

INTRODUCTION TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE

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The decision to develop a special issue on the topic of “Personality and its Measurement in Cross-Cultural Perspective” was timely and appropriate given the recent, extensive theoretical and research activity in this area and the scarcity of references that bring together these developments in a single source. Recent developments include, for example, a burst of research on the cross-cultural applicability of western models and measures of personality (e.g., Butcher, 1996; McCrae & Costa, 1997) concomitant with the continued growth of interest in indigenous psychologies and measures (Kao & Sinha, 1997; Kim & Berry, 1993; Sinha, 1997). In addition, recent theoretical developments and an explosion of research studies on individualism-collectivism and culture and self have considerable implications for conceptions of personality and self, trait psychology, and personality assessment and prediction across cultures (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1995; see also Williams, 1995 [special section on Culture and Self]). Indeed, the trait concept itself, which is at the heart of many personality theories and measures, has been called into question by some proponents of cultural psychology (Shweder, 1991). Finally, in addition to the historical and current contributions of anthropologists to the study of personality across cultures, evolutionary explanations of cross-cultural universals and differences in personality have recently emerged (e.g., Buss, 1996). Although a number of excellent reviews, many of them in the second edition of the *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology* (Berry et al., 1997), have addressed specific aspects of personality (e.g., values, emotions, the self), none have juxtaposed, in a single source, the diverse approaches to the cross-cultural study of personality and its measurement.

The first six articles of the special issue address the major theoretical or disciplinary perspectives in the study of personality across cultures (i.e., anthropological, cross-cultural, cultural, indigenous, and evolutionary). Though not mutually exclusive, these perspectives differ to some degree in

their origins, assumptions, foci, and methods (Jahoda & Krewer, 1997; Lonner & Adamopoulos, 1997; Shweder, 1991). Given the historical influence of psychological anthropology (e.g., the culture and personality school) on the cross-cultural study of personality by psychologists, it is appropriate that the first article, contributed by anthropologist Steven Piker, addresses historical and current contributions of psychological anthropology to the study of personality across cultures. Church and Lonner then examine the theoretical rationale for the study of personality from the cross-cultural or culture-comparative perspective, note the uncertain cross-cultural relevance of mainstream personality theories, and provide an overview of recent cross-cultural research in a number of personality-relevant areas. Markus and Kitayama (1991), in their discussion of the cultural psychology of personality, note that western personality psychology is rooted in a model of the person as independent and discuss the implications of an alternative interdependent model for conceptions of personality.

The articles by Ho and Díaz-Loving address the indigenous perspective in the Asian and Mexican contexts, respectively. Ho notes the arguments for and against indigenous approaches, presents a metatheory of cross-cultural comparisons, and illustrates the potential conceptual and methodological contributions of indigenous Asian psychologies for the study of personality. Díaz-Loving argues that the controversy over the etic (universal) versus emic (culture-specific) nature of personality constructs needs to be resolved empirically; then, drawing on his own studies in the Mexican context, he illustrates how personality concepts, their operationalizations, or both, can be relatively universal or culture-specific. Finally, MacDonald reviews evolutionary approaches to the five-factor model (FFM) of personality and presents a synthetic evolutionary theory of personality that incorporates both cultural universals and cultural and individual variation.

The last six articles address personality structure and assessment. The focus here is on the cross-cultural universality versus specificity of personality structure, the cross-cultural applicability of major western personality inventories, and efforts to develop indigenous measures. Paunonen and Ashton address the rationale for the cross-cultural adoption of personality inventories, the types of psychometric data that can be used to support the cross-cultural applicability of an inventory and its constructs, and factors that can undermine such data. After reviewing cross-cultural research on several personality inventories, these authors conclude that the evidence for replicability of factor structures is good, but that little evidence is available on the cross-cultural generality of the inventories' criterion validities.

Given the enormous impact of the FFM on recent personality theory and assessment, a separate article on the FFM in cross-cultural perspective was

warranted. McCrae, Costa, del Pilar, Rolland, and Parker present evidence on the cross-cultural replicability of the FFM using Filipino and French translations of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) and suggest that the FFM is a biologically based human universal. Whereas the FFM is foremost a model of normal personality, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI and MMPI-2) is the most widely used measure of psychopathology in international settings (Butcher, 1996). In their article, Butcher, Lim, and Nezami describe the procedures used to adapt the MMPI-2 for use in other cultures and to evaluate cross-cultural equivalence. They then summarize the results of a large number of successful adaptations including information on translation equivalence, comparative norms, and test validity.

Although most often cast in the framework of the FFM and its universality, lexical or natural language approaches are actually indigenous or emic approaches to the study of personality structure. In a cross-indigenous study of personality structure, De Raad, Perugini, Hřebíčková, and Szarota present the rationale for the lexical approach and summarize the procedures that have been used to derive trait taxonomies and structures in seven languages. Based on psychometric comparisons of these lexically based structures, the authors conclude that at least three or four of the “Big Five” dimensions can be identified in similar form in all of the languages.

The final two articles describe indigenous test development projects in the Chinese and Filipino contexts. Cheung and Leung describe three Chinese test development projects, including their own large-scale project in which a combined emic-etic approach to scale construction was used. These authors summarize some of the most definitive evidence currently available on the ability of indigenous approaches to identify personality dimensions that are not subsumed by western personality models (i.e., the Big Five). Guanzon-Lapeña, Church, Carlota, and Katigbak, after noting the perceived need among Filipino psychologists for indigenous theory and assessment tools, describe the development, current status, and convergence of two measures of Filipino personality constructs and two projects that are investigating indigenous Filipino personality structure.

Although space considerations limited the number of authors who were invited to contribute to this special issue—the largest special issue of the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* ever published—we are pleased that a fair amount of cultural diversity is reflected in the authorship of the articles, with contributors from at least 13 different countries. We believe that readers who examine the entire contents of the special issue will acquire an excellent feel for the theoretical perspectives, research results, and assessment approaches that currently characterize the study of personality and its measure-

ment in cross-cultural perspective, as well as areas where future theoretical and empirical work are needed.

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