Introduction

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Psychologists with an interest in culture have long noted the limited attention given to cultural variables in mainstream psychology. In personality psychology this may have reflected a degree of ethnocentrism (Sinha, 1997), but also some of the following: (a) the stigma associated with early culture-and-personality studies in anthropology and a decrease in the influence of psychoanalysis, the theoretical basis for many of these studies; (b) skepticism about the concept of personality traits, and thus their cross-cultural application, which arose in the mid-1960s; and (c) concerns about potential ethnocentrism and inaccurate stereotypes when personality traits are compared across cultures, particularly when mean differences are interpreted in genetic or biological terms (McCrae, 2000; Shweder, 1999; Singelis, 2000). Ironically, while personality psychologists have shown limited interest in culture in the past, anthropologists, the scientists who focus most on culture, now show limited interest in personality. Levine (1999) has noted that the most relevant subdiscipline, psychological anthropology, is small and marginal within anthropology.

Recently, however, several factors have led to a significant increase in efforts by psychologists to infuse culture into the study of personality. These include: (a) the rejuvenation of the trait concept as a result of supportive empirical research (McCrae, 2000); (b) the reemergence of the Five-Factor Model as a possible comprehensive and universal model

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of personality structure (McCrae & Costa, 1997); (c) elaboration and widespread application of the individualism-collectivism (I-C) construct as a cultural and individual differences dimension that may link ecology, culture, and personality (Triandis, 2001); (d) movement of research on culture and self into mainstream psychology (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989); (e) the emergence of indigenous psychologies (Enriquez, 1992; Sinha, 1997); (f) the multicultural movement in American psychology, which has addressed identity and assessment issues that are relevant to the study of personality (Dana, 2000); (g) refinement of terminology and procedures for addressing conceptual, linguistic, and measurement equivalence in cross-cultural research (van de Vijver & Leung, 1997, 2001); and (h) the increasing globalization of scientific activity, which has made cross-cultural collaboration easier and the extension of psychology across cultural boundaries more imperative.

Indeed, a number of indicators suggest that personality-and-culture is emerging as a significant area of study in psychology. These include the recent publication of books (Lee, McCauley, & Draguns, 1999), chapters (Triandis, 1997), and journal special issues (Church & Lonner, 1998; McCrae, 2000) on the topic, as well as an increasing number of articles in mainstream personality journals. Cross-cultural psychologists have for years expressed apprehension about the "ghettoization of the topic of culture" in specialized (marginalized?) professional associations, divisions, and journals (Greenfield, 2000, p. 228). The trends mentioned here suggest that the separation of culture from mainstream psychology, including personality psychology, is breaking down.

Alternative Perspectives on Personality and Culture

A central goal of this special issue is to introduce the alternative theoretical perspectives currently employed by psychologists in the study of personality across cultures. Typically, three dominant perspectives are identified—cross-cultural, cultural, and indigenous (Poortinga, 1997; Triandis, 2000), each with its own intellectual ancestors and histories (Jahoda & Krewer, 1997). To these three, we can add a fourth—evolutionary psychology (Buss, 1997; MacDonald, 1998). Although the boundaries between these approaches are sometimes fuzzy, some prototypical characteristics of each approach can be noted (Greenfield, 1997, 2000; Shweder, 2000; Triandis, 2000; Yang, 2000).

Cross-cultural approaches typically involve the following: (a) comparisons of multiple cultures in the search for cultural universals, or culture-specifics amidst universals; (b) treatment of culture, or quantitative variables related to ecology and culture, as variables "outside" the individual, which can be used to predict personality and behavior; (c) use of traditional, and relatively context-free, psychometric scales and questionnaires; (d) concern about the cross-cultural equivalence of constructs and measures; and (e) a focus on individual differences. In the study of personality and culture, the cross-cultural perspective has been the dominant one, with trait psychology as the theoretical framework. For example, cross-cultural trait psychologists tend to be optimistic about the identification of cultural universals in personality structure and treat culture as an independent variable that may impact the level, expression, and correlates of traits (McCrae & Costa, 1997).

Cultural psychology approaches typically involve the following: (a) a focus on contextual descriptions of psychological phenomenon in one or more cultures, with less emphasis on, or expectations of, cultural universals; (b) a theoretical emphasis on the dynamic and mutually constitutive nature of culture and psychological functioning; (c) an emphasis on qualitative, ethnographic, and interpretative research methods; and (d) a de-emphasis on individual differences. In the study of personality and culture, cultural psychologists have investigated self construals and processes within and across cultures, rather than traits, and have argued that the very concept of the person or self is socially constructed and hence variable across cultures (Heine, 2001; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Indeed, cultural psychologists have criticized the trait concept and questioned whether personality dispositions will be as useful in understanding or predicting behavior in collectivistic cultures (Markus & Kitayama, 1998). Although qualitative and constructivist methods of assessment are often viewed as most consistent with cultural psychology perspectives (Church, 2001; Greenfield, 1997), it is not uncommon that cultural psychology studies in this area resemble cross-cultural studies, with the application of traditional psychometric scales (e.g., measures of independent vs. interdependent self-construals) and standard social psychology research paradigms.

Indigenous approaches are more difficult to categorize, but they are consistent in their emphasis on the need to formulate theory, constructs, and methods that reflect indigenous cultural contexts (Sinha, 1997). In the study of personality, indigenous psychologists have

adopted strategies that resemble both cross-cultural and cultural approaches (Yang, 2000). For example, some indigenous psychologists use traditional psychometric scales to assess salient local constructs with an eye toward eventual comparisons with constructs in other cultures. Indeed, some cross-cultural psychologists view indigenous approaches, or cross-indigenous approaches (Enriquez, 1992), as simply one component of an overarching cross-cultural psychology, which integrates both imported and indigenous constructs into a truly universal psychology (Berry, 2000). Others view indigenous approaches as more similar to cultural than cross-cultural approaches along a number of dimensions (e.g., goals, emphasis on context and local meanings, typical methods; Shweder, 2000; Triandis, 2000). Indigenous psychologists in the personality domain have largely focused on elaboration of constructs thought to be particularly relevant or salient for particular cultural groups (Cheung & Leung, 1998; Kim & Berry, 1993; Sinha, 1997). Often the methods used have not differed much from western survey methods or rating scales, although Filipino psychologists, in particular, have made strides in formulating indigenous research methods (Enriquez, 1992; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000).

Evolutionary approaches seem most similar to cross-cultural approaches in their focus on both universals of human nature and individual differences, their preference for sampling multiple and diverse cultures, and their use of traditional psychometric scales (Buss, 2001; MacDonald, 1998). However, unlike cross-cultural psychologists, evolutionary psychologists are disinclined to view cultural variables, such as individualism-collectivism, as causes or explanations of behavior. Instead, evolved psychological mechanisms, in interaction with culture, are viewed as ultimate causes (Buss, 2001). In the study of personality and culture, evolutionary theorists have proposed evolutionary bases for the universality of the Five-Factor Model of personality trait structure (MacDonald, 1998) and argued that an important criterion of importance in selecting traits to study is their adaptive significance (Buss, 1997). They have also investigated individual differences in the sexuality domain (e.g., Schmitt & Buss, 2000).

Toward Integration

Many proponents of these approaches have argued that they are complementary and that integration may be possible (Berry, 2000; Greenfield,

2000; Singelis, 2000; Triandis, 2000; Yang, 2000). For example, Greenfield (2000, p. 229) argued that the differences between the cross-cultural, cultural, and indigenous approaches "melt away" when one has a "deep theoretical framework that encompasses findings from all of them." In her view, the construct of individualism-collectivism, or independent versus interdependent selves, can constitute such a "deep structure of culture."

Indeed, some apparent differences between cross-cultural and cultural psychology seem to reflect differences in typical methodology more than differences in theoretical beliefs about the relationship between culture and personality. For example, when cross-cultural psychologists treat culture like an independent variable, it is not because they reject the notion that culture and personality are to some extent mutually constitutive. Rather, they are taking a longer-term perspective on culture and relating relatively enduring aspects of culture to personality. As Kashima (2000, p. 22) has noted, cross-cultural psychologists treat cultures "*as if* they are stable systems . . . and strategically freeze time" to examine cultural differences in psychological phenomena.

Similarly, Kashima (2000) sees an emerging consensus that integrates evolutionary and cultural perspectives, including a physicalist stance on mind and culture (i.e., rejection of a dualistic mind-body conception), a version of evolutionism that sees both genetic human nature and culture as interacting and presupposing each other, and the belief that cultural-historical context and human mind are mutually constitutive. Others are less optimistic, however, about the integration of these approaches and note the long-standing history of contrasts between their theoretical frameworks, content, and methods (Kagitcibasi & Poortinga, 2000; Poortinga & Van Hemert, 2001).

Whatever the prospects for integration, systematic attempts to do so have been minimal. For example, cross-cultural trait psychologists have given little attention to the concerns of cultural psychologists about the relevance of the trait concept in collectivistic cultures, while cultural psychologists have largely ignored the potential role of heritable differences in personality or temperament. Similarly, cross-cultural, cultural, or indigenous psychologists rarely attend to the possible role of evolved psychological mechanisms in cultural and individual differences. Church (2000) discussed what an integration of cultural and trait psychology might look like, assuming that both theoretical perspectives are largely correct, but further empirical work is needed to test the formulations.

The field seems poised to explore whether these alternative perspectives can be combined or integrated. To do so, researchers from all perspectives will probably need to expand beyond their usual research questions and methods to incorporate those from alternative perspectives, perhaps through collaboration. Integration may also be facilitated by combining in a single source—such as this special issue—presentations of each of these alternative approaches.

Overview of Articles

The first seven articles in the issue were written by prominent representatives of the major theoretical and disciplinary perspectives on personality and culture. The last three articles are more methodological or integrative in nature.

Culture and Personality Studies in Anthropology

As a precursor to current perspectives in psychology, it is appropriate that the first article, contributed by Robert A. Levine, addresses history and myths associated with early culture-and-personality studies in anthropology. Levine notes points of consensus in the culture-and-personality field (e.g., that adult behavior is "culturally patterned"), but argues that early culture-and-personality studies did not constitute a unified school of thought. In fact, many of the stereotypic perceptions or myths about the field (e.g., that individual variation was ignored) were points of contention within the field. Levine attributes the "abandonment" of culture-and-personality studies to a failure to translate promising theoretical ideas into a coherent and generally accepted research program, stigmatization of the national character studies, and the controversy surrounding the "swaddling hypotheses" (Gorer & Rickman, 1949), which attributed a Russian preference for authoritarian leadership to their experience of having been swaddled in infancy.

Some anthropologists may disagree about the significance of the "swaddling hypothesis" controversy. However, one implication of Levine's article is the following: "Mythical stereotypes" about culture-and-personality studies may have made it all too easy for psychologists to rationalize disregarding the diverse ideas of early culture-and-personality theorists and the research conducted by psychological anthropologists today.

Trait Perspectives

The articles by McCrae and by Saucier and Goldberg are consistent with the trait perspective on personality and culture. McCrae describes three levels at which the relations between traits and culture can be addressed—transcultural (e.g., questions about universal trait structure), intracultural (e.g., questions about the culture-specific expression of traits), and intercultural (e.g., questions about cultural differences in the level of traits). McCrae then takes on one of the most controversial questions in the study of personality and culture—whether personality measures can provide accurate assessments of mean trait levels across cultures. Researchers vary in their optimism regarding the appropriateness of comparing mean scores on inventories such as the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) across cultures (e.g., see Poortinga & Van Hemert, 2001, for a more skeptical view). McCrae is sensitive to the potential problems of measurement equivalence involved, but suggests that personality assessments may be more robust than cross- cultural methodologists expect. Indeed, he reports success in relating cultural means on the NEO-PI-R with various culture-level variables, although judges could not identify which Five-Factor Model dimension differentiated high and low scoring cultures on each of the dimensions. There are good reasons to remain cautious in the interpretation of cultural mean differences in personality measures (Church, 2001; van de Vijver & Leung, 2001). Also, persuasive research on cultural differences in trait levels and the behavioral correlates of traits has barely begun.

Saucier and Goldberg contend that the lexical approach, which has been used to examine the structure of personality trait lexicons across cultures, should not be viewed as a form of trait theory; trait terms refer to phenotypic (i.e., observable, surface) attributes, not underlying genotypes, and no a priori assumptions are made by the lexical approach about the stability of these attributes. Nonetheless, I have placed this article under the trait perspective for two reasons: (a) cross-cultural lexical data have most often been used to support the universality of the Five-Factor Model or Big-Five-like trait dimensions; and (b) it has often been at least implicit in lexical studies that the folk dimensions identified will provide clues to necessary (if not sufficient) components of personality trait structure within and across cultures.

A promising heuristic feature in Saucier and Goldberg's approach is the use of middle-level trait clusters in their attempt to systematically

identify cultural universals and differences in trait structure. These clusters might cohere or generalize better across cultures than each of the Big-Five dimensions as a whole. It remains to be seen, however, whether cultural differences in the composition of these middle-level clusters themselves will be identified, and whether researchers will agree on how these middle-level clusters combine in various cultural solutions. Although lexical studies are emic (indigenous) in nature, they have often had an imposed-etic (imported) feel to them because authors have focused typically on how well the indigenous lexical dimensions replicate the (imported) Big-Five dimensions. Saucier and Goldberg's article shows promising movement away from this stance. They attempt to identify clusters of cultures that share alternative personality structures, albeit with the "Anglo-American Big Five" still providing a reference point.

An interesting paradox can be noted: As Five-Factor Model (FFM) researchers such as McCrae have built a stronger and stronger case for the universality of the FFM, as the NEO-PI-R has been applied in more and more cultures, lexical researchers appear to be moving in the opposite direction; that is, as more languages have been studied, the degree of confidence in the universality of the Big-Five dimensions, or at least their composition, has waned to some extent. The two approaches thus illustrate the complementary nature of imported and indigenous approaches: although imported approaches facilitate the identification of cultural universals, indigenous approaches are more promising as a basis for identifying culture specifics. To date, the case for cultural universals in trait structure has outstripped the case for cultural specifics, but it is also true that many more efforts have been made to replicate imported dimensions than to identify culture-specific dimensions.

Cultural Psychology and Individualism-Collectivism (I-C)

It is interesting to juxtapose the articles by Heine and Triandis because they illustrate how the cultural and cross-cultural approaches can converge on various hypotheses and results. Reflecting a cultural psychology perspective, Heine emphasizes the mutually constitutive or bidirectional relationship between culture and self, and attends relatively little to individual differences within cultures. Reflecting a cross-cultural perspective, Triandis presents a more unidirectional, ecocultural model of

personality, in which culture is treated more like an independent variable and places greater emphasis on individual differences within cultures. Nonetheless, the two approaches converge on (a) the most essential dimension of difference among cultures (i.e., I-C, or independent versus interdependent selves); and (b) the implications of this cultural distinction for various personality and self processes.

Heine focuses on the differences in self concepts and processes between North American and East Asian Confucian cultures, in part, because these cultures have been studied by far the most. Indeed, a notable limitation of the cultural psychology literature on culture and self is the prevalence of studies involving these cultures (especially the United States and Japan) and the scarcity of studies conducted elsewhere. One is also struck by the extensive application of standard social psychology paradigms in these studies, which tend to indicate the more limited role of traits in self-concepts and behavioral inferences in some cultures, concomitant with the scarce application of standard paradigms for validating the importance of traits across cultures (e.g., studies of interjudge agreement in trait judgments, predictive validity, heritability, and longitudinal and cross-situational stability). Efforts to integrate cultural and trait psychology approaches would benefit from the application of both types of paradigms and greater consideration of individual differences in cultural psychology studies.

Triandis notes the importance of distinguishing between I-C at the cultural level (where it may be a bipolar construct) and at the individual level (idiocentrism-allocentrism; I-A), where it appears to be a multidimensional "syndrome" comprised of idiocentric dimensions, such as competition, emotional distance from ingroups, self-reliance, and hedonism, and allocentric dimensions, such as sociability, interdependence, and family integrity. From a trait psychology perspective, certain questions about the I-A construct can be raised: For example, how is I-A related to trait models such as the Five-Factor Model? Should idiocentrism and allocentrism be viewed as broad value constructs with implications for personality traits, or as personality traits per se?

Presently, a significant point of contention is whether individualism and collectivism are effective explanatory variables, or whether they are so broad as to lose explanatory power (Kagitcibasi, 1997; Poortinga & Van Hemert, 2001). Greenfield (2000) adopts a middle position by endorsing I-C as a core dimension of cultural difference but expecting

I-C to exhibit variant forms across cultures. Attempts to refine or differentiate varieties of I-C have begun—for example, Triandis's distinction between horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism. However, it is unclear whether further refinements will be needed, and how useful, relative to more specific constructs, the broader I-C construct will remain if and when further refinements are made. Also, as Triandis (2001) has noted, measurement of both broad and refined I-C constructs has proven to be difficult.

Indigenous Perspectives

Ho, Peng, Lai, and Chan provide an overview of the intellectual history and rationale for indigenous psychologies. They then address the question of how to translate indigenous conceptions of human existence, such as those embedded in Asian philosophies, into new theories, concepts, and methods for personality psychology in the Asian context and in mainstream psychology. Relational constructs are particularly relevant in indigenous theories informed by Confucianism. This suggests, in Ho et al.'s view, the need for a paradigmatic shift in psychology away from methodological individualism to methodological relationalism, in which the unit of analysis is the person-in-relations. Also, Eastern philosophical traditions negate or overcome the dichotomy between self-as-subject and self-as-object on the way to a higher level of consciousness, suggesting that transcendant consciousness is a relevant focus of personality study based on Eastern traditions.

The Ho et al. article raises a number of questions: How well will personality concepts extracted from Asian philosophical traditions describe the psychology of laypersons in Asia or other societies? Some indigenous psychologists have noted the need to re-validate in lay populations the concepts obtained from such sources. What are the full implications of adopting the person-in-relations as the unit of analysis for the traditional concerns of personality psychologists (e.g., trait structure, behavioral consistency and prediction, the typical content of inventory items)? Additional conceptual and empirical work will be needed to translate ideas from indigenous sources into scientific constructs and methods.

Evolutionary Perspectives

Evolutionary perspectives have much to say about culture and personality. A major theme of Buss's article is that evolved psychological mechanisms provide the foundation for culture and that cultural universals and differences cannot be understood without taking into account these mechanisms. Buss notes a tendency to overestimate the plasticity or malleability of cultural phenomena and warns against tendencies to view culture as an independent causal agent and to attribute causal status to such descriptive labels as independent and interdependent cultures. He provides examples of evolved psychological mechanisms that may underlie selected cultural differences.

Of the theoretical perspectives addressed in this issue, the evolutionary perspective is probably the least influential among cross-cultural psychologists and the least well integrated with the other approaches. The influence of evolutionary psychology among cross-cultural personality psychologists will probably be greater to the extent that (a) cross-cultural psychologists become more interested in universals of human nature (as Buss suggests they should be); (b) the constructs and adaptive strategies investigated by evolutionary psychologists (e.g., mate selection strategies, sexual jealousy) begin to intersect more extensively with the personality and self phenomenon that currently engage cross-cultural and cultural psychologists (current examples include evolutionary perspectives on the Five-Factor Model [MacDonald, 1998], basic or universal emotions [Ekman, 1992], and the self [Sedikides & Skowronski, 1997]); and (c) evolutionary theories provide integrated theoretical accounts of universal human nature and cultural and individual differences, including key cultural distinctions of interest to cross-cultural psychologists (e.g., individualism-collectivism). Buss acknowledges the conceptual difficulties involved. Nonetheless, for cross-cultural psychologists who hope for an integration of diverse perspectives, it would be beneficial to maintain familiarity with evolutionary perspectives.

Methodological and Integrative Perspectives

Having introduced the major theoretical perspectives on personality and culture, the special issue turns to methodological issues. In keeping with the organization of the special issue, Church reviews personality measurement across cultures from diverse theoretical perspectives: trait,

projective, cultural and constructivist, evolutionary, and indigenous. An integrated measurement approach is advocated, incorporating diverse aspects or levels of personality, while drawing on the complementary strengths of alternative approaches.

In a wide-ranging article emphasizing methodological issues in cross-cultural or culture-comparative studies, Van de Vijver and Leung present a taxonomy of cross-cultural studies, consider the alternative cultural origins of measurement instruments, and provide succinct overviews of sampling and issues of bias and equivalence in cross-cultural research. Recent multilevel models, which examine cross-cultural data at both the cultural and individual level, are introduced. Multilevel models should become increasingly important because scores on particular personality inventories are increasingly available for large numbers of cultures, making culture-level analyses possible (e.g., see McCrae, 2001). As the authors note, a major challenge for cross-cultural personality studies is that equivalence of constructs and measures will rarely, if ever, be fully met, so future research should focus on the impact of violations of equivalence on cross-cultural comparisons.

For the final article, Poortinga and Van Hemert were asked to write an integrative piece addressing alternative perspectives on personality and culture. The authors first contrast two general approaches—(a) psychodynamic (e.g., culture-and-personality studies) and relativistic approaches, such as cultural and indigenous psychologies, versus (b) structural or trait approaches—in terms of their stance on cultural relativism versus universalism and their conceptions of consistency and coherence of personality and culture. The prevalence of these first two approaches is contrasted with the scarcity of (c) interactionist and (d) situationist approaches, which the authors attribute, in part, to the questionable preference in current cross-cultural research to operationalize culture using internal (i.e., psychological) constructs with a high level of inclusiveness (e.g., individualism-collectivism) rather than external variables (e.g., economic indicators) or more specific cultural conventions and rules. The authors use the term "situationist" more broadly than some personality psychologists, to include broad ecocultural or environmental dimensions as well as more specific situational contexts.

Poortinga and Van Hemert observe that, time and again in cross-cultural research, overstated claims about cultural differences have had to be scaled back and note that quantitative estimates of personality

variance accounted for by culture are modest relative to person variance within cultures. This observation takes us full circle to concerns about the "uniformity fallacy" (Bock, 2000), the tendency to downplay individual variation within cultures, which was raised by critics of early culture-and-personality studies and which remains a concern for current cultural and trait psychology approaches. Finally, the authors consider three strategies for bridging the universalism-relativism debate—combination, integration, and demarcation. They view the demarcation strategy, which acknowledges and differentiates the predictable common and the unpredictable unique, as being most feasible. In this regard, the authors take a less optimistic view than some cross-cultural psychologists about the possibility of integrating diverse perspectives.

In summary, it is hoped that mainstream personality psychologists will be challenged and encouraged by the contents of this special issue to integrate cultural considerations more consistently and thoroughly into their theoretical and empirical work. And it is anticipated that greater infusion of cultural variables in the study of personality will be facilitated by increased awareness—and perhaps integration—of the diverse theoretical and methodological perspectives on personality and culture presented in this issue.

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