LINKING PERSONALITY AND VALUES: THE IMPORTANCE OF A CULTURALLY RELEVANT PERSONALITY SCALE

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Summary—The relationship between personality and values was studied in a Hong Kong Chinese university sample. Personality was assessed by the Sino-American Person Perception Scale which is composed of eight personality dimensions whose items had been culled from both the American and the indigenous Chinese written materials. Values were assessed by Schwartz's Value Survey, which taps ten universal value types. All personality dimensions were related to the value types either alone or in combination, but Openness to Experience was most frequently related. Results were discussed in terms of the usefulness of a culturally relevant personality scale in sketching the relationship between personality and values.

INTRODUCTION

In 1993, Luk and Bond reported a study on the relationship between personality and values in a Hong Kong university sample. Comprehensive measures of these two domains were used: NEO PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and Schwartz's Value Survey (1992). Agreeableness was found to be the most powerful predictor of value endorsements and the authors concluded that culture might exert a considerable influence on the observed linkages between personality and values.

There are two potential weaknesses inherent in Luk and Bond's (1993) study that preclude a fair examination of the relationship between personality and values. First is the origin of their personality instrument. NEO PI-R is an imported instrument and was shown to capture the major personality dimensions among North Americans (Costa & McCrae, 1992). However, if the purpose of a personality inventory is to provide a reliable and valid assessment of the domain per se, then a culturally relevant instrument that includes both universal and important culture-specific constructs should be called for. This point is especially important if the personality assessment is made in a non-Western culture, such as Hong Kong.

Second is the specificity of their aggregated scale scores. Each personality score was obtained by summing ratings across six facets consisting of eight items each. Each score indicates the elevation of a broad sample of different aspects of that factor. In contrast, each value type score of Schwartz's Value Survey (1992) was computed by averaging ratings across the value items indicating that value type. Thus, each value score is more focused on a specific aspect of that value type. The difference in the specificity of scores from personality and values might prevent an examination of their relationship on an equal basis.

The present study

To overcome the shortcomings of Luk and Bond's (1993) study, culturally relevant and comprehensive instruments for both personality and values were used in the present study. This aspect was particularly important, as the sample tested was Hong Kong Chinese university students. Also, the scale scores from both domains were calculated by averaging the ratings across the items indicating that scale. Thus the specificity of scale scores was controlled.

Eight dimensions of personality perception, namely Emotional Stability, Sociability (Extraversion before), Application, Assertiveness, Helpfulness, Restraint, Intellect, and Openness to Experience, were identified with a group of Hong Kong high schoolers (Yik & Bond, 1993). These dimensions

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