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Intergenerational Value Transmission Based on Culture

by

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Abstract

This study explored the way in which culture impacts value transmission between parents and children. Specifically, I used previous literature to inform the defining of individualism and collectivism and how value transmission allows for these cultures to be preserved through the generations. Transmission of values was analyzed by conducting six semi-structured, in-depth interviews which resulted in findings that built on previous literature. I found that the values that the participants held came from cultural, parental and religious influences. Collectivist participants more consistently identified with maintaining similar values as their parents into adulthood while individualist participants reported more autonomous tendencies in value selection. Additionally, religion emerged as a common theme, and I found that individualist participants exhibited some collectivist value tendencies due to religion. These findings allow us to determine whether our values originate from culture, religion or other influences. More importantly, the findings serve as a guide for parents across all cultures who intentionally seek to instill good values in their children.

Keywords: Individualism, Collectivism, Value transmission

Intergenerational Value Transmission Based on Culture

The family you grow up in has an immense influence on the values you carry with you for the rest of your life. Through research we have been able to analyze how different family dynamics impact the way in which parents communicate with their children. An important thing to consider is that overarching any family dynamics, culture also comes into play. This is especially true when we specifically contrast individualist and collectivist societies. The attitudes and beliefs that dictate the norms in these different types of societies give light to the values which are held most tightly. Both individualism and collectivism are carried on through generations because of value transmission. When value transmission and culture are juxtaposed they allow us to understand what makes us who we are. The purpose of this study is to examine how culture relates to the transmission of values in families from varying cultural backgrounds.

Individualism and Collectivism

Individualism and collectivism are cultural ideologies that influence our behaviors and lifestyles. The two have been compared and contrasted for centuries and continue to be the focal point in cultural studies, psychology and communication. Individualism and collectivism can be considered the backbones of the value system which a society has because they determine cultural expectations (Triandis, 2001). In order to better understand these ideologies I will first define each, after which we will narrow down the scope to discuss individualism and collectivism within the parameters of the study – parenting and transmission of values in the context of individualism and collectivism.

Individualism is distinguished by valuing the sense of self a person has. Those who are individualist can be defined as “people [who] are autonomous and independent from their in-groups; they give priority to their personal goals over the goals of their in-groups, they behave

primarily on the basis of their attitudes rather than the norms of their in-group” (Triandis, 2001, p. 909). Individualism encourages the exploration of one’s goals, desires and aspirations to have as a basis in their worldview and how they approach life with the various decisions they will have to make. Cultures that ascribe to individualism as a way of thinking can be found primarily in western civilization. Regions such as North America, North and Western Europe, Australia all can be labeled as having individualist cultures (Triandis, 2001; Oyserman et al., 2002). While traditionally not as widely accepted as collectivism because of its progressive stance on values, individualism has in the last few decades increased in popularity throughout the world (Santos et al., 2017). Researchers have indicated that this phenomenon has come about partly due to the decrease in household size and the increasing independence of children (Santos et al., 2017). Because individualist cultures promote success, innovation and change, individualist cultures fall in line with a progressive mentality. Due to the progressive push, individualist values have been much more widely accepted and encouraged throughout the world.

One area that has seen the most change due to the rise of individualism is parenting styles. Throughout family studies and research done in both individualist and collectivist societies, experts have settled on four main parenting styles which encompass most of parent-child relationships. The first parenting style is authoritarian which is characterized by firm rules parents place on children, which, if broken, result in punishment. Authoritarian parents see obedience of utmost importance, are not approachable to their children and are for the most part not open to questioning from their children (Singh, 2017). Authoritative parenting, while similar to authoritarian parenting in demands, displays “more nurturing and forgiving rather than reprimanding, if their children fail to act up to their expectations” (Singh, 2017, p. 1522). The third parenting style is called permissive and is marked by parents who have low demands but

are very nurturing. Permissive parents like to befriend their children and do not feel the need to impose many rules on their children (Baumrind, 2005; Singh, 2017). The last style, uninvolved parenting, finds parents who show “limited demands, low responsiveness and little communication” (Singh, 2017, p. 1522). Uninvolved parents are very detached from their children’s lives and could even go so far as neglecting them.

Parenting techniques in the Western world - predominantly individualistic societies - have shown to follow closely those of the authoritative parenting style (Rudy et al., 1999). In authoritative parenting, the parent has high standards and high responsiveness towards their children. Most of the time this looks like the parent setting rules for the child but encouraging open lines of communication to ensure the child feels supported and treated fairly. Specifically authoritative parenting, “attempts to coordinate [its] demands with a responsiveness to the child’s feelings and a promotion of the child’s autonomy” (Rudy et al., 1999, p. 300). Parenting in individualist cultures goes beyond authoritative parenting to promote idealistic Western civilization attributes such as autonomy, individualism and independence.

Individualist cultures motivate people to pursue success as a means to fulfilling their heart’s desires. This is seen not only in the way parents raise their kids but also in society at large. The education system in individualist cultures puts personal achievement and confidence in oneself at the top of a student’s list of priorities (Hargreaves, 1980). While collaboration is discussed in schools, it is generally posed as a means from which personal success can derive. Taking time to truly get to know yourself and what you want is something Western civilization strongly encourages individuals to do.

In contrast, collectivism as a concept is based on the premise that the highest priorities in life are harmony and doing what is best for the group. In this we see that, “for collectivists, the

main goal is to maintain social relationships and harmony, whereas individualists may seek personal benefits and social justice” (Ohbuchi et al., 1999, p. 53). Collectivist cultures maintain the focus of the family as the basis for making decisions in life by promoting collaboration in the family and in society as well (Fuligni & Zhang, 2004). The majority of cultures in Eastern countries ascribe to this value system because it is traditional and is a manifestation of beliefs that have been held and passed down through the generations. Countries in Asia, Africa, Southern America and Eastern Europe all are collectivistic societies at core (Triandis, 2001). While collectivism is not popular at a societal level in the United States, because of the integration of many immigrants from other nations in American society, there are families, social groups, and religious groups that still hold to the collectivist values they lived with in their native countries (Bowie et al., 2017; Friedlmeier & Trommsdorff, 2011).

A value which is very prominent in collectivist cultures is respect (Triandis, 2001). Respect coupled with a focus on obedience and self-sacrifice makes authoritarian parenting commonplace in a collectivist society (Rudy & Grusec, 2006). With an individualistic mindset it is easy to assume that authoritarian parenting’s strict and rule-based nature would be detrimental to a child’s mental wellbeing. While in individualist cultures authoritarian parenting was found to be detrimental to a child’s ability to internalize and process values due to its lack of allowing autonomy, it does not have any significant negative effects when used in collectivist cultures (Rudy & Grusec, 2006). Because respect is so highly valued in collectivistic cultures, many parents instill it into their children from a young age and thus the children grow up being accustomed to having to obey their parents and knowing there are always consequences to their actions.

In a collectivist culture you will find individuals who are closely tied to their families through the various bonds they share together. While personal success and making a better life for oneself is still sought after in collectivist cultures, success is never to be pursued at the cost of leaving the family behind. The highly relationship-focused nature of collectivist societies make for strong family units and societies, however, it makes it difficult for those who want to pave their own path to do so. Collectivist societies are fervent about keeping traditional family values alive and well for generations to come (Friedlmeier & Trommsdorff, 2011).

Perhaps this motivation in collectivist societies of passing down values through the generations is how research has found that, “[there are] stronger intergenerational similarities for collectivistic values than for individualistic values” (Friedlmeier & Trommsdorff, 2011, p. 675). This key finding confirms to us that the traditional nature of collectivist families is the motivation behind ensuring that values are transmitted to future generations. This research suggest that parents from collectivist cultures are passing down their values at a more successful rate than parents from individualist cultures. While this may be due to the authoritarian nature of collectivist parenting (Rudy & Grusec, 2006), where parents closely guide their children’s belief systems, an important thing noted in Friedlmeier and Trommsdorff’s (2011) study is that transmission of values was not only a result of parenting but also of the social environment or culture the child lived in.

Value Transmission

Values are truths that are accepted and held as standards of living by a society and which manifest themselves in the behaviors and choices those people make (Schönpflug, 2001). In light of its intersection with parent-child interactions, value transmission, then, for the purposes of this study will be defined as – the effectiveness of parents passing on values to their children (Vedder

et al., 2009). Value transmission is important to the continuation of a culture and society as it ensures that the foundations of cultural belief systems continue to be held. Not all values are created equal, however, and we see this most commonly through the values that through research are more consistently transmitted.

As mentioned earlier, collectivist values have shown to transmit much more effectively and more often than individualist values (Friedlmeier & Trommsdorff, 2011; Knafo & Schwartz, 2001). This success in value transmission stems from partially from the way children in collectivist societies are raised as well as the cultural pressures that influence the values they choose to adopt. Another study notes that values which, “preserve and protect family connections and collaborations are more likely to be socialized by families” (Prioste et al., 2015, p. 229). This goes to show that values which encourage harmony and cohesiveness in the family unit are most commonly cultivated in the household. Thus, we can see that if a family decides to pursue certain values, they are more likely than not familial and collectivistic values.

Furthermore, in a study comparing value transmission in Romanian mother-adolescent dyads and American mother-adolescent dyads, Friedlmeier and Trommsdorff (2011) found that collectivistic values were detected in both Romanian and American dyads, but individualistic values were only present in American dyads. This finding shows that even in individualist societies, collectivist values are more often transmitted than are individualist values. Throughout all these studies, one truth comes to light: there are many influences that come from family relationships, communities and even the society in regards to impacting value transmission between parents and children.

In academia and research, individualism and collectivism are often closely associated with ideas of loose and tight cultures. Loose cultures are those in which rules are more or less

fluid and where deviant behavior from the norm is well accepted – these standards line up closely with individualism. Tight cultures then, being more collectivistic, have higher standards of compliance to societal rules and less tolerance for behavior that is deviant from the norm (Gelfand et al., 2011). Gelfand et al. (2011) found that tight (collectivist cultures) were much more likely to be religiously motivated. For many collectivists, faith is something which at its root is meant to be shared. On the other hand, individualistic cultures view faith as a personal journey, often independent from the family (Cohen, 2016). Because religion is such an integral part of a collectivistic worldview, I would suggest that perhaps one of the motivators for values being transmitted from parents to children can stem from adherence to religion.

Both individualism and collectivism are carried on through generations because of value transmission. When culture and value transmission are coupled together, the two concepts offer a story on how parents can instill the values respective to their culture in their children. I posed the following research question: How does value transmission from parent to child differ based on being raised with collectivist values versus individualist values?

Methods

My research and data collection methods would be categorized under the interpretive paradigm. Six participants were chosen, three being from a collectivist culture and three being from an individualist culture in order to have an even number of interviewees speaking for each culture. The three collectivist participants identified as being raised with collectivist values in the United States because their parents moved here as adults. All the participants have been given pseudonyms in order to protect their identities. Emily is a 19 year old female from a collectivist culture. Maria is a 21 year old female from a collectivist culture. Erica is a 19 year old female from a collectivist culture. All of their parents were born in a collectivist country and moved to

the United States before having them. Haley is a 25 year old female from an individualist culture. Anna is a 23 year old female from an individualist culture. Becca is an 18 year old female from an individualist culture. All of their parents were born in and have always lived in the United States.

Participants were chosen using a purposive sampling method via email.

Recommendations for possible participants came from friends suggesting individuals they thought would provide insight to the research. Potential participants were sent a recruitment flyer with information about the research being done (Appendix A). Respondents to the emailed recruitment flyer were sent pre-screening questions to determine whether they are from an individualist or collectivist culture and why they were particularly interested in this study (Appendix B). Pre-screening questions served to even out the number of participants from individualist and collectivist cultures as well as to use interest expressed to determine and predict quality of responses. Based on the emails that came in I looked at the responses and selected the three participants for collectivist and three participants for individualist based on the level of interest evident in their response to the pre-screening questions.

Interviews were held in quiet, closed spaces. Since Emily, Maria and Anna are all Portland State students, I reserved library study rooms in which I held their interviews. Haley and Erica both preferred to have their interviews at their homes as they had busy schedules and Becca wanted to do hers at a quiet park. I began all the interviews by expressing gratitude for the participant taking time out of their schedule to be interviewed for this study.

After receiving verbal permission to record the interview and take notes, I started the recording and began with the first question on my interview moderator's guide (Appendix C). The interviews were semi-structured interviews with a moderator's guide that contained a list of

predetermined questions. The question order went from broader (asking them to describe their cultures) to increasingly more specific (what specific values they ascribe to). Besides the questions listed in the moderator's guide, I used probing questions in instances where I wanted more information on a topic the interviewee talking on or when I needed clarification. Probing questions differed among all the participants since they were specifically tailored to each conversation. The probing questions encouraged the participants to tell detailed stories about their experiences and to feel comfortable going on different tangents.

Data analysis began with transcribing all the interviews. Transcription was done word for word and I included pauses and filler words. I began preliminary coding during the transcription process by bolding words and phrases that were important and could be potential themes. Next, I started reading through all the interviews, looking at the bolded sections especially and wrote a list of themes they represented. While some themes were based off of bolded phrases, I chose some based on a few of the questions from the interview protocol.

Themes were chosen initially based off of the research question and forefronted the themes on similarity and difference in values among parents and children. Secondary themes included specific values that emerged as consistently important throughout all the interviews. Religion specifically surfaced as present in the lives of all the participants, therefore was included as a theme. After creating a list of main themes, I went back through the transcriptions and searched each transcription for every theme in order to have as much representation as possible. I selected phrases the interviewees said that were relevant and allowed me to have a better understanding of their perspective.

Results

I found that participants had pretty similar descriptions of what the word ‘values’ means to them. Maria described values as, “your law, building blocks, like the foundation to your behavior and beliefs and actions.” Many of the participants mentioned values being things such as, “central to you” (Haley), “a set of morals” (Emily), and “close in your heart” (Erica). All participants said that their values were very important to them and that they held tightly to them, integrating them into their daily lives.

Similarities and Differences in Values with Parents

I analyzed similarities between participants’ values and their parents’ by asking them if their values related to those of their parents. I found that collectivist participants consistently responded that their values are very similar to their parents’ values. Collectivist participants said that this similarity is due to a mixture of being directed towards these values at a young age and also seeing the importance of the values for themselves as they grew up. All the collectivist respondents mentioned that although their values were similar to their parents, they were not necessarily displayed the same way. For example, Maria stated, “I’ve kept pretty much all my parents’ values but we exhibit them differently and I think to different degrees.” Both Haley and Anna, although individualist, mentioned that they still held to many of the values they were originally raised with. Uniquely, Becca said that she and her family have drastically changed in what they value since she was a child. Through Becca’s narrative I learned that she felt that she had more influence over what her family values than her parents did.

I wanted to analyze how participants talked about difference in values from their parents. All participants recognized ways that they view values and life differently than their parents. Maria touched on how her parents see all entertainment as a waste of time and she attributed to

this view to, “they lived for survival.” She mentioned how she does not hold this same view and likes to spend time socializing and making time for entertainment in her life. On a more serious note, Haley talked about the way in which her parents held certain values but did not put in effort to live by them. She said, “it’s not something that they actively work on. And that’s one of the generational things that you want to change.” When I asked her to go more in depth she said that her parents would constantly allude to holding certain values but never put in effort to pursue those values in their personal lives. In essence, they promoted expected their children to adhere to good values but did not always follow through with upholding the values well. All but one respondent, Becca, recognized that the values their parents hold were not perfect but that they made a good foundation for a healthy lifestyle. When asked whether her collectivist parents supported her seeking out different values, Emily responded with, “they have taught me to get to this point and to be able to make these choices so they do have their trust and confidence in me.” Differences in values, thus, were not found to be strongly present in the majority of the narratives. Becca’s case was different in that she considered her parents’ values to be harmful.

Religion

While religion was not asked about through questioning, it emerged as a motivation for many participants. For participants who identified with similar values to their parents I wanted to examine their motivations for holding those same values. Emily said that, “Probably because the religion that my parents taught to us at home, it wasn’t something fake, it wasn’t based on rituals or what you need to do. It was always something very genuine and I saw the realness in their lives and that really attracted me to it.” All the respondents, except Becca, answered similarly by talking about how their parents displayed their values in the way they lived and what encouraged them most to hold on to them was to see the way the values made life better.

Because it emerged in the data, I analyzed the presence of religion in the family life of every participant. I found that all participants identified as religious, specifically Protestant Christian. All participants, except for Becca, reported that they grew up in a Christian home with religious values encouraged by their parents. Haley mentions that her faith is based on the importance of, “be[ing] centered on Christ and it’s just really a blessing to have people around me that just have this love for the Lord.” Similarly, Anna notes how religion is a big part of her family by saying, “it’s one of our consistent conversations in our house.” I found religion to be the foundation to many of the values the participants held. Becca, who grew up in a non-religious home said that growing up values were hard to define because she never really knew what her parents believed. She spoke of values being almost non-existent, or not what you would traditionally think of when you hear the word ‘value’. She said that her parents’ values, “relate a lot more to their hurts because they haven’t worked through their hurts in the way that I have had the opportunity to do.” (Becca) Therefore she held to the thought that because of the lack of religion in her family, their values did not originate from a place of stability.

Personal Success

When asked about specific values participants early on mentioned personal success. Respondents agreed that personal success is important, however differed in how highly it should be regarded among other values. I found that all the participants who are individualist spoke of personal success more often and more highly than those from collectivist cultures. Haley mentioned that personal success was a value important to her family in that success allows, “freedom from financial burdens.” She said that this reason was a motivator for her and her three brothers that was encouraged by their parents. Similarly Anna spoke of personal success in the sense that in her family, everyone expects you to do your best and accomplish your goals. While

many of the participants took an approach to personal success that included family, Becca strayed away from that. She said that doing what makes you happy and successful is more important than sticking with the family, and that your family's opinion should matter a little but not too much because, "God may be choosing a different path for you than what your parents may want."

On the other hand, Maria mentioned a perspective on personal success that was different from the others. She said that her parents, "don't value the success itself...it's the hard work that it took." This collectivistic way of approaching personal success pays homage to the character that results from the determination needed to achieve success. Erica mentioned personal success only in passing when she said that there were other things more important in life than success, while Emily never spoke of success as a value her or her family holds.

Dealing with Conflict

I analyzed how participants perceived their families deal with conflict, specifically when the conflict is a result of a difference in values. I found that all the participants valued open lines of communication to resolve conflict but that degrees of consideration to parental opinions varied between the individualist and collectivist respondents. To assess this, the question that was specifically asked was, - "What would you tell someone to do if their parents are advising them to choose a different career path than they were initially going to choose?" Becca instantly responded with, "I would tell them not to listen to their parents, yeah cause I think that's like...really oppressive." Haley and Anna, while mentioning that the differing in opinions would lead to a long-term conversation with their parents, still considered the decision of what career to choose was ultimately up to them and not their family. Collectivist participants said that they would heavily consider what their parents had to say on their career choice. Maria said that she

would personally put off starting her career in order to give her and her family time to come to a healthy compromise. Similarly, Emily said that she values her parents' "wisdom" and "insight". While both individualist and collectivist participants appreciated communication as a means by which to help resolve conflict, I found collectivist participants expressed more willingness to compromise.

Togetherness and Family

I analyzed participants' mentions of togetherness/family as a value and found that only collectivist participants mentioned it as something their family values. Emily fondly recalled the times when she was younger and wanted to go to a sleepover; her parents would remind her, "yeah, we want you to go, have fun with your friends but don't forget we're together, we're family." She said this was a silly little example of togetherness as a value in her family; however, it speaks much of how her family interacts. Maria said that togetherness is best exemplified in her family through the fact that in her culture kids will live with their parents until they are married. She even went so far as to say that typically if a child leaves home before they are married, the parents and community find it highly disrespectful. Finally, Erica mentions that the value of togetherness and family is one that goes back generations. She said that it was especially important to her family back when her parents were growing up in Communist Romania. She says that because of the climate back then, "without relying on each other for support – financial support, emotional support – it would be kind difficult for them to get by." This value, she says, is something her parents still want to keep and carry on in their own family.

Respect and Authority

I analyzed how participants value respect for elders and authority. Again, collectivist participants were the only ones who mentioned respect and authority as values of importance in

their families. Participants mentioned that in collectivist cultures parents are considered to be wise and kids usually go to parents when making life decisions. They hold to the idea that, “experience comes with age” (Emily) and are very involved in the lives of their children, guiding them as much as possible. One idea that two of the participants reflected on is that authority is particularly important at a young age and the roles change as children grow up. Erica said that, “when I was younger, I didn’t really have the freedom to make my own choices because my parents knew that the choices they made for me were best for me, even though I didn’t view it that way.” This changes the older the child grows, and they transition to making their own choices, both Emily and Erica said. Emily looked back on her time growing up and said, “they instilled that really respectful attitude but as I grew up it sort of shifted and our relationship already had that respectful foundation so then we moved on to more of a trusting and loving relationship.” Emily mentioned that this shift from parental authority to trust being the priority was an example of how reaching adulthood resulted in less parental control. I found that respect and authority are important values in collectivist families but that the way they are exhibited changes based on the maturity of the child.

Values in Society vs. Parental Values

I wanted to analyze how participants viewed their family’s values in comparison with American culture. Most of the participants immediately mentioned that the United States held a much more competitive nature than they were accustomed to in the homes. Erica notes, “they say ‘we’re all about teamwork’ but when you get one on one with a person they start backstabbing other people.” Participants said that being kind to people and acting unselfishly is not a cultural value but rather a Christian value. Anna reflects on how faith values are not highly valued in American culture which is in striking contrast with the way she was raised. Maria believes that in

comparison to American culture she has a, “stronger sense of commitment whereas like even if you’re hurting...this is what you’ve committed to so stick with it.” Immediately after she acknowledged that there were definitely situations in which walking away from a relationship is the healthiest option and said that she was referring to that sense of commitment in a general sense. Becca differed from the perspectives of the rest of the participants in that she spoke about how her parents’ values growing up resembled more of the American culture rather than those associated with religion. Specifically, she contrasted her parents’ values with those she learned at her Catholic school and always remembered feeling out of place because her parents never ascribed to those same values.

Difficulty in Defining Values

Two participants discussed factors that have impacted their parents’ difficulty of defining and living by values. Haley reflected on how her mother has battled with mental illness for years and this has made it hard for her to really hold on to values. She says, “[mental illness] creates a hard situation as far as knowing what a value is. Because while one person might be valuing harmony, the other person could just be valuing life itself.” Mental illness was not something asked about but was brought up by Haley and is an important note to consider.

Becca discussed her childhood in detail and says that when she was growing up her parents held values that, “were so dysfunctional or negative or worldly.” She mentioned that while Christianity is a big part of their lives now, her parents have not been able to heal from their broken past of drugs, abuse and alcohol. She said that even now her parents’ values, “relate a lot more to their hurts,” than to anything else. She said this is the reason for why her personal pursuit of faith has impacted and changed her family for the better.

Discussion

This research was focused on exploring the question of: how value transmission from parent to child differ based on being raised with collectivist values versus individualist values. My primary goal was to identify whether the data I collected from the participants' stories associated with and validated previous research on value transmission between parents and children. Previous research mentioned different values that were consistent within both individualist and collectivist cultures. Individualism encourages independence and personal success while collectivism places importance on devotion to the family and respect for parents (Triandis, 2001; Ohbuchi et al., 1999; Fuligni & Zhang, 2004). Collectivism and individualism have an impact on the way families interact and parenting is largely affected by cultural implications (Rudy et al., 1999; Rudy & Grusec, 2006). This was confirmed through my research but other origins of values were also mentioned by participants. I found that personal parental values were also a contributor to the way children were raised. By personal parental values I am referring to the values parents hold as standards for themselves on a personal level. I noticed that many participants mentioned that they learned from their parents not only through their parents directly teaching them values but also through seeing the way their parents live.

On a separate note, my research has found that religion plays a big role in the values that individuals hold. Faith and religion look different in every culture (Cohen, 2016). In my research I found that instead of religion being something that varies between individualist and collectivist societies, it resulted in participants from both cultures unifying on similar values. Religion was something at the crux of all the participants' lives and greatly impacted how they viewed world and the values they chose to hold. Religion had just as much, if not more, impact on values than

culture did. This finding runs consistent with research that suggests that religion plays a role in cultural values.

Friedlmeier and Trommsdorff (2011) found that intergenerational similarities of values were more consistent in collectivist cultures than in individualist cultures. My findings were consistent with this theory with one exception. Although collectivist participants were more consistent in identifying as similar to their parents in values, they still made mentions of differences existing in how they live out the values. The difference was not in the values held but the way in which they were exhibited. This could be due to the fact that all the participants who identified with being raised with collectivist values were raised in the United States, an individualist society, by collectivist parents. This goes back to previous literature which suggests how parenting style tends to differ based on living in a collectivist or individualist society (Rudy & Grusec, 2006). Because my participants grew up in in collectivist families in an individualist society I believe that the reconciliation of both cultures in one household may have led collectivist participants to hold collectivist values with an individualist twist.

I found that although individualist participants did exhibit more individualistic tendencies, such as a focus on personal success and independence in decision-making, they still valued relationships with their families and loved their parents regardless of difference in opinions and values. One explanation could be that religion has a collectivist component to it (Gelfand et al., 2011) as seen in sharing values of family, togetherness and respect. These similarities could be the reason for the presence of some collectivistic values in individualist participants' lives, however, more research needs to be conducted to confirm this.

While five of the six participants mentioned similarities in values with their parents, there was one outlier participant who strongly denied similarity in values with her parents. This

participant, Becca, spoke about factors such as a broken past with drugs, alcohol and abuse leading to a difficulty in defining values. She spoke of her family's transition to getting out of this broken cycle and creating a new life for themselves. Although she agrees with the values her parents hold today, she said she cannot identify with a childhood where values were clear and defined.

Respect is a value that is found in every culture; however, what is meant by respect varies by culture. In collectivist societies, respect as well as authority are viewed highly and parents instill them in their kids as they raise them (Triandis, 2011). I found that collectivist participants frequently mentioned respect and gave examples of what respect looks like with the values they were raised with. Specifically, one thing participants pointed out was that parental authority started very strong when they were young but tapered off as they transitioned into adulthood. Whereas during childhood the roles were hierarchical, in adulthood collectivist parents began to trust their children more and allow them to make decisions for themselves. The value of respect, however, remained consistent throughout childhood and into adulthood for collectivist participants.

All this is not to say that individualist cultures do not value respect. For individualist cultures, the idea of respect is a little more fluid. It goes back to the term of loose cultures, which describes cultures in which rules are a little less rigid and deviant behavior is more readily accepted (Gelfand et al., 2011). I found that for the individualist participants, it was important to have harmonious relationships with their parents even amongst differences of opinions. Sometimes this meant compromising in order to show respect toward their parents. I believe more research could be done in order to understand the individualistic approach to respect.

Limitations

First, due to the low number of interviews conducted, I was not able to reach a saturation point in my qualitative analysis. This left me with gaps in my findings as there were many questions that still remained in my mind regarding how my findings related to the literature. Conducting more interviews in the future would resolve this issue and allow me to reach a saturation point in data collection. Second, little variation in demographics was also an issue in this study as all the participants were female. In the future, including male participants would account for the difference in experiences that come as a result of gender. Parents may act differently towards their sons than they do towards their daughters. Third, all the interviews were done with participants who were born and raised in the United States. Specifically for the collectivist participants, their experiences and values held may have been different were they to have been raised with collectivist values in a collectivist society rather than collectivist values in an individualist society. Interviewing participants living in different countries would allow for these differences to emerge. Fourth, since all my participants were Protestant Christian I did not interview perspectives from other religions or individuals who did not follow any religion. Interviewing participants from varying (or lack of) religious backgrounds would allow for a better understand of religion as a component in value transmission.

Future research should look closer at religion's role in understanding two things: 1) the preservation of collectivist values, and 2) the presence of collectivist values in individualist societies. This future research would define both religion and culture and attempt to understand what familial values pull from each of them. This is important to the research because based on my data religion seemed to be influencing the adoption of collectivist values in all the families. Exploring religion's role in encouraging collectivist values would inform the difference on how values are drawn from culture versus religion.

Conclusion

Values are integral to who we are and the lifestyles we decide to lead. It is because of this that exploring where our values come from is crucial to deeply understanding ourselves as well as the cultures we live in. Value transmission from parents to children is what allows for culture to carry on through the generations. Without value transmission, different generations would be disjointed with one another and fail to create cultures that are both structured and defined. The main takeaway from this research lies in the importance of parents discerning the values that will enable their children to be advocates for good. Whether individualist or collectivist, understanding the origin of our values gives us insight into how we fit into our families, societies, and ultimately our world.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Materials



Are you interested in how family values get passed down through the generations?

We are trying to learn more about the values that are carried on through family generations. We would love to hear about your thoughts and experiences through a one-on-one interview.

To participate, simply email us at: naomiu@pdx.edu and confirm that you are 18 years of age or older.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to choose not to participate or to withdraw your participation at any point in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you have questions or concerns about your participation in this study, contact Naomi Miu at naomiu@pdx.edu or Dr. Lauren Frank at lfrank@pdx.edu.

Appendix B

Screening Questions

Dear [Participant name],

Thank you so much for your interest in participating in our research study on values that are carried on through family generations. Since I am working with a short amount of time, I will be trying to interview people with different backgrounds. Please answer the following questions:

1. In what country were you raised?
2. Would you say that your mother is from a collectivist or individualist culture?
3. Would you say that your father is from a collectivist or individualist culture?

I would like to schedule interviews at the times that are most convenient for my participants. Please let me know what times would be good for you to meet.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Naomi Miu

Appendix C

Data Collection Instruments – Moderator’s Guide

1. What would you tell someone to do if their parents are advising them to choose a different career path than they were initially going to choose? How would you advise this person?
2. How would you describe your parents’ cultures?
3. What does the word “values” mean to you?
4. What values do your parents hold?
 - Prompt, if necessary: competitiveness, personal achievements/success, freedom, consensus, conflict resolution, togetherness, collaboration in identities
5. What values do you hold?
6. How do your values relate to those of your parents?
7. Did the values you learned at home match the ones you learned at school and in society?
 - In what ways were they similar? Different?
8. Do you feel that the values you were raised with at home have an impact on the values you hold today?
 - Why or why not?
9. How important is it to you that the people around you share and agree with your values?
10. Is there anything else on this topic that you would like to share with me?