10	.02	-.29	.17	.76**
Indulgence (vs. Restraint)	23	.05	.38†	.11	-.54**	.02	.19
Self-expression vs. survival values	28	.00	-.07	.03	.43†	.07	-.57†
Secular-rational vs. traditional values	28	.07	-.48*	.03	.31	.17	-.73***

Note. In Step 4, variables were tested separately but with all Step 3 variables in each model. ΔR^2 in Step 4 was calculated in comparison with Step 3 models that only contained the same national samples as the Step 4 model. Analysis exclusionism (vs. universalism) revealed unrealistic numbers, most likely because of non-identification, and is therefore not included here. Estimates shown are all at the nation level.

† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Main predictors. In Step 1, the two indicators of I-C explained 52% of the variance in self-differentiation (see Table 6.8). In line with predictions, I-C was a significant predictor of self-differentiation, with individualistic societies scoring higher (Hypothesis 1). However, contrary to predictions, I-C did not explain a substantial amount of variance in other-focus (Hypothesis 2) nor self-containment (Hypothesis 3) and the two predictors were not significant. In Step 2, national affluence did not account for a substantial amount of incremental variance in self-differentiation (Hypothesis 4) and self-containment (Hypothesis 6). However, it was a highly significant predictor of other-focus and explained an additional 40% of variance: other-focus was higher in more affluent nations, contrary to predictions (Hypothesis 5). Moreover, when including national affluence in the model, both indicators of I-C also became significant predictors of other-focus. Hence, it seems that collectivism predicts other-focus when looking at nations with similar levels of wealth, but differences in national affluence suppress this relationship.

In Step 3, religion accounted for an additional 13% of variance in self-differentiation, 13% of variance in other-focus and a more substantial 29% of variance in self-containment. Hypotheses 7 was supported: self-differentiation was negatively predicted by Islamic religious traditions. However, contrary to predictions, self-differentiation was not significant lower in Buddhist/nations (Hypothesis 10). In line with predictions, other-focus was higher in Islamic nations (Hypothesis 8) but it was only marginally related to Buddhism/Hinduism (Hypothesis 11). I originally predicted that self-containment would be lower in Islamic nations but the results revealed that it was in fact higher (Hypothesis 9). These results emphasise that self-containment is something different from individualism and appears to be distinctive of Islamic cultures.

Finally, in line with predictions, self-containment was lower in Buddhist/Hindu nations (Hypothesis 12).⁴⁶

In conclusion, this pattern of results suggests that self-differentiation largely conformed to expectations and common views in the self-construal literature. Hypotheses 1, 4 and 7 were supported—self-differentiation was lower in Islamic nations and higher in individualist and wealthier nations, although affluence was only a marginal predictor when controlling for I-C and it did not add much additional variance. The predicted relationship to Buddhism/Hinduism was not found (Hypothesis 10). Other-focus, on the other hand, revealed a more surprising pattern, especially in terms of its relation to national wealth. It was positively predicted by affluence—hence, the opposite relationship to what was hypothesized was observed (Hypothesis 5)—and it was only related to collectivism once controlling for national wealth (Hypothesis 2). Hypothesis 8 was supported—other focus was predicted by Islamic religious tradition but it was only marginally related to Buddhism/Hinduism (Hypothesis 11). Finally, self-containment showed a very different pattern of results compared to what was originally predicted. It was not higher in individualist nor wealthy nations (Hypotheses 3 and 6). In fact, there were indications that it was higher in collectivist nations. Moreover, religion was the best predictor of self-containment—it was higher in Islamic nations, contrary to predictions, and there were indications that this self-construal dimension was lower in Buddhist/Hindu nations, which was in line with predictions (Hypothesis 12).

⁴⁶ I ran parallel analyses with Germany categorized as Catholic, Uganda as Protestant, Ethiopia as Muslim, Nigeria as Other Christian, and Lebanon as Catholic. These alternative analyses revealed almost identical results, with one exception: when Lebanon was categorized as Catholic, Islam was no longer a significant predictor of self-containment and Catholicism was instead a marginal positive predictor. A substantial proportion of variance was still explained in self-containment with this alternative categorization of Lebanon ($R^2 = .35$) and additional analyses using Catholicism or Islam as a reference group suggested Buddhism/Hinduism was a negative predictor of self-containment.

Exploratory predictors. The exploratory variables were entered in Step 4 with separate analyses for each variable (see lower part of Table 6.8). Regarding self-differentiation, only the secular-rational vs. traditional value dimension was a significant predictor ($\Delta R^2 = .07$). This relationship was negative, which may seem surprising given that self-differentiation is more typical of wealthy nations, as is secular-rational values (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Secular-rational vs. traditional values have also been found to correlate with autonomy (vs. embeddedness; Schwartz, 2004). Hence, the negative relationship observed here could be due to the fact that I control for both wealth and autonomy (vs. embeddedness) in these analyses and with a large amount of shared variance, it is unclear what this negative relationship means. Overall, it seemed that self-differentiation was best explained by I-C, national wealth, and religion, which together explained 70% of the nation-level variance. The many correlations between self-differentiation and other variables identified in Table 6.7 are therefore arguably the product of common associations with I-C, wealth and religion.

In contrast, other-focus was significantly predicted by several other variables, which each accounted for considerable additional variance. These included the following negative predictors: inequality ($\Delta R^2 = .08$), ethnic fractionalization ($\Delta R^2 = .14$), religious fractionalization ($\Delta R^2 = .06$), historical pathogen prevalence ($\Delta R^2 = .07$), religiosity ($\Delta R^2 = .09$), indulgence (vs. restraint; $\Delta R^2 = .11$); and the following positive predictors: harmony (vs. mastery) values ($\Delta R^2 = .14$), egalitarian (vs. hierarchy) values ($\Delta R^2 = .07$) and climate harshness ($\Delta R^2 = .06$). Self-containment was also positively predicted by religiosity ($\Delta R^2 = .09$), uncertainty avoidance ($\Delta R^2 = .15$), essentialism ($\Delta R^2 = .13$), and monumentalism (vs. flexumility; $\Delta R^2 = .17$); and negatively predicted by secular-rational vs. traditional values ($\Delta R^2 = .17$) and dynamic externality ($\Delta R^2 = .09$). Given that the exploratory predictors were tested in separate analyses because of

differences in the number of available data points, repeated tests for significance were performed which increases risk for Type 1 error. After conducting a Bonferroni correction (based on 24 simultaneous tests), the only significant exploratory predictors of other-focus were ethnic fractionalization and harmony (vs. mastery) and the only significant exploratory predictors of self-containment were essentialism and secular-rational vs. traditional values. Thus, the findings with regards to the other predictors noted above need to be treated with caution.

6.3.3 Discussion

Study 3 was designed to answer two questions—how our national samples differed on the three self-construal dimensions and why they differed. These two questions are discussed in turn. In terms of sample differences, the US sample's top position on self-differentiation was consistent with the widely held perception that North Americans strive to be different and unique (Oyserman et al., 2002). On this dimension, the European samples scored intermediate between US and Asian samples, in line with previous research (Kitayama et al., 2009; Oyserman et al., 2002). However, it is important to note that this was not the case for all three self-construal dimensions. In particular, many European samples scored higher on other-focus compared with samples that are traditionally characterized as collectivist, which highlights the fact that this self-construal dimension is positively related to affluence, societal equality, and ethnic and religious homogeneity. Nonetheless, most East Asian samples scored low on self-differentiation and self-containment and relatively high on other-focus, supporting the traditional view in the literature (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Notably, however, the Japanese sample scored moderately high on self-differentiation, while scoring very low on self-containment. Considering that these two facets are usually confounded in

previous measures of independence, this pattern may help to explain why Japan is sometimes characterized as interdependent and sometimes independent in previous studies measuring self-construals in Japan (see Levine et al., 2003; Matsumoto, 1999).

Perhaps surprising to some, many of our South American samples scored similarly to the US sample. Hofstede (1980) originally classified many South American nations as collectivistic, based on data collected in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The present results, on the other hand, are more in line with recent findings reported by Kolstad and Horpestad (2009) and suggest that much has happened in Chile, Colombia and Peru since Hofstede collected his data around 40 years ago. It should be noted, however, that we did not sample any Central American nations. Considering that it was these nations that occupied the lowest position on Hofstede's individualism index and that they have seen slower economic development, it is possible that the pattern of results may have been very different for Central American samples.

Middle Eastern samples are less frequently featured in the self-construal literature. Nonetheless, Harb and Smith (2008) found that self-construals in Arab cultures emphasized hierarchical structures and family relationships. The emphasis on family was present also within the present results, as illustrated by Middle Eastern samples' high position on other-focus. Moreover, the relatively high endorsement of self-containment may be a product of a cultural emphasis on honour, which many regard as characteristic of this region (Abu-Lughod, 1985; Gregg, 2005). Self-containment involves a self that is not malleable and that does not rely on others, perhaps reflecting the honour code's emphasis on toughness and machismo (Gregg, 2005).

Finally, there is only limited research into self-construals among African samples, but the existing evidence suggests that interdependence is emphasized in

African contexts (Adams, 2005; Chasiotis, Bender, Kiessling, & Hofer, 2010; Cheng et al., 2011; Eaton & Louw, 2000; Hansen, Postmes, van de Vinne, & van Thiel, 2012; Ma & Schoeneman, 1997). Low to moderate scores on self-differentiation support this notion and low self-containment scores suggest that the context has great influence on how the self is defined, which is in line with descriptions in the anthropological literature (Beattie, 1980). However, most African samples scored relatively low on other-focus. Thus, the African samples are distinguished from other collectivist regions in that they do not emphasize this particular conception of the self. I return to this issue in the General Discussion (Section 6.4.2). It is important to note that there was also substantial variation among the African samples. The Nigerian sample scored more similar to East Asian samples than to other African samples on other-focus and self-containment. The Namibian and South-African samples also scored similar to the European samples on self-differentiation and self-containment. These two samples are distinguished from our other African samples in terms of national wealth and religion, since they have a clearer Protestant tradition, which may be contributing to their similarity to some of the European samples.

Our second question referred to why our national samples differed on the self-construal dimensions. It is often assumed in the literature that differences in self-construals are the product of differences in cultural-level I-C. The present study provided what I believe to be the first large-scale empirical test of this assumption, and it can be concluded that it is only partially correct. Self-differentiation was found to be higher in individualist nations, as predicted in Hypothesis 1. However, Hypothesis 2 was only partially supported: other-focus was higher in collectivist nations only when national wealth was accounted for. Moreover, Hypothesis 3 was fully rejected, self-containment was not higher in individualist nations, in fact the opposite relationship was

indicated. Thus, although nation-level I-C appears to be a very important factor to consider in relation to self-construals, the picture is much more complex than the current literature suggests.

In addition to I-C, the present results suggested that national wealth and religion also need to be taken into account when explaining why self-construals differ across cultures. Contrary to Hypothesis 5, national wealth was a substantial *positive* predictor of other-focus. Moreover, religion explained a large proportion of variance in all three self-construal dimensions, most notably in self-containment. This pattern of results, in combination with those for I-C, suggests that the three self-construal dimensions function very differently, with different antecedents. I-C provided the best explanation for variance in self-differentiation, national affluence in combination with I-C was the best predictor of other-focus, and self-containment was best predicted by religion.

Furthermore, several other contextual variables accounted for a considerable proportion of variance in other-focus and self-containment. The present results suggested that, in addition to national wealth and collectivism, societies that are equal, homogenous, secular, and endorse harmony and egalitarian values and restraint (rather than indulgence), promote other-focus. There therefore seem to be two different ways a society can come to endorse this conception of the self—either through societal equality or through collectivist values and practices (when looking at nations of similar wealth). European nations tend to score high on equality (Central Intelligence Agency, 2011), which can explain why the European samples scored high on this dimensions. The similarly high scores of Middle Eastern and East Asian samples on this dimension are arguably more driven by collectivism. In contrast, societies that are religious, that endorse monumentalism, traditionalism, uncertainty avoidance and essentialism, and that deemphasize beliefs about a dynamic externality, appear to promote self-

containment. As a general pattern, it seems that self-containment is endorsed in nations that emphasize absolutist thinking, structure and rules and deemphasize ambiguity.

It can be concluded that I-C does not tell the whole story when it comes to explaining differences in self-construals. I identified several other important predictor variables related to the structural and normative context. It should be noted, however, that there may be other important contextual variables that were not included in the present analysis. It is also important to note that these conclusions are based on correlational data, and it is possible that it is instead the different constructions of the self that promote different types of societies or that the processes are bidirectional.

6.4 General Discussion

The present results suggest that Markus and Kitayama's (1991) descriptions were in many ways accurate—in the US the self is constructed as desiring to be unique and different from others, and in East Asia it is constructed as desiring to fit in and adapt to others. However, with two large and diverse cross-cultural datasets, including many national groups that are normally underrepresented in the self-construal literature, a more differentiated and multifaceted picture has been presented. It can be concluded that variation in self-construals is more complex than the two-dimensional model of independence and interdependence would suggest, and that a multidimensional model was needed to account for variation in representations of the self (Study 3). This model was then tested in an adult sample, which demonstrated that the structure was best represented as a seven-dimensional model at both individual and cultural levels of analysis (Study 4). Although cultural variation in correlations among the factors precluded an individual-level higher-order structure, I was able to identify three higher-order dimensions at the cultural level: self-differentiation, other-focus, and self-

containment. These dimensions showed different patterns of national sample scores and different nomological networks (Study 5).

The present research found that self-differentiation was best predicted by individualism and to some extent also by religion, in particular Protestant rather than Islamic heritage. This was illustrated by the high scores of our US and European samples on this dimension. Other-focus was best predicted by national wealth but also by collectivism (when controlling for affluence), societal equality, homogeneity and secularism and European, Middle Eastern, and East Asian samples all scored high on this dimension. Finally, self-containment was best predicted by religion, monumentalism (vs. flexumility), and traditional rather than secular-rational values. In particular, it was strongly endorsed in Muslim societies.

6.4.1 Dimensionality of Self-Construals

Traditionally, the multiple dimensions that were identified have been considered part of the same overarching constructs, independence and interdependence. For example, notions of self-reliance and consistency have been considered under the same umbrella as the desire to be different and to stand out as facets of independence. However, as was illustrated in Figure 6.1, these facets only seem to co-occur in some nations. In others, such as our Middle Eastern samples, an emphasis on self-containment was combined with a de-emphasis on self-differentiation. Hence, it would not be appropriate to characterize this region as either independent or interdependent. Rather, different domains of relatedness need to be considered separately when categorizing individuals or regions. It is possible that the heavy reliance on comparisons between North America and East Asia in previous theory and research has obscured these more

fine-grained distinctions. Thus, the present research provides an update on self-construal theory—extending the scope both geographically and theoretically.

It is also possible that the habit of confounding these different dimensions has contributed to inconsistencies in the literature. As noted above, the fact that Japan is sometimes characterized as interdependent and sometimes as independent (see Levine et al., 2003; Matsumoto, 1999) could be explained in part by the fact that our Japanese sample scored low on self-containment but moderately high on self-differentiation. Hence, how “independent” Japanese people are seems to depend on which facet is being measured. It is important to note that the present dimensions also differ from previous measures of independence and interdependence by each having two poles: for example uniqueness is posed against fitting in/similarity, and inclusion of others in the self is posed against separateness of self and others. This further illustrates the point that the seven dimensions are not sub-factors of independence and interdependence. Although they can be thought of as each containing one independent and one interdependent pole, they do not factor together to form a higher-order dimension of independence and interdependence.

Contradictory findings among national samples have led Kitayama et al. (2009) to conclude that explicit measures of self-construals lack validity, and they propose that national differences in independence and interdependence should instead be measured implicitly by scores on a range of experimental tasks. Their implicit approach adds an important level to the relationship between culture and self and has the potential to enrich the field in many ways. However, I disagree with their conclusion that the explicit measures are not meaningful. The present results indicate that with a larger number of national samples (Kitayama et al. studied participants in four nations) and a more differentiated model of self-construals, the pattern of national differences is indeed

meaningful and can be meaningfully explained by a range of societal variables. The possibility that national differences in implicit independence and interdependence may also be multidimensional should be noted. However, more research, with a larger number of nations, would be needed to investigate this possibility.

The importance of considering multiple dimensions was particularly salient in the present study at the individual level of analysis. The correlations between the seven dimensions varied widely in different cultural groups, suggesting that the way the different facets are interrelated is very much dependent on the cultural context in which one lives. Hence, the three broad dimensions identified at the cultural level were not mirrored at the individual level. This means that although cultures that are high on commitment to others also tend to be high on inclusion of others in the self, this is not automatically the case for individuals. For some participants, living in Ghana for example, these two dimensions were completely unrelated. The three higher-order dimensions are therefore not appropriate for characterizing individuals' self-construals, and in order to avoid committing the ecological fallacy, the seven dimensions should always be considered separately at the individual level of analysis.

Unlike other self-construal models in the literature, the present dimensions do not refer to different types of relationships at different levels of inclusiveness, such as the individual, relational and collective self (Brewer & Chen, 2007; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Cross et al., 2000; Kashima & Hardie, 2000). Rather, different ways of being related to other people were identified that varied meaningfully across cultures. Nonetheless, focusing on different domains of relatedness, the present model does not rule out the possibility that conceptions of the self also vary in relation to different types of relationships, such as close relationships or group memberships. I used the family as the most common reference group as it has been shown to be the most important group

for most people (Fischer et al., 2009), but it would be possible to vary this category, for example in terms of romantic partner or the community, to see whether the same seven dimensions could be identified. It would also be interesting to investigate these kinds of relationships along the horizontal/vertical axis, in order to see the impact of a varying sense of equality to others.

6.4.2 Self-construals at the Cultural-Level

The present research is one of the first empirical investigations that systematically tries to explain variation in self-construals across cultures using a wide range of nation-level variables. The results showed that self-construals are related to I-C, but that this relationship is not as straightforward as previously thought, and several additional important nation-level variables were identified.

A noteworthy finding was the unexpected positive relationship between other-focus and national affluence. Given that collectivism has often been associated with lower affluence (e.g. Hofstede, 1980), the fact that other-focus was higher in wealthier nations may be surprising. An important question then is to understand in what ways other-focus is different from collectivism. The present analyses showed that other-focus was also related to egalitarianism (vs. hierarchy) and harmony (vs. mastery) values, which have also been shown to be higher in richer nations (Van Herk & Poortinga, 2011).

Egalitarianism (vs. hierarchy) refers to the importance of emotional attachment and concern about others in close interaction (in terms of loyalty, benevolence, and honesty) and in wider groups (in terms of equality, social justice and freedom; Schwartz, 1994). Other-focus overlaps conceptually with the former facet of this value dimension. Schwartz (1994) describes the concern about others manifest in

egalitarianism as a voluntary commitment, rather than being ascribed or based on obligation as is more typical of collectivistic cultures. It is possible that other-focus also represents voluntary actions and motivations, which are likely to be more prevalent in affluent nations. For instance, in poorer cultures where children are depended on for economic and utilitarian support, family relationships are often based on authority and obedience and there is little choice in terms of close relationships; in richer nations, in contrast, economic independence allows a degree of autonomy in relationships but does not necessarily mean emotional separateness (see Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005).

The low scores of our African samples on other-focus are also in line with Adams and colleagues' (Adams & Dzokoto, 2003; Adams & Plaut, 2003; Adams, 2005) arguments about the nature of the interdependent self in West African contexts. Based on extensive research into friendship and enemyship, he suggests that rather than being associated with pro-social orientations including desire and promotion of connections with other people, interdependence is the default state of being, the taken for granted nature of relationships. Thus, it is possible that other-focus captures a pro-social side of social relationships which are not highly endorsed in the African context. This would also suggest that the more implicit, taken for granted nature of social relationships may be missing in the present model of self-construals, which suggests additional self-construal dimensions should be explored from a more emic perspective (see below in Section 6.4.3).

Other-focus also shares some characteristics with harmony (vs. mastery) given that they both deemphasize achievement and success. In many developing nations, a shift has taken place from traditional to modern values. As a product of economic scarcity and uncertainty, these modern values emphasize economic achievement and growth (Inglehart, 2000). Modern values are contrasted against postmodern and post-

materialist values in cultures which have achieved economic security. These latter values include self-expression, tolerance and concern for nature. Thus, it is possible that the lower scores on other-focus that we observed among many of our African samples are also a reflection of the relatively higher importance given to individual achievement in an economically tough environment.

As noted above, other-focus was only positively related to collectivism when controlling for national affluence. Comparing Japan and the US, for example, Japan scored higher on other-focus and lower on autonomy (vs. embeddedness). However, comparing Japan and Cameroon, Japan scored higher on both dimensions. This illustrates the problem of relying on comparisons of a small number of nations when drawing conclusions about culture. It also highlights the problematic assumption that all collectivistic cultures will share the same attributes when in fact factors such as affluence and modernization can generate fundamental differences (Cheng et al., 2011). Following the argument made above, it is possible that when removing differences in choice and autonomy in relationships, which are caused by economic differences, other-focus and collectivism are actually not that different. These findings highlight the pervasive influence of national affluence and raise the question that was noted in the General Introduction of whether it should be considered part of, or separate from, culture and whether culture and economic development can ever be completely disentangled (see Hofstede, 2006; Javidan et al., 2006; Smith, 2006, for a discussion). Adams et al. (2012) suggest that rather than trying to disentangle culture and wealth, we should study the patterns in the world and the corresponding patterns in the mind, regardless of what has produced them, and trying to separate ‘the structural’ and ‘the cultural’ may not be helpful since it can obscure relationships of power.

Moreover, the fact that self-differentiation and other-focus were both related to I-C, may highlight different facets of collectivism. Kim (1994) distinguished the relational mode of collectivism, which refers to devotion and close interdependence where people share the thoughts and feelings of others, and the coexistence mode of collectivism, which refers to the importance of social norms and roles in public behaviour in order to maintain harmony. The former is very similar to the present other-focus whereas the latter corresponds to low self-differentiation, i.e. harmony as opposed to uniqueness. The importance of separating these facets is illustrated by the European samples, for example the Italian and Swedish samples, which scored high on the former and low on the latter. Thus, the present findings support the notion that I-C can take different forms which may show different cross-cultural patterns (Brewer & Chen, 2007; Green, Deschamps, & Páez, 2005; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997; Oyserman et al., 2002).

However, I-C explained only a small proportion of variance in self-containment and was far from the only important predictor of other-focus. In the same way as I-C is here considered to be more than only self-construals, these results show that self-construals are more than simply a reflection of I-C. The current preoccupation with I-C in the self-construal literature can therefore be considered problematic. It presents a danger of reducing self-construals to cultural stereotypes and ignores many other important ways in which cultures differ (Gregg, 2007). Among these additional factors, religious heritage stood out as particularly important alongside national wealth. This is in line with findings by Georgas et al. (2004) and by Inglehart & Baker (2000) who found that religious traditions influenced psychological variables independently of economic development. Thus, although the importance of the church has diminished in many nations, in particular in Western Europe, the influence of religious traditions is still great. This finding supports the notion that it is not only religious beliefs of

individuals that matter, but also the religious heritage of a nation (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Different religious traditions provide different answers to the question of how the self and one's relation to others are defined, and are therefore a powerful explanation for patterns of cross-cultural differences in self-construal. I therefore agree with arguments that psychological research needs to pay more attention to how religious traditions interact with national cultures (see Johnson, Hill, & Cohen, 2011; Saroglou & Cohen, 2011, in recent special issue in *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*).

6.4.3 Limitations and Future Directions

The most common self-construal scales were used as the starting point for this research, which are based on Markus and Kitayama's (1991) original descriptions of self-construals, and the dimensions I identified correspond to their descriptions in many ways. However, as noted above, Markus and Kitayama's focus was on differences between the US and East-Asia and their conceptions of self-construals were driven by this contrast (Markus & Kitayama, 2003). Thus, the starting point for the present research largely reflected Markus and Kitayama's theory and the emic input was limited. There may therefore be further differences in self-construals that are salient in other parts of the world but which are yet unexplored, as Markus and Kitayama (2003) themselves have pointed out. Hence, more indigenous research from African, Middle Eastern, and South American cultures may identify additional important dimensions of self-construals (see Kim & Berry, 1993). For instance, as noted above, there may be an implicit, taken for granted nature of social relationships which is more common in African contexts which is not captured by the present model. The seven-dimensional model should therefore not be considered final but instead be thought of as a step towards a more culturally decentred model of self-construals.

Moreover, the focus in the present research was on clarifying cross-cultural differences in self-construals and explaining these differences in terms of different national contexts. Hence, less attention was paid to correlates of self-construals at the individual level. Future research should therefore explore the antecedents of individual differences in the seven self-construal dimensions. A further limitation was that I used only three items per self-construal dimension. Although this is sufficient for the purpose of testing the factorial structure of self-construals, it is not ideal from the point of view of scale development. Hence, Chapter 7 describes the development and validation of an extended version of this scale, as well as showing how the separate dimensions can be useful in predicting different psychological and behavioural outcomes.

6.4.4 Conclusion

Based on data from 38 diverse nations, including both student and adult samples, it can be concluded that cross-cultural variation in people's sense of self is not well represented by the broad constructs of independence and interdependence. Rather, this thesis presents a more multifaceted picture which at the individual level involves seven dimensions of variation in how people construe themselves and their relations with others. At a cultural level of analysis, these can also be organised into three higher-order dimensions, which can be thought of as referring to different social constructions of the self. This new model of self-construals provides a greater understanding of cultural diversity in representations of the self. Moreover, beyond simply describing this diversity, significant progress has been made towards explaining it in terms of societal structures and norms, most importantly in terms of I-C, affluence, and religion. These findings provide insight into the factors that shape people's conceptions of the self across cultures and therefore shed new light on the link between culture and self.

Gaining a richer understanding of cross-cultural diversity in the self and its likely origins has the potential to make self-construals more relevant and useful as explanatory constructs. It raises new and interesting questions and opens up the potential for novel predictions in diverse areas such as health promotion, education, business management, and international relations.

Chapter 7

Self-construals at the Individual Level

Chapter 6 identified multiple dimensions of self-construals which showed meaningful cross-cultural patterns and nomological networks at the cultural level. These findings provide insight into the meaning of constructions of the self across cultures and they can help us understand differences between national or cultural groups. However, so far in this thesis I have paid less attention to the individual level of self-construals. Chapter 6 showed that individual constructions of the self should be organized into seven different dimensions, referring to different ways of seeing the self and its relation to others. Unlike at the cultural level of analysis, these dimensions did not form higher-order dimensions but should be considered separately. Nonetheless, questions still remain with regards to how these seven dimensions can be useful in understanding the role of self-construals in psychological outcomes and behaviour. Moreover, as noted in Chapter 6, the scale measuring the seven dimensions was very limited, which could be a particular problem at the individual level where reliability is of greater concern.

Chapter 7 therefore had two aims: firstly, to improve and extend the scale which was developed in Study 4 and secondly, to explore how the seven dimensions of self-construals relate to a range of outcomes, in particular variables related to socio-emotional adjustment. Most importantly, I investigated whether the multiple dimensions would show a differentiated pattern of relationships with these outcomes, which would highlight the value of using multiple dimensions. To this end, I used samples from the UK, Romania, Thailand, and Malaysia.

7.1 Study 6: Self-construals predicting socio-emotional adjustment

Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggested that self-construals fundamentally influence cognition, emotion and motivation such that for example people with independent construals of the self will pay more attention to information that confirms their internal attributes and will express more self-focused emotions. People with interdependent constructions of the self, on the other hand, will pay more attention to contextual stimuli and are more likely to express other-focused emotions. Since then, a large body of research has built on and extended these claims and self-construals have been used to explain a wide range of psychological and behavioural outcomes (see Cross et al., 2011).

In this study I chose to focus on outcome variables related to socio-emotional adjustment, such as wellbeing, resilience, and constructive psychological functioning, which have received less attention in the literature compared to cognitive outcomes (Cross et al., 2011). These included life-satisfaction, depression, social anxiety, self-efficacy, self-esteem, coping strategies, narcissism, modesty, and authenticity. There are indications in the literature that independence is related to higher life-satisfaction and to lower depression and social anxiety (Elliott & Coker, 2008; Hyun, 2000; Okazaki, 1997; Sato & McCann, 1998; Trung Lam, 2005), higher self-esteem (Oyserman et al., 2002; Singelis, Bond, Sharkey, & Lai, 1999), higher authenticity (Heine, 2003; Ito & Kodama, 2007), higher narcissism (Konrath, Bushman, & Grove, 2009), and more direct coping strategies (Cross, 1995). On the other hand, interdependence has been shown to be related to higher depression and social anxiety (Okazaki, 1997; Sato & McCann, 1998), lower self-esteem (Singelis et al., 1999), relational and collective

coping styles (Hardie, Critchley, & Morris, 2006), and higher modesty (Kurman, 2011; Chen, Bond, Bacon Chan, Donghui Tang, & Buchtel, 2009).

However, there are also indications that these relationships are in fact much more complex than what is suggested above. For instance, the relationship between self-construals and life-satisfaction has been shown to be mediated by self-esteem and relationship harmony (Kwan, Bond, & Singelis, 1997) and the link between self-construal and depression has been argued to depend on social anxiety (Okazaki, 1997), while other studies have found self-construals to be unrelated to these variables (Lam, 2006). Moreover, these relationships appear to depend on the cultural context. For example, Cheng et al. (2011) found that independence was related to wellbeing in Western countries whereas the same was true for interdependence in sub-Saharan African regions, and East Asian participants' wellbeing was promoted by an integration of the two. Thus, it is clear that the relationship between self-construals and socio-emotional adjustment is far from straightforward and may depend on a range of different conditions.

Given this complexity, it is likely that there is something to be gained from refining the conception of self-construals. As Cross et al. (2011) suggest, the traditional measures of self-construals may be unable to distinguish between more fine-grained meanings which have differential impact on wellbeing and resilience. In line with these arguments, Hardin (2006) found that the specific dimensions of self-construals explained more variance in social anxiety than higher-order independence and interdependence.

The aim of this present study was to test whether the seven self-construal dimensions showed different patterns of relationships to a range of socio-emotional adjustment outcomes and whether they could therefore be considered important in

different psychological processes. Based on an intuitive understanding of the meaning of the seven self-construal dimensions, some predictions were made. I predicted that self-direction would be positively related to self-efficacy and direct and active coping styles, such as confrontive coping and planful problem solving. Uniqueness was predicted to be positively related to self-esteem and narcissism and negatively related to modesty and social anxiety. On the other hand, harmony was predicted to be positively related to social anxiety, modesty, and relationship harmony and negatively related to narcissism and confrontive coping. Inclusion and commitment were both predicted to be positively related to social support as a coping style and inclusion was also hypothesized to relate negatively to distancing as a way of coping. Self-reliance was predicted to positively relate to self-controlling coping and acceptance of responsibility and negatively to social support, and consistency was predicted to be important for authenticity. Given that the seven-dimensional model has not previously been used in the cross-cultural literature, I did not make any specific predictions of how these relationships would vary across the four national samples.

7.1.1 Method

7.1.1.1 Participants and procedure

The study included data from four nations (Malaysia, Romania, Thailand and the UK), although only a subset of the measures were included in Malaysia. Participants in the UK were undergraduate psychology students ($N = 106$), who completed the questionnaire in their own time in return for course credit, and high-school students ($N = 87$), who completed the questionnaire during normal teaching time. Participants in Romania, Thailand, and Malaysia were undergraduate students who also completed the study during normal teaching hours (see Table 7.1 for demographic details).

Table 7.1 Demographic Details Study 6

Country	<i>N</i>	Mean age	<i>SD</i>	% females	Language
Malaysia	465	22.81	1.31	51	Malay
Romania	435	22.04	3.59	70	Romanian
Thailand	534	20.11	2.30	71	Thai
UK	193	18.89	2.94	71	English

7.1.1.2 Instruments

Self-construals scale. I included 58 items, with eight or nine items per dimension, in order to have a wide selection of items when refining the scale and allowing for some items to be dropped (see Appendix C). These were designed based on the existing 21 items, aiming to add fidelity more than bandwidth. In the same way as in Study 4, participants were asked “*How well does each of these statements describe you*” and the items were rated on nine-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*exactly*), with three intermediate anchor-points. In the scale-refinement part of the analyses, I controlled for acquiescence by modelling it as a latent factor (see below). In order to control for acquiescence in the regression analyses, however, I identified nine pairs of items which had almost exact reverse meaning (e.g. “*You see yourself the same way even in different social environments*” vs. “*You see yourself differently in different social environments*”; Appendix C shows which items were included in these pairs). Given that it would not make meaningful sense to answer positive to both items in these pairs, a mean across these 18 items provided an improved measure of acquiescence compared to ipsatization based on all items. This mean was subtracted from each of the 58 items.

Life-satisfaction. I used the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) which includes five items (e.g. “*So far I have got the*

important things I want in life”) and which were rated on seven-point scales ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) Reliabilities were good in all four national samples (Malaysia: $\alpha = .81$; Romania: $\alpha = .81$; Thailand: $\alpha = .81$; UK: $\alpha = .85$). I decided not to control for acquiescence when computing these variables since most of the outcome variables did not include any reversed items, which makes it difficult to calculate an acquiescence score for each participant. I did not aim to compare means of the outcome variables across the national groups in this study, which would have been problematic with acquiescence as a confound. Rather, the aim was to look at relationships between dimensions of self-construals and these outcomes, and given that I had controlled for acquiescence in the self-construal dimensions, spurious correlations because of response style were unlikely.

Depression. Participants were asked to rate a range of feelings and behaviours in terms of how frequently they had experienced them during the past week (see Radloff, 1977, 1991). I used 20 items (e.g. “*I was bothered by things that usually don’t bother me*”) which were rated on four-point scales ranging from 1 (*rarely or none of the time*) to 4 (*most or all of the time*). Reliabilities were good in all four national samples (Malaysia: $\alpha = .86$; Romania: $\alpha = .90$; Thailand: $\alpha = .86$; UK: $\alpha = .92$).

Self-esteem. I used the Single Item Self-Esteem Scale (SISE; Robins, Hendin, & Trzesniewski, 2001) which, as the name suggests, contains one item (*I have high self-esteem*). This item was rated on a scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). This one item measure has been shown to function in a very similar way to longer, more traditional measures of self-esteem (Robins et al., 2001).

Self-efficacy. This variable was measured by 10 items (e.g. “*I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough*”) which were rated on four-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all true*) to 4 (*exactly true*; Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995).

Reliabilities were good in all four national samples (Malaysia: $\alpha = .89$; Romania: $\alpha = .85$; Thailand: $\alpha = .82$; UK: $\alpha = .84$).

Social anxiety. I used six items to measure social anxiety (e.g. “*When mixing socially I am uncomfortable*”) which were rated on five-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*; see Mattick & Clarke, 1998). This variable was not included in Malaysia. Reliabilities were good in the three national samples where it was measured (Romania: $\alpha = .83$; Thailand: $\alpha = .83$; UK: $\alpha = .86$).

Narcissism. I used the short version of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI-16; Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006). This measure includes 16 pairs of items where participants chose between a narcissistic response (e.g. “*I really like to be the center of attention*”) and a non-narcissistic response (e.g. “*It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention*”) as closest to their feelings and beliefs about themselves. The narcissistic response was coded as 1 and the non-narcissistic response was coded as 0 and a mean was calculated across all 16 items. Reliabilities in the three national samples where this variable was included was good (Romania: $\alpha = .71$; Thailand: $\alpha = .70$; UK: $\alpha = .70$).

Modesty. This variable was measured by seven items (e.g. “*I feel uncomfortable whenever I have to describe my successes to others*”) and was rated on five-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*; see Cialdini, Wosinska, Dabul, Whetstone-Dion, & Heszen, 1998). Reliabilities were good in Romania ($\alpha = .75$) and in the UK ($\alpha = .83$) and acceptable in Thailand ($\alpha = .66$). This variable was not included in Malaysia.

Authenticity. I measured the tripartite model of authenticity comprising of authentic living (e.g. “*I live in accordance with my values and beliefs*”), self-alienation (e.g. “*I feel alienated from myself*”), and accepting external influence (e.g. “*Other people influence me greatly*”; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008). The

latter two dimensions are measuring lack of authenticity. These three dimensions all comprise of four items each, however, one item from the authentic living dimension ("*I am true to myself in most situations*") was not included in the UK analyses because it had substantial negative impact on reliability in this sample⁴⁷. Reliability of authentic living was still low in the UK and results should therefore be treated with caution (authentic living: UK $\alpha = .53$, Romania $\alpha = .63$, and Thailand $\alpha = .66$). Reliabilities of the other two dimensions were good in all three samples (self-alienation: Romania $\alpha = .78$, UK $\alpha = .87$, Thailand $\alpha = .78$; accepting external influence: Romania $\alpha = .73$, UK $\alpha = .76$, Thailand $\alpha = .74$). Items were rated on five-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). These three dimensions were not measured in Malaysia.

Relationship harmony. I used the Interpersonal Relationship Harmony Inventory (IRHI; Kwan et al., 1997) which assess the degree of harmony participants have achieved in different relationships. Participants were asked to specify their five most important relationships and indicate the gender of the targets and the types of relationships (e.g. friend, family, classmate etc.). They were then asked to indicate the degree of harmony characterising each relationship on seven-point scales ranging from 1 (*very low*) to 7 (*very high*). These five ratings were then averaged to create a relationship harmony score. Reliabilities were acceptable in Romania ($\alpha = .62$) and Thailand ($\alpha = .61$) but slightly lower in the UK ($\alpha = .58$).

Coping styles. These were measured using a modified version of the Ways of Coping checklist (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986; Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). The original version includes 68 items, describing a broad range of cognitive and behavioural coping strategies. However, because of space

⁴⁷ I kept this item in the other two samples since it contributed substantially to the reliability there and the analyses were run separately for each sample. Parallel analyses without this item in Romania and Thailand revealed almost identical results.

restrictions the number of items had to be substantially reduced to 35 in total. The format of the scale was also modified. Rather than asking about coping styles in relation to a specific stressful situation, I used the following instructions: *“Sometimes people have problems or feel upset about things, for example when they have an argument with a friend, fail to achieve something they really wanted to achieve, or when they are treated unfairly. When this happens, they may do different things to solve the problem or to make themselves feel better. Below is a list of things people may do when faced with a problem. For each statement, circle the number that represents the response that best describes how often you usually do the behaviour when you have a problem. There are no right or wrong answers, just indicate how often you usually do each thing.”* The scale measures eight different dimensions of coping: confrontive coping (four items, e.g. *“Stand my ground and fight for what I want”*); self-controlling coping (five items, e.g. *“I try not to act too hastily or follow my first hunch”*); seeking social support (five items, e.g. *“I talk to someone about how I am feeling”*); accepting responsibility (four items, e.g. *“I criticize or lecture myself”*); planful problem-solving (four items, e.g. *“I make a plan of action and follow it”*); positive reappraisal (four items, e.g. *“I change or grow as a person in a good way”*); escape-avoidance (five items, e.g. *“I hope a miracle will happen”*); distancing (four items, *“I go on as if nothing has happened”*). These were rated on five-point scales ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*most of the time*). Given that the number of items per dimension had to be reduced, reliabilities were generally low (confrontive coping: Romania $\alpha = .44$, UK $\alpha = .53$, Thailand $\alpha = .44$; self-controlling coping: Romania $\alpha = .48$, UK $\alpha = .50$, Thailand $\alpha = .46$; seeking social support: Romania $\alpha = .62$, UK $\alpha = .82$, Thailand $\alpha = .67$; accepting responsibility: Romania $\alpha = .49$, UK $\alpha = .41$, Thailand $\alpha = .23$; planful problem-solving: Romania $\alpha = .67$, UK $\alpha = .55$, Thailand $\alpha = .59$; positive reappraisal: Romania $\alpha = .59$, UK $\alpha = .60$, Thailand $\alpha =$

.53; escape-avoidance: Romania $\alpha = .50$, UK $\alpha = .60$, Thailand $\alpha = .33$; distancing: Romania $\alpha = .51$, UK $\alpha = .57$, Thailand $\alpha = .49$. Despite their low reliabilities, I decided to retain these variables in the analyses in order to provide as much of a full picture as possible of how the self-construal dimensions relate to outcomes. It should be noted, however, that these analyses provide only an initial overview of patterns of relationships and more research with more reliable measures will be needed into the mechanisms of coping and how these are influenced by constructions of the self.

7.1.2 Results

7.1.2.1 Refining and testing the self-construal scale

The aim of these analyses was to find a final set of items which would make up the optimal measurement of the seven self-construal factors and show the most cross-cultural comparability. In a similar way to Study 1 (see Chapter 5), I ran a series of single group and multigroup CFA in MPlus version 5. Once again I modelled acquiescence as a separate uncorrelated factor which loaded onto every indicator at a fixed value of 1 (Welkenhuysen-Gybels et al., 2003). Model fit was assessed using the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and the Standard Root Mean Squared Residual (SRMR). Values of CFI above .90, RMSEA up to .08, and SRMR up to .10 are seen as acceptable (Kline, 2005).

Achieving configural invariance. Firstly, I tested the seven-dimensional model with all 58 items in the four samples separately. Any items that did not load significantly on their respective factor or loaded opposite to the intended direction in any of the four national samples were removed from further analyses, which brought the number of items down to 56 (items 8 and 9 removed, see Appendix C). The fit of the model with the remaining items was still poor in all four samples and it was clear from

the modification indices that several items had a large number of cross-loadings. In order to identify the most problematic items, I inspected the modification indices closely and I ran partial correlations where each item was set to correlate with the means of the other dimensions, while controlling for the mean of its intended dimension. From these analyses I found 21 problematic items, which were removed from further analyses. I tested the resulting model in each national sample separately (see Model 1 – 4, Table 7.2) and as can be seen from the table, all three fit indices suggested good fit in Romania and the UK and RMSEA and SRMR indicated good fit in Thailand and Malaysia (Appendix C shows which items were included in the final model).

This difference between fit indices deserves some further discussion. CFI has been criticised for being based on an independence model, which assumes zero covariances between variables. Such a baseline or null model is unrealistic in most SEM research (see Kline, 2005). Rigdon (1996) argued that compared to CFI, RMSEA is more useful in re-evaluating earlier research and confirming existing models because no such baseline model is involved in the calculation of RMSEA. SRMR is similar to RMSEA in that it is based on residuals rather than comparison with baseline model. Hu and Bentler (1998) recommend using SRMR in combination with either RMSEA or CFI. In line with the argument above, considering the aim of Study 6 was to confirm the seven-dimensional model identified in Study 4, it seems that SRMR and RMSEA are more useful for evaluating model fit in the present analyses.

Testing metric and scalar invariance. I then created a multigroup model, again including a method factor, analyzing all samples simultaneously (see Table 7.2, Model 5), and I tested the impact on model fit of constraining first the factor loadings (for metric invariance: Model 6) and then the intercepts (for scalar variance: Model 7) to be

Table 7.2 Single-group and Multigroup Invariance Analysis Study 6

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	CFI	RMSEA	RMSEA 90% CI		SRMR
					LL	UL	
Model 1, Malaysia seven-factor model	1527.51***	538	.81	.06	.06	.07	.08
Model 2, Romania seven-factor model	1045.21***	538	.90	.05	.04	.05	.06
Model 3, Thailand seven-factor model	1251.60***	538	.86	.05	.05	.06	.07
Model 4, UK seven-factor model	862.75***	538	.90	.05	.05	.06	.08
Model 5, multigroup configural invariance	4687.06***	2152	.87	.06	.05	.06	.07
Model 6, factor loadings constrained	5221.18***	2257	.84	.06	.06	.06	.10
Model 7, factor loadings and intercepts constrained	6110.40***	2338	.80	.06	.06	.07	.10
Model 8, factor loadings and 28 intercepts constrained	5580.22***	2317	.83	.06	.06	.06	.10
Model 9, factor loadings and 21 intercepts constrained	5380.65***	2296	.84	.06	.06	.06	.10

Note. CFI = Comparative fit index; RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation. CI = Confidence intervals; LL = Lower level; UL = Upper level. Multilevel analyses did not provide confidence intervals for RMSEA.

*** $p < .001$.

equal across samples. The impact of constraining factor loadings and intercepts was small according to RMSEA and SRMR, which suggests that invariance is tenable.

However, CFI dropped substantially, especially when the intercepts were constrained. I therefore investigated whether CFI could be improved by testing for ‘partial intercept invariance’ (Byrne et al., 1989) in the same way as in Chapter 5 (Section 5.2.2.1).

By inspecting modification indices, I identified seven problematic intercepts (one per factor). Freeing these intercepts improved CFI to some extent (see Model 8). Freeing another seven intercepts (again one per factor) provided an additional small

improvement (see Model 9) and reached the same level of invariance as when only factor loadings were constrained. Hence, it did not seem worthwhile freeing more intercepts.

Overall, these results provide a somewhat mixed picture. Configural, metric, and scalar invariance of the seven factor could be considered tenable when assessing model fit according to RMSEA and SRMR. CFI on the other hand suggested a poor fit for the constrained models. As noted above, there are arguments in favour of using RMSEA rather than CFI when confirming models from previous research and hence the present results provide some confidence in the cross-cultural validity of the 35 item self-construal scale.

Latent mean differences. Considering these indications of invariance, I then moved on to look at how the four samples differed in their levels of endorsement of the self-construal dimensions. When investigating latent means, groups are compared against one reference group which has its mean set to zero. In line with common practice in the literature where other cultures are compared against the West (e.g. Oyserman et al., 2002), I chose the UK sample as the reference group. A significant result should therefore be interpreted as a significant difference from the UK sample. Table 7.3 shows that the Thai and Malaysian samples scored lower than UK participants on uniqueness whereas the Romania sample scored higher. The opposite pattern was observed for harmony. Considering Study 5 found self-differentiation (high uniqueness and low harmony) to be related to individualism, this pattern fits in with the common view in the literature which describes East Asia as less individualistic (e.g. Triandis, 1995). Interestingly, these results suggest that Romania may be more individualistic than the UK, which was also the case in Study 5. Malaysian and Thai participants scored lower on self-direction whereas the Romania sample did not differ from the UK

sample. British participants scored the lowest on inclusion and the Malay and Thai samples also scored higher on commitment, while Romanian participants scored lower than the UK sample. These results differ from those in Study 5 where the UK scored high on inclusion and commitment—a discrepancy which could be the result of the present student samples and the large proportion of rural UK participants in Study 5. In terms of self-reliance, the UK and Thai samples did not differ, whereas the Malaysian and Romanian samples scored higher. Finally, the Malaysian, Thai and UK samples did not differ on consistency but the Romanian sample scored higher. Mirroring results from Study 5, the Romanian sample was again found to score relatively high on self-reliance and consistency, whereas unlike the previous study where the Thai sample score higher on these dimensions, the present results suggested comparable levels between the Thai and UK sample.

Table 7.3 also shows reliabilities based on ipsatized scores for each of the seven dimensions, which were good or acceptable in all four samples.

Table 7.3 Latent Means and Reliabilities Study 6

	Malaysia		Romania		Thailand		UK	
	Mean	α	Mean	α	Mean	α	Mean	α
Uniqueness	- 0.24*	.73	0.33**	.78	- 0.50***	.80	0.00	.84
Harmony	0.98***	.62	- 0.23*	.73	0.85***	.68	0.00	.80
Self-direction	- 0.87***	.63	- 0.05	.76	- 0.43***	.72	0.00	.80
Inclusion	0.87***	.80	0.57***	.71	0.70***	.73	0.00	.77
Commitment	0.25*	.65	- 0.50***	.70	0.37**	.65	0.00	.77
Self-reliance	0.17**	.73	0.76***	.84	0.00	.85	0.00	.91
Consistency	0.33	.65	0.75***	.86	0.18	.77	0.00	.92

Note. Table is showing standardized estimates.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

7.1.2.2 Self-construal dimensions predicting outcomes

Given that I was unable to control for acquiescence among the outcome variables and these variables were not tested for invariance, I considered it safest to conduct single country analyses. The aim of the study was not first and foremost a comparison between countries, but a comparison of the different self-construal dimensions—hence, parallel analysis seemed appropriate.

Zero-order correlations between self-construal dimensions and the outcomes in each national sample can be seen in Appendix D. These results confirm the findings from Study 4 that individual-level correlations among the self-construal dimensions show a diverse pattern across different samples. For example, although uniqueness and harmony were negatively related in the Romania, Thai and UK samples, they were unrelated in the Malay sample. Similarly, consistency and uniqueness were substantially negatively correlated among Malay participants, they were unrelated in the Romanian and Thai samples, and positively related in the UK sample. Thus, these findings support the conclusion that self-construals dimensions at the individual level should be considered separately. Next, I entered the seven self-construal dimensions into a series of regression models, one for each outcome variable. The results of these analyses can be seen in Tables 7.3 and 7.4.

Depression and life-satisfaction. I had made no specific predictions in relation to these variables. The results suggested that inclusion (Malaysia and Thailand) and self-reliance (Malaysia and Romania) were the most important self-construal dimensions to wellbeing. In the Romanian sample, a high sense of consistency also contributed to lower depression and higher life-satisfaction. Interestingly, a high sense of self-direction appears to have a negative impact on wellbeing in the Malay and the UK samples.

Table 7.4 Self-construal Dimensions Predicting Socio-emotional Adjustment Outcomes

	Malaysia	Romania	Thailand	UK
Depression				
Uniqueness	.00	-.04	-.09	-.03
Harmony	-.04	-.03	-.02	-.01
Self-direction	.00	.04	-.05	.10
Inclusion	-.14*	.01	-.23***	-.01
Commitment	.04	-.07	-.05	-.02
Self-reliance	-.15**	-.19***	-.04	-.05
Consistency	.04	-.23***	-.04	-.02
Life-satisfaction				
Uniqueness	.03	-.07	.13**	-.02
Harmony	-.03	.02	-.09	-.14
Self-direction	-.23***	-.08	-.04	-.27**
Inclusion	-.04	.05	.15**	.06
Commitment	-.01	.01	.04	.05
Self-reliance	.06	.20***	.01	.12
Consistency	-.05	.10*	.09	.03
Self-efficacy				
Uniqueness	.10*	.08	.17***	.03
Harmony	-.03	.05	.02	-.05
Self-direction	-.04	.20**	.11*	-.20*
Inclusion	.07	.19***	.07	-.09
Commitment	-.05	-.09	-.02	-.05
Self-reliance	.25***	.29***	.25***	.37***
Consistency	.03	.06	.11*	.10
Relationship Harmony				
Uniqueness	-.03	.00	.07	-.01
Harmony	.08	-.05	-.01	-.11
Self-direction	-.20***	.00	-.07	-.30**
Inclusion	-.05	.13*	.21***	.09
Commitment	.08	.08	.01	.09
Self-reliance	.05	.04	-.09	.10
Consistency	-.08	.05	.08	-.06
Narcissism				
Uniqueness		.23***	.30***	.16*
Harmony		-.12**	-.08	-.29***
Self-direction		.05	.05	-.10
Inclusion		-.04	-.13**	-.17*
Commitment		-.12**	-.14**	-.18*
Self-reliance		.08	.00	.11
Consistency		-.14**	-.04	-.11
Social anxiety				
Uniqueness		.11*	-.18***	-.02
Harmony		.11*	-.05	.31***
Self-direction		-.08	-.04	.03
Inclusion		-.17**	-.23***	-.11

	Romania	Thailand	UK
Commitment	.11*	-.00	-.16**
Self-reliance	-.22***	-.13**	-.05
Consistency	-.09	-.06	-.05
Modesty			
Uniqueness	-.04	-.13**	.07
Harmony	.14**	.00	.31***
Self-direction	.03	-.00	.03
Inclusion	-.02	-.20***	.06
Commitment	.20***	.03	-.06
Self-reliance	-.03	.01	.13
Consistency	.05	.05	.10
Self-esteem			
Uniqueness	.11*	.26***	.19*
Harmony	-.05	-.10*	-.10
Self-direction	.09	.03	-.13
Inclusion	-.02	.03	-.02
Commitment	-.07	-.03	-.10
Self-reliance	.07	.12*	.12
Consistency	.09	-.04	.12
Authentic living			
Uniqueness	.11*	.21***	.06
Harmony	.01	-.07	-.22**
Self-direction	.08	.11*	-.10
Inclusion	.09	.15**	.01
Commitment	.03	.08	.09
Self-reliance	.26***	.19***	.24**
Consistency	.10	.14**	.22**
Self-alienation			
Uniqueness	-.01	-.14**	.09
Harmony	.10*	-.02	.10
Self-direction	.03	-.10*	.18
Inclusion	-.10*	-.31***	.01
Commitment	.09	-.01	-.04
Self-reliance	-.25***	-.12*	-.20*
Consistency	-.21***	-.06	-.04
External influence			
Uniqueness	-.02	-.16***	-.09
Harmony	.19***	.09*	.25***
Self-direction	-.15**	-.15**	-.14
Inclusion	-.03	-.24***	-.05
Commitment	.05	.08	-.05
Self-reliance	-.28***	-.24***	-.14
Consistency	-.12**	-.16***	-.24**

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Other socio-emotional adjustment outcomes. Self-efficacy was most strongly and positively predicted by self-reliance in all four groups, whereas self-direction showed a contradictory pattern—it appeared to contribute to the one’s sense of self-efficacy in Romania, as predicted, but have opposite effect in the UK. Thus, although self-reliance and self-direction appear to fulfil a similar function in Romania, this was not the case in any of the other samples, in fact they appear to have the opposite effect in the UK. Uniqueness was also found to contribute to a higher sense of self-efficacy in the Thai sample, and inclusion seemed to have a similar function among Romanian participants. In terms of relationship harmony, I had predicted that harmony would be the most important self-construal dimension. This was not the case in any of the samples. Rather, self-direction was a negative predictor in the Malay and the UK samples and inclusion was a positive predictor in the Romanian and Thai samples.

As predicted, narcissism was positively predicted by uniqueness in all three samples for which there was available data and negatively predicted by harmony in the UK and Romanian samples. Although with generally smaller effects, commitment and inclusion were also negative predictors in all samples, with the exception of inclusion among Romanian participants. In terms of social anxiety, I predicted that a self that emphasised harmony would also be more socially anxious whereas a self constructed in terms of uniqueness would show the opposite effect. In fact, uniqueness was only a negative predictor in the Thai sample and harmony was a positive predictor in the UK sample, with a very weak positive effect in the Romanian sample. Rather it appears that inclusion and self-reliance are more important for low social anxiety in Romania and Thailand. I had made the same predictions for modesty as for social anxiety, and the results showed a similar pattern. Uniqueness as a negative predictor in the Thai sample and harmony was a positive predictor in the Romanian and UK samples. In the

Romanian sample, however, it was inclusion which was the most important (negative) predictor and commitment was the most important (positive) predictor. Consistency was originally hypothesized to be an important predictor of authenticity. This was confirmed in terms of accepting external influence in all three samples and for authentic living in the Thai and UK samples. In Romania, on the other hand, consistency was a negative predictor of self-alienation. However, a range of other self-construal dimensions were also important for authenticity, most notably self-reliance which positively predicted authentic living and negatively predicted self-alienation and accepting external influence in all three samples. Uniqueness also seems important to authenticity in Thailand whereas endorsing harmony appear to lead to low levels of authenticity in the UK and Romania. Finally, as predicted, uniqueness positively predicted self-esteem in all samples, although the effect was small in the Romanian sample.

Coping styles. Self-construal dimensions predicting coping styles are shown in Table 7.5. Confrontive coping was hypothesised to be positively predicted by self-direction and negatively predicted by harmony. The former prediction was not confirmed whereas the latter was—harmony was a negative predictor in all three samples, with a particularly strong effect in the UK sample. I predicted that self-controlling coping would be positively related to self-reliance which was confirmed in all samples although the effects were small among Romanian and Thai participants. Instead, harmony was a stronger positive predictor in all three samples. Coping in terms of social support was predicted to be more important among people who emphasise inclusion and commitment in the construction of their self and less important among people who are highly self-reliant. These predictions were partially supported—inclusion was a positive predictor in the Romanian sample and self-reliance was a negative predictor among Romanian and Thai participants, but commitment was

Table 7.5 Self-construal Dimensions Predicting Different Coping Styles Study 6

	Romania	Thailand	UK
Confrontive			
Uniqueness	-.14**	.14**	-.03
Harmony	-.35***	-.19***	-.60***
Self-direction	.01	.05	-.15
Inclusion	.11*	.06	-.05
Commitment	-.15**	.05	.03
Self-reliance	.03	-.06	.03
Consistency	.02	-.06	-.16*
Self controlling			
Uniqueness	.03	.02	.05
Harmony	.28***	.34***	.46***
Self-direction	.09	.01	.09
Inclusion	.09	-.16**	.00
Commitment	-.09	-.02	-.07
Self-reliance	.14**	.14**	.26**
Consistency	.02	.08	.13
Social support			
Uniqueness	-.01	.04	-.04
Harmony	-.19***	-.06	-.28***
Self-direction	-.19**	-.23**	-.45***
Inclusion	.27***	.10*	.09
Commitment	-.01	.06	.11
Self-reliance	-.20***	-.22***	-.12
Consistency	-.01	-.02	-.14*
Planful problem solving			
Uniqueness	-.01	.17**	.07
Harmony	.16*	.05	.02
Self-direction	-.01	-.04	-.47***
Inclusion	.10	.14**	.05
Commitment	-.18**	-.02	-.15*
Self-reliance	.26***	.17***	.34***
Consistency	.12*	.11*	.04
Positive reappraisal			
Uniqueness	.08	.27***	.09
Harmony	-.04	.07	-.09
Self-direction	.12*	.02	-.32***
Inclusion	.20***	.14**	.12
Commitment	-.05	.02	-.01
Self-reliance	.14**	-.00	.22**
Consistency	.07	.08	.13

	Romania	Thailand	UK
Escape avoidance			
Uniqueness	.05	.04	.05
Harmony	.01	.06	-.05
Self-direction	.10	.01	-.00
Inclusion	.12*	-.15**	.02
Commitment	.01	-.05	.05
Self-reliance	-.17**	-.16**	-.06
Consistency	-.15**	-.02	-.09
Accepting responsibility			
Uniqueness	.08	.08	.12
Harmony	-.04	.06	-.13
Self-direction	.00	-.02	-.09
Inclusion	.23***	-.10	.02
Commitment	-.09	-.00	.18*
Self-reliance	-.04	.03	-.02
Consistency	-.11*	.02	-.05
Distancing			
Uniqueness	-.14*	.01	-.16*
Harmony	-.09	.03	.21
Self-direction	.27***	-.05	.08
Inclusion	.11	-.14**	-.15
Commitment	-.02	-.03	.04
Self-reliance	-.08	-.03	.18*
Consistency	-.03	.09	.17*

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

unrelated to social support in all three samples. Rather, self-direction was a negative predictor in all three samples with a strong effect in the UK sample. Harmony was also negative predictors in two out of three samples. Contrary to predictions, planful problem solving was not positively predicted by self-direction. Rather, this self-construal dimension was a strong negative predictor in the UK sample. Instead, self-reliance was a positive predictor in all three samples and commitment was a negative predictor in the Romanian and the UK samples. No predictions were originally made in relation to positive reappraisal as a coping style. Nonetheless, the results revealed inclusion as a positive predictor in the Romanian and Thai sample and self-reliance was a positive

predictor in the Romanian and the UK samples. Self-direction was a negative predictor in the UK sample and uniqueness predicted positive reappraisal among Thai participants. The effects in relation to escape avoidance were generally small and variable, with no significant effects in the UK sample. Accepting responsibility was predicted to positively relate to self-reliance, which was not confirmed in the results. Rather, inclusion was a positive predictor in the Romanian sample and commitment was a positive predictor in the UK sample. Finally, inclusion was hypothesised to be a negative predictor of distancing, which was confirmed with a small effect in the Thai sample. However, in the Romanian sample it was self-direction and in the UK sample it was self-reliance and consistency that were positive predictors, while uniqueness was a negative predictor among UK participants.

7.1.3 Discussion

Study 6 was designed to improve the measure of self-construals which was developed in Study 4 and test its cross-cultural invariance, as well as exploring how the self-construal dimensions differentially relate to a range of socio-emotional adjustment outcomes. After some refinement, I settled on 35 items which showed good model fit according to RMSEA and SRMR, acceptable reliabilities, and indications of metric and scalar invariance. Mean differences largely confirmed findings from Study 5 with some exceptions—the UK sample scored relatively low on inclusion and commitment and the Thai sample scored on par with the UK sample on self-reliance and consistency.

The results also demonstrated a different pattern of relationships between the seven self-construal dimensions and socio-emotional adjustment. As a general pattern, consistency appeared to mainly play a role in dimensions of authenticity, but was also a negative predictor of depression in the Romanian sample. Considering this sample

scored relatively high on consistency, it may be that this self-construal dimension is particularly important for psychological wellbeing in Romania. Self-reliance was related to a range of outcomes—most strongly it positively predicted self-efficacy, dimensions of authenticity and planful problem solving but also self-controlling coping and low depression. Unexpectedly, constructing the self in terms of self-reliance appears to have a range of psychological benefits in all samples.

Commitment negatively predicted narcissism and planful problem solving but also modesty in Romania (positively) and accepting responsibility in the UK (positively). Although a less straightforward pattern, it seems that this self-construal dimension is about putting the self second and facing responsibility. Furthermore, in two out of three samples, inclusion positively predicted social support, positive appraisal and relationship harmony and was a negative predictor of depression and social anxiety. Including others in the self can therefore be thought of as important for stable and constructive social relationships and a positive outlook in life.

Harmony, on the other hand, showed to some extent the opposite pattern. In two or three of the samples, it was positively related to social anxiety, modesty, and self-controlling coping and negatively related to social support, confrontive coping, narcissism, and dimensions of authenticity. Thus, it is clear that harmony is important in psychological processes where the self is constrained and restricted. It should be noted, however, harmony was not negatively related to wellbeing in any of the four samples which may indicate that these self-restricting processes are not necessarily damaging for the person. Conversely, uniqueness positively predicted narcissism and self-esteem in all three samples and was a positive predictor of positive reappraisal in Thailand. As predicted, uniqueness appears to play a part in processes where the self is promoted. Finally, self-direction was a negative predictor life-satisfaction, relationship harmony,

and social support in two or three samples. It was also a strong negative predictor of planful problem solving in the UK and positive predictor of distancing in Romania. Interestingly, self-direction therefore seems to be less beneficial than other self-construal dimensions and strongly endorsing this construction of the self may have negative consequences, especially in the Malaysia and the UK.

These results highlight the importance of separating dimensions which previously were grouped together under ‘independence’ and ‘interdependence’. For instance, I found self-reliance to be related to a range of positive socio-emotional variables whereas self-direction showed the opposite pattern to some extent. Furthermore, uniqueness appeared unrelated to such variables and instead seemed more important to self-promotion. These three dimensions are normally confounded in traditional theory and measurement of self-construals. Similarly, inclusion appears to play an important role in maintaining constructive and trusting social relationships whereas harmony showed the opposite pattern to some extent by predicting self-restricting processes. Again, these are often grouped together in traditional conceptions of interdependence. It is clear that in order to increase the predictive validity of self-construals, these dimensions should be considered separately. Other dimensions, such as consistency and commitment, showed fewer significant correlations overall and they therefore seem to play a less important role in socio-emotional adjustment. Rather, it could be that these dimensions are more important in cognitive and motivational processes (I return to this issue in Chapter 8).

The main aim of the study was not to compare national samples, nonetheless, it is interesting to note that although the results showed some variation across the four/three samples, in many respects they are similar. With only four samples it is difficult to draw conclusions about cross-cultural variability, however, it is interesting to

note that these samples (with the exception of Romania) are usually contrasted in the literature (the West vs. East Asia) with the accompanying expectation of differences. The present findings suggest instead that there are common processes in the functioning of the self and its consequences. Nonetheless, the results suggest that inclusion appears to be particularly important for wellbeing in Thailand and self-reliance and consistency seem more important in Romania. Moreover, self-direction appears to have negative consequences for wellbeing in particular in the UK and Malaysia.

Finally, some limitations with this study should be pointed out. As noted above, some of the outcome variables had very low reliabilities and these results therefore need to be treated with caution. I was also unable to control for acquiescence among the outcome variables since most of them did not include any reversed items and I was restricted to single country analyses. Hence, there seems to be a lot of scope in developing better measures of these constructs, which should include reversed items.

Moreover, the present study included a relatively small number of national samples which were chosen mainly based on practical considerations. In order to get a much richer picture of these relationships, future research should include a larger number of samples, preferably chosen on theoretical grounds. There is also a lot of potential to investigate the seven-dimensional model in relation to a much broader set of outcomes, as I discuss further in Chapter 8. Nonetheless, these results provide some initial indications of the usefulness of the seven-dimensional model, suggesting that it can increase our understanding the relationship between socio-emotional adjustment and the self.

7.1.4 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on self-construals at the individual level. Building on the findings in Chapter 6, it had two aims. Firstly, I investigated whether the scale developed in Study 4 could be extended and improved, and whether cross-cultural invariance could be established. Based on these analyses, I was able to identify a 35 item model which showed acceptable reliabilities and configural, metric and scalar invariance was considered tenable. Secondly, I tested how the seven self-construal dimensions related to a range of socio-emotional adjustment outcomes. The differentiated pattern of correlations highlighted the importance of considering the seven dimensions separately. For instance, self-reliance was linked to a range of positive outcomes whereas self-direction showed the opposite pattern, in particular in the Malaysian and the UK samples. This study provides some initial findings of the usefulness of the seven-dimensional model in understanding the role of the self in psychological process and behaviour.

Chapter 8

General Conclusions

The aim of this final chapter is to sum up the aims, findings and conclusions of this thesis. After a short summary of objectives and results, it will discuss implications for definitions of culture, for research into beliefs and self-construals, and potential practical implications. It will also raise some points for consideration, taking a more critical stance on some of the fundamental assumptions underlying this research. Finally, it will outline some potentially valuable avenues for future research.

8.1 Summary of objectives and findings

This thesis aimed to disentangle the concept of culture and provide greater understanding of how nations and social groups differ on measures of cultural orientations. Building on Brewer and Chen's (2007) tripartite model, I distinguished values, beliefs and self-representations as important facets of culture. Given that research into values has reached an advanced stage with a clear model of different value domains and how these differ across cultures (Schwartz, 1992, 2004), the focus was on beliefs and self-construals. The aims for these two facets were, however, very different. In terms of beliefs, I was interested in beliefs in a more narrow sense than the commonly used social axiom approach to cultural beliefs. In particular, I aimed to develop a belief dimension which would tap the cultural syndrome of I-C. In terms of self-construals, the aim was to go broader than the common distinction between independence vs. interdependence and West vs. East, by redefining the model and looking for alternative ways of construing the self.

The main conclusion to be drawn from this thesis is that we need a more fine-grained and nuanced understanding of culture. This involves going beyond the common focus on values and including other facets of culture such as beliefs and self-construals. It was shown that such an approach can add explanatory power (Study 2). This also involves investigating dimensions of cultural variation beyond I-C, in the present case other-focus and self-containment seem to be the product of very different nation-level processes (Study 5). Finally, it also involved distinguishing between different levels of analysis and recognising that describing cultural orientations of individuals may not be the same as describing the culture of social groups. This more nuanced understanding of culture can help breaking down cultural stereotypes and increase our understanding of the impact of culture on behaviour.

Across six studies, these two different facets of culture, self-construals and beliefs, were refined and validated. Study 1 developed a measure of contextualism and showed it to be part of cultural collectivism. Study 2 built on these results and demonstrated that contextualism plays a role in explaining societal processes where sharp distinctions are made between ingroups and outgroups, above and beyond the role of values and self-construals. Moving on to self-construals, Study 3 and 4 tested and rejected the one and two-dimensional models and instead identified a seven dimensional model of different constructions of the self, which at the cultural level could be organized into three higher-order dimensions (self-differentiation, other-focus and self-containment; Study 4). These three dimensions were shown to have different nomological networks—self-differentiation was best predicted by I-C, other-focus was best predicted by national wealth, and self-containment was best predicted by religious heritage. The three dimensions also differentiated clusters of national samples, highlighting the need to include a wider range of samples than the common West vs.

East dichotomy (Study 5). Finally, Study 6 improved the self-construal scale and looked at the role of self-construals in predicting socio-emotional adjustment at the individual level. I found that each dimension showed a unique pattern of relationships, highlighting the need to keep these dimensions separate.

It was noted in Chapter 2 (Section 2.4) that this thesis includes two different perspectives on the individual. Using the framework put forward to by Mauss (1938/1985), I differentiated between *the person*, which refers to representations of the person within society, and *the self*, which refers to an individual's own awareness of their unique identity and their relation to other people. The former is concerned with ontological beliefs about what a person is, whereas the latter is concerned with people's own understanding of who they are within their social relationships. Nonetheless, this thesis has shown these two approaches to have a common theme: they are both concerned with 'the social'. In the form of contextualism, this means the social context, answering questions about the person vs. the social environment. In the form of self-construals, this means interpersonal relations, answering questions about the self vs. the other. Although both are related to notions of social patterns, it is clear that we need a nuanced understanding of the type of patterns that these two approaches are based on in order to make sense of cross-cultural variation.

8.2 Implications

8.2.1. Implications for conceptions of culture

The general introduction (Section 1.1) outlined several questions in relation to how culture is defined. Here I briefly review how the present results bear upon these issues. In terms of the distinction between subjective and objective culture, my starting-point was culture defined as subjective orientations in the form of values, beliefs and

self-construals. However, the results suggested that the subjective-objective distinction is far from straightforward. Most prominently, the complex interrelationship between other-focus and national affluence highlighted that ‘collectivism’ may mean different things depending on the material wealth of the country. Perhaps Adams et al.’s (2012) argument (see Section 6.4.2.) against separating ‘the structural’ and ‘the cultural’ are useful here. A definition of culture in line with their arguments would take a wider perspective than the one adopted in this thesis, but may ultimately prove more beneficial when trying to move away from conceptions of culture based on constructions of ‘the other’ (see below Section 8.3.1).

Moving on to the question of whether culture is unique to particular groups and societies or whether universal ways of describing cultures can be identified, the present results strongly support the latter position. Using more culturally diverse samples than is normally found in the social psychological literature, aiming for a decentered approach when developing the scales, and testing the validity of the instruments across these diverse samples, the present results suggest that cross-culturally valid and meaningful dimensions can be identified, even though this is far from claims of universality.

The present findings also have implications for the question of whether culture should be considered the property of individuals or groups. The approach adopted in this thesis recognised that culture exists at both levels, nonetheless, it was shown that culture often takes different forms depending on the unit of analysis. Notably, the results suggested that I-C does not form a coherent dimension of individual-level cultural orientation (see Chapter 5, Section 5.4.1; see also Triandis, 1993). It was shown that the different facets of I-C hang together meaningfully at the cultural level of analysis, whereas this was not the case at the individual level. It therefore seems to make more sense to conceive of I-C as a cultural-level construct, which is how it was

originally defined (Hofstede, 1980). Moreover, it was only at the cultural level that the seven self-construal dimensions could be organised into the three higher-order dimensions, emphasising that culture may not have the same meaning at different levels of analysis.

The distinction between cultures and nations has been important in the current research and rather than using ‘nation’ as proxy’s for culture, the core idea developed in this thesis is that cultural orientations can and should be measured, in order to be able to say anything meaningful about the culture of a nation or social group. Although Study 4 made use of different cultural groupings within nations, most of the research presented here used the nation as the unit of analysis. In line with other recent research (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011), the fact that I found meaningful cross-cultural patterns and meaningful effects of external nation-level indices suggest that the nation is a useful unit of analysis in cross-cultural research.

Most importantly, as noted above, the present results have implications for conceptions of culture in terms of highlighting the need to adopt a more nuanced and multifaceted approach. In order to increase the predictive power of cultural explanations, different facets, dimensions and levels need to be carefully considered.

8.2.2 Implications for research into beliefs

This thesis has introduced a new way of looking at personhood beliefs. Rather than comparing the relative importance of traits to the importance of contextual attributes, as is common in cross-cultural research into personhood beliefs (e.g. Church et al., 2003, 2005), it was argued that investigating the importance of the social context in its own right was a more useful approach. In fact, items tapping the importance of dispositional attributes did not load negatively against items tapping the importance of

the context (Pilot Study, Chapter 5), suggesting these are not conceptual opposites. It may be that the tendency to think of the context as the opposite of traits is based on a very Western perspective. Hence, research moving forward in this field would benefit from adopting a more fine-grained definition of personhood beliefs, focusing on each aspect in turn rather than assuming Western dichotomies are universally valid.

The current research complements investigations into other broader belief systems such as social axioms. Targeted specifically at beliefs which define I-C, it is hoped contextualism can contribute to a more detailed understanding of the role of beliefs. Social axioms refer to generalised beliefs about oneself, the social and physical environment and how concepts and entities are related. Hence, dimensions of social axioms are on a higher level of abstraction than contextualism, which instead targets a very specific type of relationship—that between the person and the environment. At the individual level, it is possible to imagine that contextualism would fit within the broader social axiom social complexity, given that this axiom includes beliefs about how human behaviour changes with the social context. Nonetheless, this social axiom dimension also refers to beliefs about flexibility in behaviour, thinking and problem solving, and beliefs about science. As such, it taps a wider notion of lack of rigid rules. Future research should further explore the relationships between contextualism and social axioms, in order to gain a fuller understanding of how these belief systems are related.

Contextualism as a more specific belief dimension may be even more useful at the nation level of analysis. As noted elsewhere, social axioms have been found to form two broad cultural dimensions at the nation level, dynamic externality and societal cynicism. Although these appear to capture broad cultural belief systems, the exact meaning of these dimensions, in particular dynamic externality, is not always clear and they may be less useful in predicting specific societal processes. As was shown in Study

2, contextualism has the potential to be useful in answering questions about ingroup-outgroup distinctions and may also be related to social determinism and social mobility (see also section 8.4 below). Hence, the decision of whether one should use a general belief dimension such as dynamic externality or the more specific beliefs about the importance of the context in defining a person must be guided by one's research question.

8.2.3 Implications for research into self-construals

There are a number of important implications of the present findings for self-construal research. First and foremost, it is clear that we should no longer talk about independence and interdependence as unidimensional constructs. Using a wide range of national samples, cultural groups within nations, adults as well as students, and different versions of the self-construal scale, a multidimensional model was confirmed as superior to a one or two-dimensional model. The value in differentiating between multiple dimensions was shown by meaningful cross-cultural patterns, different nomological networks and unique patterns of correlations with socio-emotional adjustment variables. Thus, it is clear that holding on to a simple one or two-dimensional model of self-construals is too simplistic and risks overlooking important variation and losing explanatory power.

The present findings into antecedents of self-construals also cast light on the processes involved in producing cross-cultural patterns of constructions of the self. As noted in Chapter 6 (Section 6.4.2), the present preoccupation with I-C in the self-construal literature may not be helpful. Instead, this thesis argues that in order to understand variation in self-construals we need to look at a range of societal processes. These alternative perspectives, such as religious heritage, equality, affluence, and other

beliefs and value system are likely to give us a much richer picture of how and why cultures differ and are likely to be more useful in trying to identify solutions to societal problems.

This research has also highlighted the importance of sampling more widely than the simple West vs. East comparison. In fact, it was samples not normally included in the self-construal literature, such as the Middle Eastern samples, that most clearly illustrated the need to look at multiple dimensions. Although the present research goes some way towards adding a more diverse perspective on self-construals, there is still much work to be done in this area. This refers not only to sampling, but also to idea generation. As noted in Chapter 6 (Section 6.4.3), more indigenous research or emic input from for example South America, the Middle East and Africa could potentially really add to the current model.

8.2.4 Practical implications

The overall aim of this thesis was to advance knowledge and theory around culture—to provide an alternative, more nuanced approach to cultural orientations and (re)define important constructs. However, alongside these theoretical implications, it is also possible to imagine some practical implications of the present research. Firstly, it could have implications for reducing cultural stereotypes, in particular by highlighting that all non-Western cultures, or what are often classed as ‘collectivistic’ cultures, are far from the same. Perceiving the outgroup as more heterogeneous has been known to reduce prejudice (Brauer & Er-rifiy, 2011), hence, encouraging a more differentiated understanding of other cultures could contribute to reduction in xenophobia.

Secondly, some recent developments in health persuasion have shown that matching health communications with self-construals can lead to greater endorsement of

health messages (see Sherman, Uskul, & Updegraff, 2011). This research has mainly made use of the independence vs. interdependence distinction, but it is possible that a more fine-grained model of self-construals and health messages designed to match this model would have even greater benefits.

Finally, findings in Study 6 hinted on the potential of promoting certain constructions of the self that may be beneficial for wellbeing and resilience. For instance, self-reliance was related to a range of positive outcomes in all four samples. Although this research is still in its infancy, there appears to be some scope for looking at which are the most adaptive constructions of the self and how these patterns may or may not vary across different cultural contexts. Such knowledge could then be used in clinical contexts to promote certain ways of looking at the self, thereby helping reduce levels of depression, for example.

8.3 Points for consideration

8.3.1 Similarities and differences

The starting point for this research was to identify dimensions of cultural orientations and investigate how cultural groups differ on these dimensions. Hence, from the outset I aimed to investigate cultural variation and difference. In psychology, such an approach has in many ways been a worthwhile endeavour—focusing on cultural variation has highlighted the problems with simply importing Western theories to non-Western contexts and it has brought attention to the value of indigenous research. The fact that this quest for difference gave non-Western researchers a voice and a way to challenge the hegemony of Western research traditions made it a prominent aim of cross-cultural and cultural psychology. However, this search for difference could also be seen as problematic. It involves the construction of ‘the Other’, either as different

and inferior based on colonialist traditions, or different and surprise superior based on orientalist traditions (Burman, 2007). This ‘Other’ is normally measured against a Western standard and it is constructed as strange and exotic. The discourse of difference runs the risk of reifying, essentialising, and homogenizing cultures. Moreover, focusing on purely ‘cultural’ differences may obscure other factors, such as differences in power and affluence, an argument which relates to Adams et al.’s (2012) point above that separating these things may not always be helpful.

Questions have started to be raised regarding whether this focus on difference is justified in cross-cultural psychology (Poortinga, 2012). Arguments for a more careful consideration of ‘difference’ refer to the fact that normally only about 10-12% of variance of cultural orientation measures is found at the cultural level (Fischer, 2012). However, perhaps discussions about when a difference is large enough to be considered meaningful should focus on whether the differences matter. As noted in Section 6.3.2, even small nation-level differences have been shown to meaningfully predict psychological outcomes (Becker et al., 2012; Gheorghiu et al., 2009). At the same time, our research agendas (as well as publication practices) should equally allow for quests for difference and similarity, cultural uniqueness and universality. Moreover, rather than a blind search for difference, we need to be better at developing theory of why we would expect differences or similarities in specific areas. The present research into antecedents of self-construal provides a small step in that direction by identifying factors which appear to produce differences.

8.3.2 Can we really measure the self?

Self-construals are often defined as “how individuals see the self in relation to others” (Cross et al., 2011, p. 143). Thus, the core idea refers to self-perceptions—the

image in our mind of who we are. Nonetheless, a closer inspection of the items used in the present research as well as the more traditional scales reveal a wide range of items, including behaviours, preferences, emotions, values, as well as self-perceptions. Thus, the way self-construals are most often operationalised is closer to Singelis' (1994, p. 581) definition of self-construals as "a constellation of thoughts, feelings, and actions concerning one's relationship to others, and the self as distinct from others". One reason for operationalising self-construals in this way is practical. Experience of working with such a large number of translations and some semi-literate groups highlighted the need for straightforward and concrete language and concepts, which makes it difficult to capture the idea of self-perceptions. If the goal is to put together a measure that can be used in a range of different cultural contexts, the present thesis suggests it needs to be based on concepts that are relatively easy and straightforward to grasp. Nonetheless, theoretically this opens up questions about what we are actually measuring. Is it really constructions of the self, or is it their manifestations and consequences? The question then arises—can we ever measure the self? And can these things really be separated? As hinted to above, this thesis adopted a very pragmatic approach to this question. At the same time it recognises that there is a lot of scope in investigating this issue further, which may require a multimethod approach (see below in section 8.4.1). This also raises the question of whether *self*-construal is the best label for these constructs. In fact, Markus and Kitayama (1991) had originally chosen the wording 'modes of being' and 'modes of operating', but reviewers thought such terms sounded awkward and advised them to change them (Markus & Kitayama, 2003). Considering the difficulties in measuring the self and the lack of clarity around these constructs, it may be more constructive to broaden the terminology more in line with Markus and Kitayama's original idea.

8.3.3 Issues of representativeness and comparability

Throughout the thesis I have brought attention to the fact that our samples were not representative of their nations, nor were they matched on specific criteria (with the exception of being students in Study 1, 3 and 6). It is possible that this may have influenced the pattern of results. Nonetheless, it is worth reiterating that analyses controlled for the compositional differences of our samples in terms of gender, age and subjective wealth in Study 5. Moreover, in many nations we sampled more than one cultural group in order to increase the diversity of our samples. Considering that a large proportion of cross-cultural research is conducted using undergraduate student samples, this can be considered a strength of this research. The fact that I found meaningful cross-cultural patterns and meaningful effects of external nation-level indices in spite of not having representative or comparable samples further speaks to the adequacy of this approach. Sampling different groups within a culture does not necessarily pose a problem to the validity of a nation-level analysis. As noted in Chapter 1, Section 1.1.4, Minkov and Hofstede (2011) demonstrated that regional groups within nations tended to cluster together and did not tend to cluster with groups from other nations. Nonetheless, future research should attempt to use representative samples in order to be able to draw more firm conclusions.

8.4 Future research directions

The present research aimed to explore new ways of looking at culture, in particular by developing new dimensions of cultural orientations focusing on beliefs and self-construals. Having developed and validated these constructs and conducted some initial analyses into how they can be useful for understanding societal and individual

level processes, there is a lot of scope for developing this research further. In terms of contextualism, it is clear that at the cultural level, this belief system can help to explain societal processes where sharp distinctions are made between ingroups and outgroups. Future research could investigate whether this is also the case at the individual level of analysis. Moreover, it could further explore the consequences of holding beliefs about the contextual determination of the person. Do such beliefs make one more or less likely to believe people can change, or more or less likely to endorse social mobility? In terms of self-construals, there is a lot of scope to look at previous research linking self-construals to cognitive, emotional and motivational consequences to see whether the new seven dimensional model can add explanatory power. Building on the findings presented in Chapter 7, it would be particularly interesting to investigate whether there are some ways of constructing the self that may be more beneficial to wellbeing and resilience in certain cultural contexts. Moreover, as noted in Chapter 7, some self-construal dimensions, such as consistency and commitment, appeared to play a less important role in socio-emotional adjustment. It may be that these dimensions are more important in other areas of psychological functioning. In the case of consistency, it may be more important for cognition, such as need for closure and essentialism. For commitment, it may be more important for motivation, playing a role in pro-social and helping behaviour.

I have noted elsewhere that, although this research has identified dimensions of cultural orientations that seem valid and useful for cross-cultural research, they are far from definitive. Future research should explore alternative belief and self-construal dimensions and how these relate to the existing dimensions. The search for these alternative ways of looking at self-construals and beliefs is likely to benefit from more emic input, in particular from African, South American and Middle Eastern contexts. In

order to fully explore such alternative perspectives, it may be necessary to utilise a wider range of methods—starting with a ‘bottom-up’ approach and incorporating qualitative as well as quantitative analyses. Considering the difficulties with complex questionnaires in non-Western contexts, such an approach could add something to the question raised above of whether the self can ever be measured and how best to go about it.

The question of method is also inextricably linked to how culture is defined. The approach taken in this thesis is based on the idea that people’s self-reports on their own beliefs and values will provide a relatively accurate picture of cultural variation. Nonetheless, there are a number of alternative approaches which define culture in other ways. For example, Morling and Lamoreaux (2008; see also Lamoreaux & Morling, 2012) argue that self-reports only tell half of the story and they include institutions, practices, and artefacts in their definition of culture. By studying cultural products such as books, newspapers and TV adverts they find larger effect sizes studying differences in individualism and collectivism compared to self-report studies. From a different perspective, Chiu, Gelfand, Yamagishi, Shteynberg, and Wan (2010) extend the understanding of culture to also include intersubjective culture—defined as perceptions of other people’s values and beliefs within a culture. They find that these perceptions most often do not coincide with actual, internalised values and beliefs measured through self-report. There is scope in future research to investigate the dimensions of cultural orientations identified here using these alternative methods and definitions of culture. For instance, it would be interesting to see whether people’s perceptions of the importance that other people attribute to the context in defining a person shows a similar cross-cultural pattern to the one presented here. Similarly, investigating the seven (or

three) self-construal dimensions through cultural products is likely to reveal very interesting results.

Finally, future research should also investigate the role of globalisation and how a changing intercultural context impacts on cultural orientations. Some have suggested that globalisation will lead to homogenisation and uniformity of cultures (for a discussion, see Fu & Chiu, 2007) while others believe it will lead to sharpening of differences (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007). Globalization has also been linked to identity confusion and identity anxiety (Arnett, 2002). Investigating how personhood beliefs and constructions of the self are affected by such changes may provide a valuable area of research which could potentially challenge the narrative of essentialised and homogenised cultures.

8.5 Final remarks

The aim of this thesis was to disentangle the concept of culture by investigating different cultural orientations in the form of beliefs and self-construals. It has been concluded that we need a more differentiated understanding of culture that goes beyond the focus on values and I-C, and that simultaneously looks at the individual and cultural levels of analysis. I hope that the studies presented here can contribute to a greater understanding of how things cohere: the person vs. the self, the individual vs. society, and the cultural vs. the structural. Moreover, this increased knowledge of the different nuances of culture can potentially prove useful when solving problems in the culturally patterned world we live in.

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Appendix A

Contextualism scale

Using the scale below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by circling a number for each statement.

completely disagree	moderately disagree	slightly disagree	slightly agree	moderately agree	completely agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

1. Who a person is, is mostly defined by his/her family relationships.
2. To understand a person well, it is essential to know about his/her role in society.
3. To understand a person well, it is essential to know about the place he/she comes from.*
4. One can understand a person well without knowing about where he/she lives [reversed].
5. Who a person is, is mostly defined by his/her position in society.
6. One can understand a person well without knowing about which social groups he/she is a member of [reversed].
7. Who a person is, is mostly defined by his/her occupation.
8. One can understand a person well without knowing about his/her family [reversed]. *
9. One can understand a person well without knowing about his/her social position [reversed].*
10. Who a person is, is mostly defined by where he/she lives.
11. One can understand a person well without knowing about the place he/she comes from [reversed].*

12. Who a person is, is mostly defined by his/her educational achievements.
13. To understand a person well, it is essential to know about which social groups he/she is a member of.*
14. To understand a person well, it is essential to know about his/her family.*

* Items included in the final 6 item version

Appendix B

Self-construal scale Study 4

Below are some statements of what you might be like. Probably some will describe you well and others will not describe you well. Please circle a number below each statement showing how well it describes you. For example, if the statement describes you a little, then circle 3. If the statement describes you very well, then circle 7.

How well does each of these statements describe you?

Not at all		A little		Moderately		Very well		Exactly
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Self-direction

1. You prefer to do what you want without letting your family influence you.
2. You follow your personal goals even if they are very different from the goals of your family.
3. You always ask your family for advice before making a decision. [*reversed*]

Self-reliance

4. You try to avoid being reliant on others.
5. You prefer to rely completely on yourself rather than depend on others.
6. You prefer to ask other people for help rather than rely only on yourself. [*reversed*]

Consistency

7. You behave in the same way even when you are with different groups of people.
8. You always see yourself in the same way even when you are with different people.
9. You see yourself differently in different social environments. [*reversed*]

Inclusion of Others in the Self

10. If someone in your family is sad, you feel the sadness as if it were your own.
11. When someone in your family achieves something, you feel proud as if you had achieved something yourself.
12. Your happiness is unrelated to the happiness of your family. [*reversed*]

Commitment to Others

- 13. You value good relations with the people close you to more than your personal achievements.
- 14. Your own success is very important to you, even if it disrupts your friendships.
[reversed]
- 15. You value personal achievements more than good relations with the people close to you. [reversed]

Uniqueness

- 16. You like being different from other people.
- 17. You see yourself as unique and different from others.
- 18. You try to avoid being noticeably different from others. [reversed]

Harmony

- 19. You try to adapt to people around you, even if it means hiding your inner feelings.
- 20. You show your inner feelings even if it disturbs the harmony in your family.
[reversed]
- 21. You prefer to say what you are thinking, even if it is inappropriate for the situation.
[reversed]

Note. Items should be presented in randomized order when administering the scale.

Appendix C

Self-construal scale Study 6

Below are some statements of what you might be like. Probably some will describe you well and others will not describe you well. Please circle a number below each statement showing how well it describes you. For example, if the statement describes you a little, then circle 3. If the statement describes you very well, then circle 7.

How well does each of these statements describe you?

Not at all		A little		Moderately		Very well		Exactly
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Self-direction

1. You prefer to do what you want without letting your family influence you. *
2. You follow your personal goals even if they are very different from the goals of your family. *
3. You like to make your own plans without seeking advice from others.
4. You like to do things in your own way, rather than follow the wishes of others.
5. You always ask your family for advice before making a decision. [*reversed*] *
6. You always seek guidance from people close to you when making important choices. [*reversed*] *
7. You prefer to follow your family's advice on important matters. [*reversed*] *
8. When you have to make a choice, you always prefer to know what other people think. [*reversed*]
9. You prefer situations where you have clear instructions from others rather than having to decide by yourself what to do. [*reversed*]

Self-reliance

10. You try to avoid being reliant on others. *
11. You prefer to rely completely on yourself rather than depend on others. *
12. You tend to rely on yourself rather than seeking support from others. † *
13. You prefer to rely on yourself rather than accepting help from others.
14. You like to depend on others, and not rely only on yourself.

15. You prefer to ask other people for help rather than rely only on yourself.
[reversed] † *
16. You prefer to get support from others rather than rely only on yourself.
[reversed] *
17. You prefer to accept help from others rather than relying only on yourself.
[reversed] *

Consistency

- 18 You behave in the same way even when you are with different groups of people.
† *
- 19 You always see yourself in the same way even when you are with different people. † *
- 20 You see yourself the same way even in different social environments. † *
- 21 You try to act consistently across different social situations.
- 22 You see yourself differently in different social environments. [reversed] † *
- 23 You see yourself differently when you are with different groups of people.
[reversed] † *
- 24 You usually behave differently when you are in different situations. [reversed]
- 25 You tend to behave differently when you are with different groups of people.[reversed] † *

Inclusion of Others in the Self

- 26 If someone in your family is sad, you feel the sadness as if it were your own. *
- 27 When someone in your family achieves something, you feel proud as if you had achieved something yourself. *
- 28 If a close friend of yours is happy, you feel the happiness as if it were your own.
- 29 If someone insults a member of your family, you feel as if you have been insulted personally. *
- 30 Your wellbeing depends very strongly on the wellbeing of your close friends and family.
- 31 Your happiness is unrelated to the happiness of your family. [reversed] *
- 32 You rarely share family members' happiness or sadness. [reversed]
- 33 You tend to think of yourself as separate from others. [reversed]

34 Your feelings are generally unrelated to the feelings of people around you.

[*reversed*]

Commitment to Others

35 You value good relations with the people close you to more than your personal achievements. † *

36 Your family is more important to you than your personal goals.

37 You always put the interests of your family above your personal interests.

38 You would always help a friend in need, even if it disrupted your personal goals.

39 Your own success is very important to you, even if it disrupts your friendships.[*reversed*]*

40 You value personal achievements more than good relations with the people close to you. [*reversed*] *

41 You sometimes put your personal needs above the interests needs of your family. [*reversed*] †

42 You protect your own interests, even if it might sometimes disrupt your family relationships. [*reversed*] *

Uniqueness

43 You like being different from other people. † *

44 You see yourself as unique and different from others. *

45 Being distinctive is important to you.

46 You would rather be different than be similar to others. † *

47 You try to avoid being noticeably different from others. [*reversed*] † *

48 You prefer to fit in rather than being different from other people. [*reversed*]

49 Fitting in among others is more important to you than being distinctive from others. [*reversed*]

50 You would rather be similar than be different from others. [*reversed*] † *

Harmony

51 You try to adapt to people around you, even if it means hiding your inner feelings. † *

52 You prefer to hide your feelings to avoid disturbing the harmony in your family.

- 53 You try to act appropriately for the situation, even if it means hiding your inner thoughts.
- 54 You prefer to preserve harmony in your relationships, rather than expressing your feelings. † *
- 55 You show your inner feelings even if it disturbs the harmony in your family. [reversed] † *
- 56 You prefer to say what you are thinking, even if it is inappropriate for the situation. [reversed] *
- 57 You prefer to express your thoughts and feelings, rather than adapting to people around you. [reversed] † *
- 58 You prefer to tell people what you think, even if it disturbs the harmony in your relationships. [reversed]

Note. Items should be presented in randomized order when administering the scale.

† Items included in the acquiescence measure.

* Items included in the final 35 item version.

Appendix D

Table D1 Zero-order Correlations Study 6 in Malaysia

	Uniqueness	Harmony	Self-direction	Inclusion	Commitment	Self-reliance	Consistency
Harmony	-.07						
Self-direction	.14*	-.40**					
Inclusion	-.01	.46**	-.51**				
Commitment	-.19**	.40**	-.33**	.35**			
Self-reliance	.06	.29**	-.15**	.30**	.02		
Consistency	-.36**	.29	-.16**	.08	.20**	.08	
Life-satisfaction	.02	.04	-.19**	.07	.02	.07	-.04
Depression	-.03	-.12**	.10*	-.19**	-.03	-.20**	.01
Self-efficacy	.12	.07	-.07	.13**	-.04	.28**	.00
Relationship harmony	-.05	.17**	-.24**	.13**	.16**	.08	.00

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table D2 Zero-order Correlations Study 6 in Romania

	Uniqueness	Harmony	Self-direction	Inclusion	Commitment	Self-reliance	Consistency
Harmony	-.26**						
Self-direction	.39**	-.19**					
Inclusion	-.06	.05	-.47**				
Commitment	-.31**	.28**	-.43**	.28**			
Self-reliance	.26**	-.27**	.26**	-.00	-.17**		
Consistency	.06	-.29**	.00	.13**	.07	.22**	
Life-satisfaction	-.05	-.03	-.09	.18*	.06	.18**	.14**
Depression	-.06	.07	.00	-.06	-.07	-.23**	-.27**
Self-esteem	.20**	-.16**	.20**	-.08	-.17**	.17**	.12**
Self-efficacy	.24**	-.12*	.24**	.08	-.18**	.38**	.13**
Social anxiety	-.03	.20**	-.08	-.12*	.12*	-.28**	-.18**
Narcissism	.33**	-.20**	.25**	-.13*	-.28**	.17**	-.09
Modesty	-.13**	.19**	-.10*	.04	.25**	-.10*	.01
Authentic living	.20**	-.13**	.14**	.06	-.05	.33**	.17**
Self-alienation	-.13**	.25**	-.05	-.11*	.11*	-.33**	-.30**

	Uniqueness	Harmony	Self-direction	Inclusion	Commitment	Self-reliance	Consistency
External influence	-.22**	.35**	-.27**	.05	.21**	-.41**	-.24**
Relationship harmony	-.01	-.05	-.07	.15**	.10*	.05	.09
Confrontive coping	.01	-.37**	.04	.06	-.18**	.12*	.13**
Self-controlling coping	.06	.19**	.08	.04	-.06	.11*	-.02
Social support	-.10*	-.08	-.34**	.35**	.13**	-.21**	.03
Planful problem solving	.08	-.04	.06	.08	-.15**	.28**	.15**
Positive appraisal	.18**	-.15**	.17**	.13**	-.10*	.23**	.14**
Escape avoidance	.02	.08	.01	.06	.01	-.17**	-.17**
Accepting responsibility	.09	-.03	-.03	.18**	-.07	-.01	-.08
Distancing	-.03	-.08	.18**	-.04	-.08	-.02	-.01

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table D3 Zero-order Correlations Study 6 in Thailand

	Uniqueness	Harmony	Self-direction	Inclusion	Commitment	Self-reliance	Consistency
Harmony	-.31**						
Self-direction	.26**	-.20**					
Inclusion	-.03	.18**	-.37**				
Commitment	-.13**	.26**	-.21**	.28**			
Self-reliance	.23**	-.06	.20**	.09	-.01		
Consistency	-.02	-.00	.07**	-.04	.04	.10*	
Life-satisfaction	.14**	-.08	-.05	.16**	.06	.06	.08
Depression	-.10*	-.03	.02	-.23**	-.09*	-.10*	-.04
Self-esteem	.32**	-.18**	.14**	-.00	-.08	.19**	-.03
Self-efficacy	.24**	-.04	.19**	.04	-.03	.33**	.13**
Social anxiety	-.19**	-.03	-.02	-.23**	-.05	-.20**	-.06
Narcissism	.35**	-.22**	.22**	-.21**	-.24**	.08	-.04
Modesty	-.13**	.01	.04	-.19**	-.01	-.04	.06
Authentic living	.28**	-.12*	.15**	.12**	.06	.30**	.16**

	Uniqueness	Harmony	Self-direction	Inclusion	Commitment	Self-reliance	Consistency
Self-alienation	-.18**	-.01	-.05	-.28**	-.06	-.21**	-.07
External influence	-.27**	.15**	-.20**	-.16**	.09	-.35**	-.17**
Relationship harmony	.02	.03	-.15**	.23**	.08	-.07	.06
Confrontive coping	.19**	-.21**	.08	.02	-.02	-.01	-.06
Self-controlling coping	-.05	.29**	.04	-.10*	.02	.12*	.09*
Social support	-.07	.02	-.31**	.17**	.12**	-.25**	-.05
Planful problem solving	.18**	.02	-.02	.17**	.02	.22**	.12*
Positive appraisal	.24**	.01	.03	.13**	.04	.08	.07
Escape avoidance	.00	.02	.04	-.17**	-.08	-.16**	-.03
Accepting responsibility	.06	.02	.04	-.09	-.02	.04	.02
Distancing	-.01	.01	.01	-.13**	-.05	-.04	.09

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table D4 Zero-order Correlations Study 6 in the UK

	Uniqueness	Harmony	Self-direction	Inclusion	Commitment	Self-reliance	Consistency
Harmony	-.36**						
Self-direction	.23**	-.25**					
Inclusion	.07	.04	-.50**				
Commitment	-.19**	.30	-.25**	.14*			
Self-reliance	.28**	-.27**	.39**	-.08	-.32**		
Consistency	.24**	-.27**	.22**	-.04	-.15**	.32**	
Life-satisfaction	-.01	-.07	-.22**	.18*	.05	.01	.03
Depression	-.01	-.02	.08	-.07	-.03	-.00	-.02
Self-esteem	.27**	-.23**	.05	.03	-.20**	.21**	.22**
Self-efficacy	.12	-.14	.05	-.03	-.16*	.36**	.21**
Social anxiety	-.11	.27**	.01	-.13	-.06	-.07	-.12
Narcissism	.26**	-.38**	.15*	-.15*	-.31**	.22**	.05
Modesty	.04	.20**	.03	.04	-.04	.12	.10
Authentic living	.31**	-.24**	-.01	.10	-.01	.26**	.36**
Self-alienation	.05	.06	.10	-.06	-.01	-.12	-.06

	Uniqueness	Harmony	Self-direction	Inclusion	Commitment	Self-reliance	Consistency
External influence	-.29**	.39**	-.29**	.03	.15*	-.33**	-.39**
Relationship harmony	-.05	.01	-.31**	.24**	.12	-.06	-.08
Confrontive coping	.11	-.50**	-.01	.01	-.10	.06	-.03
Self-controlling coping	.02	.29**	.12	-.06	-.06	.26**	.12
Social support	-.13	-.03	-.53**	.33**	.22**	-.33**	-.23**
Planful problem solving	.08	-.03	-.30**	.24**	-.15*	.22**	.08
Positive appraisal	.13	-.12	-.21**	.25**	-.04	.16*	.17*
Escape avoidance	.03	-.02	-.05	.03	.07	-.07	-.10
Accepting responsibility	.10	-.08	-.10	.10	.16*	-.06	-.03
Distancing	-.13	.14*	.16*	-.21**	.00	.18*	.15*

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

