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DO CHILD-REARING VALUES IN TAIWAN AND THE UNITED STATES REFLECT CULTURAL VALUES OF COLLECTIVISM AND INDIVIDUALISM?

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Eighty-one middle-class mothers of 3- and 4-year-old children from urban cities in Taiwan and the United States were interviewed about their child-rearing values. Three methods were used to assess values: open-ended probes, Likert-type ratings, and ordering of values according to importance. Child-rearing values could be grouped into five broad categories: individuality, achievement, proper demeanor, decency, and connectedness. U.S. mothers' child-rearing values were somewhat consistent with an individualistic orientation, yet they considered values associated with connectedness to be most important. Taiwanese mothers' child-rearing values were less focused on any specific category. Findings from the three methods suggest that child-rearing values in Taiwan and the United States cannot be dichotomized as collectivist or individualist. Mothers in the two societies embraced both individualist and collectivist values.

Keywords: child-rearing values; individualism; collectivism; Taiwan

Values have historically been considered the essential core of a culture (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952), functioning to connect the ideologies of a society across generations. Individualism-collectivism is a dimension often used to characterize cultural values (Greenfield & Suzuki, 1998; Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, 1995; van de Vijver & Leung, 2000). Individualistic values reflect personal preferences, needs, and rights; collectivist values emphasize interpersonal harmony and the subordination of self-interest to that of the group. Western cultures, including the United States, have typically been portrayed as promoting values associated with individualism, such as self-confidence, achievement, and independence (Harwood, Schoelmerich, Schulze, & Gonzalez, 1999; Hofstede, 1980; Kohn, 1969; Triandis, 2000). In contrast, Asian cultures have been portrayed as collectivist, stressing the importance of obedience, social rules, interdependence, and filial piety (Hofstede, 1980; Lieber, Yang, & Ling, 2000; Triandis, 1995).

Melvin Kohn (1969) found that middle-class U.S. parents value children's self-direction. In another study of child-rearing values in the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia, Northern Ireland, Belgium, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and West Germany, adults from the United States rated independence, hard work, and

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leadership higher than adults from other countries (Baer, Curtis, Grabb, & Johnston, 1996). Harwood, Schoelmerich, Ventura-Cook, Schulze, and Wilson (1996) interviewed mothers of toddlers aged 12 months to 24 months, from the United States (Connecticut) and Puerto Rico, about their socialization goals. White non-Hispanic mothers were more likely than Puerto Rican mothers to generate descriptors that emphasized self-maximization and were less likely to mention values associated with proper demeanor.

Taiwan has frequently been characterized as a collectivist society, yet independence and achievement are quite important to Taiwanese mothers. In one study of child-rearing values across eight countries including the United States ($n = 1,420$) and Taiwan ($n = 2,137$), participants were asked to select a quality that they would most like to see in their school-aged child (Hoffman, 1988). Taiwanese mothers considered independence as more important than obedience, and there were no differences in the percentage of urban women in Taiwan and the United States who chose obedience (Taiwan = 15.6% vs. United States = 14.5%) and independence (Taiwan = 27.7% vs. United States = 25.0%). Moreover, Taiwanese women were more concerned with school achievement than were U.S. women (17.9% vs. 10.2%). Lin and Fu (1990) used the Child-Rearing Practices Report with parents of first- and second-grade children in Taiwan and the United States. Taiwanese parents considered independence to be an important value and rated parental control, encouragement of independence, and achievement higher than Caucasian-American parents. Others have obtained mixed findings. Olsen (1971) interviewed 97 mothers of sixth-grade boys in Taiwan about the qualities of a good child. The major values mentioned by Taiwanese mothers were obedience, achievement, independence, and nonaggression. These findings are inconsistent with a collectivistic orientation and demonstrate the controversy that persists with respect to Taiwanese parents' child-rearing values.

In summary, there is consistent evidence that middle-class U.S. mothers emphasize child-rearing values that reflect individualism and independence, in line with a Western orientation. However, whether or not mothers in Taiwan emphasize child-rearing values associated with collectivism, as generally characteristic of Asian societies, remains unclear.

THE PRESENT STUDY

We investigated the child-rearing values of mothers of 3- and 4-year-olds in Taiwan and the United States. Early childhood is a period of emerging competencies and self-awareness, a time when parents earnestly begin socialization efforts, and a time when social roles and family interaction patterns (e.g., increased play with peers) are learned for the first time (Bigner, 1994). During this period, parents' child-rearing values are increasingly relevant to shaping children's behaviors and attitudes.

We assessed child-rearing values using the following three approaches: open-ended probes, a rating task, and an ordering task. Mothers were asked to define and provide examples of each value spontaneously mentioned in the open-ended probes. Open-ended probes explore mothers' spontaneous values, without predetermining choices and responses (Patton, 1990). Such methods are particularly important in cross-cultural research as mothers from different cultures might assign different meaning and interpretation to the same value label. For example, mothers from different societies might note the importance of independence but define it differently. Indeed, researchers have distinguished instrumental independence, which refers to "the child's ability to be self-reliant, develop skills, and find ways to control the environment to achieve his or her goals," from emotional independence, which refers to "the child's ability to be alone, to assert him/herself and to do without

excessive emotional support” (Gonzalez-Ramos, Zayas, & Cohen, 1998; Osterweil & Nagano, 1991, p. 363). Ratings of values enable respondents to treat different values equivalently if they wish (see Schwartz, 1992). Finally, ordering procedures seek to discover the value hierarchies of respondents (Ng, 1982; Rokeach, 1973).

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

Eighty-one¹ mothers of 3- to 4- year olds (United States = 22 male, 18 female, Taiwan = 19 male, 22 female) were interviewed from urban areas in Taiwan and the United States. Forty-one mothers were Chinese and were recruited from Tainan², Taiwan, and 40 U.S. mothers were white non-Hispanic and were born and educated in the United States. Among the 40 U.S. mothers, 25 were from New York City and the remaining from Boston, Massachusetts.

Children’s age did not differ in the two groups, and both groups averaged two children. Taiwanese families had a larger immediate household size (Taiwan = 5.10, United States = 1.73), with 19 of 41 mothers living with their parents or their husband’s family. All but one U.S. mother, who was divorced and living with a partner, were married and living with their husbands. Fathers’ education in the two groups did not differ; however, U.S. mothers had completed more years of schooling than Taiwanese mothers. This difference mirrors the educational structure of the two cultures. The percentage of White, non-Hispanic population with 1 or more years of college was 40.8% in 1993 in the United States (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1997); however, in Taiwan, only 12.8% of population had finished 2 or more years of college education in the same year (Ministry of Education, Republic of China, 1993). A greater percentage of Taiwanese mothers were employed.

INSTRUMENTS

Mothers’ child-rearing values were assessed through open-ended probes, ratings of a list of 22 values, and the ordering of 22 values. The 22 values used in the rating and ordering tasks were developed from pilot interviews with 10 middle-class Taiwanese and 9 U.S. middle-class, White, non-Hispanic mothers of 3- to 4-year olds. Of the 22 values (see Table 1), 14 of them were mentioned by mothers in both countries. Values only mentioned by U.S. mothers were self-esteem, curiosity, sharing with others, and creativity. Those only mentioned by Taiwanese mothers were good manners, not wasting, being humble, and following social rules.

PROCEDURES

Mothers were interviewed at their homes, offices, playgrounds, children’s preschool, and coffee shops, depending on their preferences. Mothers were first given the open-ended probes, followed by the rating and ordering tasks so that mothers’ spontaneous responses would not be affected by reading the 22 predetermined values. In the open-ended task, each mother was asked to name at least five values she felt to be important in raising her young child. Because different mothers might have unique interpretations of each value, mothers were asked to provide a definition and example of each value they mentioned.

TABLE 1
Definitions and Examples of 22 Child-Rearing Values From Pilot Interviews

<i>Value</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Love/attachment to family	Being bonded to the family and committed to it. Seeing the family as the central theater of life. Enjoying the company of their parents and caring about how they feel.	Happy to spend time with the family. Happy to be at home. Saying, "Mom, you are the best mom in the world. I love you." Caring if her brother is crying.
Obedience	Listening to their parents and doing what they are told. If the child is asked to do something, he will do it.	When I tell him to pick up his room, to brush his teeth, or to get in the car, he'll do it without question.
Honesty	Being truthful. Not telling lies. Saying what they believe. Standing up for what they think is right. Owning up to what they have done wrong.	He tells me if he wet his bed, or if he doesn't want to go to another child's birthday party because he does not like that child.
Politeness	Being polite to others.	She says "Hello" when meeting someone she knows. She always says "Please," "Excuse me," and "Thank you."
Humility	Not boasting	He doesn't yell, "This is mine!"
Responsibility	Taking the consequences of their actions. Doing what needs to be done.	He puts his toys away after playing. He's a good role model for his sister.
Sharing	Willing to share.	He lets his friends play with his toys.
Emotional Independence	Not being dependent on another child for their happiness. Being able to deal with frustration.	She is capable of playing by herself. She doesn't attribute her happiness or unhappiness to other children.
Self-reliance	Being able to count on themselves. Learning to be able to do things on their own. Being able to take care of themselves financially in the future.	She's able to go to the bathroom, put her clothes on, and brush her teeth on her own. He fixes a broken toy by himself. She calms down by herself when she gets upset.
Creativity	Thinking differently from others. Using their imagination.	He uses an object in a completely unexpected and novel way.
Assertiveness	Standing up for their rights as an individual. Having their own judgments and thoughts. Being able to express their feelings and opinions.	She tells a playmate it is wrong to take her toy and that she wants it back. He reminds me that I promised to read him a story and insists that I do it.
Respect for elders	Respecting grownups.	She always shows good manners when in the presence of her grandparents.
Getting along with others	Reaching out and initiating interactions with people outside the family. Building relationships and meeting new people.	He makes new friends at school.
Not wasting	Recycling; frugality; using money wisely.	She doesn't waste food. He will use a piece of paper on both sides. She doesn't run the water when brushing her teeth.
Working hard in school	Studying hard and performing well in school. Doing their best with a school project.	She respects her teacher and pays attention to her. As soon as the teacher says, "Clean up!" she starts to do it.

(continued)

TABLE 1 (continued)

<i>Value</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Good manners/habits	Not being aggressive. Not hitting others. Being orderly.	He makes his bed and brushes his teeth when he gets up in the morning. She says, "May I please be excused from the table."
Diligence	Being serious about learning. Concentrating and paying attention when working on a project.	She can work for 2 or 3 hours straight on a puzzle or a painting.
Compassion/consideration	Being sensitive to the feelings of others. Conscious when another is feeling pain.	He sees another child crying and asks if he is O.K.
Respect for others	Being in tune with the needs of others. Treating others as they would like to be treated.	He is capable of leaving others alone when they need to be left alone.
Curiosity	Exploring. Wanting to know things. Being interested in what is all around them. Asking lots of questions that go beyond the surface.	She asked in a restaurant, "Is that meat from a dead cow? How did they kill it?" He showed an interest in sprouting seeds and the way they grow.

The values mentioned by mothers were classified into one of the following five categories: individuality, achievement, proper demeanor, decency, and connectedness. The five categories largely paralleled those identified by Harwood, Miller, and Irizarry (1995)³ with a few exceptions. In their study, a single category of self-maximization was identified, which referred to values such as self-confidence and independence. Here, we further subdivided self-maximization into the categories of individuality (e.g., self-esteem, assertiveness, and curiosity) and achievement (e.g., personal skills, mastery, knowledge, and diligence). The category of connectedness was similar to Harwood's category of lovingness (i.e., developing warm, friendly, and affective bond with others), with an additional emphasis on sharing, compassion/consideration, and generosity. The other two categories, proper demeanor and decency, paralleled those of Harwood. Using this taxonomy, 93% of values mentioned by U.S. mothers and 86% by Taiwanese mothers could be classified. Reliability in coding mothers' spontaneously mentioned values for open-ended categorization was calculated between the researcher and two independent judges (i.e., a Native American for U.S. mothers' responses, and a native Chinese for Taiwanese mothers' responses) on 17% of the sample. The results yielded an average of 93.8% agreement across values.

In the rating task, mothers were asked to rate the importance of each of 22 values on a 10-point Likert-type scale. A 10-point rating scale was used, rather than a traditional 5-point scale, due to previous studies on cross-ethnic differences in participants' responses to Likert-type scales that demonstrate this tendency of certain groups (e.g., Asian) to respond cautiously (e.g., Hui & Triandis, 1989). After the rating task, mothers were told to order the 22 value cards (each presented on its own index card) by placing the 22 cards in three piles of increasing importance. Mothers were then asked to order the cards within each pile, from least to most important.

TABLE 2
Definitions of the Five Categories

<i>Category</i>	<i>Content</i>
Individuality	The development of self-potential and individuality. This category includes emotional independence, optimism, the ability to handle frustration, openness, the capacity to express feelings, creativity, assertiveness, curiosity, self-esteem, and the ability to enjoy life and be happy.
Achievement	The development of instrumental independence. This category includes self-reliance, working hard in school, diligence, working hard at tasks, reading, absorbing knowledge, art and physical education, a love for learning new things, potential for future achievement, and potential to become a professional and successful adult.
Proper demeanor	The development of proper manners, respect, the ability to cooperate, and a sense of duty. This category includes obedience, listening to parents, politeness, respect for elders, respect for others, not hurting others, getting along with others, good manners/habits, following social rules, patience, being able to wait, and being tolerant of other people.
Decency	The development of integrity. This category includes honesty, humility, responsibility, and a respect for nature and the environment.
Connectedness	The development of friendliness and affection. This category includes love/attachment to family, filial piety, brotherly/sisterly love, sharing with others, compassion, consideration, kindness, and generosity.

RESULTS

We begin by presenting results on mothers' responses to the open-ended probes, followed by their responses on the ordering and rating tasks. We end by examining associations among the three tasks. Because mothers' education and work status differed in the two groups, we report results with and without these measures covaried.

OPEN-ENDED PROBES

The average number of child-rearing values spontaneously mentioned by Taiwanese and U.S. mothers did not differ ($M = 6.56$ and 6.51 , respectively). Mothers in each group mentioned a total of 31 different values.⁴ The first three child-rearing values often mentioned by Taiwanese mothers were self-reliance (i.e., independence/mastery), diligence, and love/attachment to family/filial piety; the first three for U.S. mothers were respect for others, compassion/consideration, and honesty. Table 2 lists the values mentioned by mothers, along with their classifications into the five categories of individuality, achievement, proper demeanor, decency, and connectedness.

For each mother, we next calculated the percentage of values that fell into each of the five categories and averaged these percentages across mothers. So, for example, if an individual mother mentioned six values in total, and three values fell into the category of proper demeanor, two into decency, and one into connectedness, she would receive scores of 50%, 33.3%, and 16.7% for proper demeanor, decency, and connectedness, respectively. Table 3 presents data on the average percentages for each category across mothers. These percentage data were subjected to General Linear Model Multivariate tests. Culture was the between-subject factor, and the five value categories were the within-subject measures. The overall culture main effect was significant, $F(1, 79) = 5.08$, $p < .01$. This main effect was explained

TABLE 3
Percentage of Each Category Mentioned in the Taiwanese and U.S. Groups

<i>Category of Value</i>	<i>% Taiwan (n = 41)</i>	<i>% United States (n = 39)</i>	<i>F(1, 79)</i>
Individuality	12.0	20.5	7.17****
Achievement	25.0	13.4	11.45****
Proper demeanor	26.7	27.6	.05
Decency	8.5	11.0	1.28
Connectedness	13.8	20.7	5.63***

*** $p < .05$. **** $p < .01$. Overall model $F(1, 79) = 5.08, p < .01$.

by significant differences for the value categories of individuality, achievement, and connectedness. Cultural comparisons for these five value categories are presented in Table 3. The strongest differences between the two cultures were for the values of individuality, achievement, and connectedness. U.S. mothers mentioned individuality and connectedness significantly more than Taiwanese mothers (individuality: 20.5% vs. 12.0%, $p < .01$; connectedness: 20.7% vs. 13.8%, $p < .05$), whereas Taiwanese mothers mentioned achievement more often (25.0% vs. 13.4%, $p < .01$). The two societies did not differ in the categories of proper demeanor and decency. Findings maintained after covarying mothers' education and work status.

Of interest as well were cultural differences that did not fit into any of the five categories. The most salient example was the value of not wasting, which was mentioned only by Taiwanese mothers. Fifteen Taiwanese mothers (i.e., 37%) mentioned that they would like their children to not waste food, water, electricity, and so forth; not to buy too many toys or clothes, and to save money for something important such as education or books. Eleven of the 15 said they would explain to their children that money was necessary to purchase toys, food, and so forth. They wanted their children to understand the value of money, that it is hard for parents to earn money, and to not waste money.

RATING AND ORDERING OF VALUES

Mothers' ratings and orderings of the 22 values are presented in Table 4. Taiwanese mothers demonstrated greater variability in their ordering of the 22 values, as indexed by significantly greater standard deviations when compared to mothers in the U.S. group (5.62 vs. 4.51, $t = 3.99, p < .001$).

In both tasks, Taiwanese mothers assigned greater importance to politeness, humility, responsibility, getting along with others, not wasting, diligence, and following social rules, and U.S. mothers assigned greater importance to love/attachment to family, curiosity, self-esteem, and compassion/consideration. Task-specific differences emerged for getting along with others, sharing, assertiveness, and respect for elders (favored in Taiwanese mothers) and for working hard in school, good manners/habits, and compassion/consideration (favored in U.S. mothers).

Twenty-one of 22 values (i.e., excluded was the category not wasting) were next classified into the five categories: individuality (composed of emotional independence, creativity, assertiveness, curiosity, self-esteem), achievement (composed of self-reliance, working hard in school, diligence), proper demeanor (composed of obedience, politeness, respect for

TABLE 4
Averages of Ratings and Orderings of 22 Values in the Taiwanese and U.S. Groups

Value	Rating				Mann-Whitney Test Z	Ordering				Mann-Whitney Test Z
	Taiwan (n = 41)		United States (n = 40)			Taiwan (n = 41)		United States (n = 40)		
	M	SD	M	SD		M	SD	M	SD	
1. Love/attachment to family	7.76	2.35	9.53	1.13	-4.06†	9.95	7.41	3.18	3.38	-4.39†
2. Obedience	6.56	1.94	6.40	2.33	-.12	14.56	6.13	16.45	5.38	-1.41
3. Honesty	9.34	1.32	9.40	.87	-.63	5.83	4.86	5.98	4.12	-.68
4. Politeness	9.12	.95	7.73	2.14	-3.25****	9.68	4.78	13.35	4.40	-3.33****
5. Humility	7.44	1.79	5.90	2.84	-2.42***	14.07	5.01	18.05	3.82	-3.69†
6. Responsibility	9.20	1.19	8.63	1.33	-2.14***	6.88	4.64	9.53	3.30	-2.98****
7. Sharing with others	8.32	1.51	8.13	1.32	-.94	10.54	5.20	12.88	4.21	-1.96***
8. Emotional independence	8.02	1.74	8.13	1.94	-.54	9.07	5.96	10.20	6.40	-.86
9. Self-reliance	8.22	1.90	8.35	1.98	-.45	9.95	6.92	9.13	5.55	-.29
10. Creativity	8.02	1.85	8.35	1.75	-.77	13.17	5.76	10.90	5.38	-1.83
11. Assertiveness	8.59	1.26	7.93	1.65	-1.73	10.73	6.40	13.75	5.02	-2.09***
12. Respect for elders	9.00	1.18	8.30	1.88	-1.60	10.05	5.88	13.05	5.72	-2.23***
13. Getting along with others	9.22	.91	8.13	1.28	-3.93†	8.41	4.89	9.40	4.04	-1.14
14. Not wasting	8.61	1.46	6.40	2.62	-4.04†	13.49	5.65	19.60	2.49	-5.14†
15. Working hard in school	7.56	1.75	7.95	2.34	-1.60	17.02	5.57	14.75	4.50	-2.67****
16. Good manners/habits	7.66	1.46	8.10	1.84	-1.59	16.85	4.74	13.83	3.60	-3.39****
17. Diligence: working hard at activities	9.20	1.14	7.75	2.23	-3.49†	10.00	6.05	12.93	5.53	-2.22***
18. Compassion/consideration	8.61	1.32	9.15	1.75	-2.57***	12.00	5.09	5.98	3.88	-5.06†
19. Respect for others	9.02	1.25	9.32	1.07	-1.27	9.39	4.81	7.50	4.66	-1.88
20. Curiosity	7.95	1.38	8.85	1.66	-3.22****	15.12	5.21	9.32	6.26	-4.46†
21. Self-esteem	8.51	1.42	9.82	.38	-5.19†	10.90	6.87	4.28	4.51	-4.47†
22. Following social rules	8.73	1.28	6.58	2.16	-4.94†	15.10	5.89	18.95	3.04	-3.00****
Average mean	8.39	1.47	8.13	1.75		11.49	5.62	11.5	4.51	

NOTE: Higher ratings represent values considered to be more important; lower orderings represent values considered to be less important.

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

TABLE 5
Rating and Ordering: *M*, *SD*, and *M* Differences in the
Taiwanese and U.S. Groups

<i>Method</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Taiwan</i> (<i>n</i> = 41)		<i>United States</i> (<i>n</i> = 40)		<i>Mann-Whitney</i> <i>Z</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Rating task	Individuality	8.22	1.02	8.62	1.05	-1.91**
	Achievement	8.33	1.11	8.02	1.86	-.03
	Proper demeanor	8.47	.73	7.80	1.15	-2.63****
	Decency	8.66	1.06	7.98	1.35	-2.30***
	Connectedness	8.23	1.22	8.93	.91	-2.82****
Ordering task	Individuality	11.80	3.35	9.70	2.90	-2.58***
	Achievement	12.33	3.48	12.27	3.56	-.07
	Proper demeanor	12.02	2.46	13.22	2.09	-2.41***
	Decency	8.93	2.91	11.18	2.37	-3.57†
	Connectedness	10.85	3.51	7.34	2.52	-4.59†

NOTE: Higher ratings represent values considered to be more important; lower orderings represent values considered to be more important.

p* = .056. *p* < .05. *****p* < .01. †*p* < .001.

elders, getting along with others, good manners/habits, respect for others, following social rules), decency (composed of honesty, humility, responsibility), and connectedness (composed of love/attachment to family, sharing with others, compassion/consideration). Taiwanese mothers rated and ordered proper demeanor and decency as more important than U.S. mothers; and U.S. mothers had higher scores for connectedness in both tasks (see Table 5). U.S. mothers marginally rated individuality as more important than Taiwanese mothers, and ordered it as more important as well. Only the Taiwanese prioritizing of proper demeanor attenuated to nonsignificance after covarying mothers' education and work status.

COMPARISONS ACROSS OPEN-ENDED, RATING, AND ORDERING TASKS

Although each of the three methods provided unique lenses onto child-rearing values, we expected significant associations to exist across the three tasks. Mothers' responses to open-ended probes correlated relatively consistently with their responses to the ordering task and revealed modest associations to their responses on the rating task (see Table 6). The strongest, most consistent associations were obtained between the rating and ordering tasks. Not shown is the finding that the strong associations obtained between ratings and orderings at the level of individual values as well; 20 of the 22 values (i.e., 90%) revealed strong cross-task associations.

DISCUSSION

Do child-rearing values in Taiwan and the United States reflect the respective cultural emphases of collectivism and individualism? Although culturally distinct patterns emerged, findings suggest that this dichotomy is too simplistic. Parents from Taiwan and the United

TABLE 6
Correlation Coefficient Among the Three Tasks Within Each Culture

<i>Culture</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Open-Ended/ Rating</i>	<i>Open-Ended/ Ordering</i>	<i>Rating/ Ordering</i>
Both cultures (<i>N</i> = 81)	Individuality	.25***	-.38****	-.52†
	Achievement	.17	-.14	-.61†
	Proper demeanor	.22***	-.47****	-.29****
	Decency	-.01	-.25***	-.42***
	Connectedness	.17	-.25***	-.33****
Taiwan (<i>n</i> = 41)	Individuality	.12	-.17	-.48****
	Achievement	.42****	-.36***	-.59†
	Proper demeanor	.15	-.45****	-.26
	Decency	.06	-.28	-.33***
	Connectedness	.21	-.26	-.49****
United States (<i>n</i> = 40)	Individuality	.32***	-.50****	-.53†
	Achievement	-.02	.05	-.63†
	Proper demeanor	.31*	-.54****	-.28
	Decency	-.04	-.43****	-.25
	Connectedness	-.01	.01	-.21

NOTE: Higher ratings represent values considered to be more important; lower orderings represent values considered to be more important.

* $p < .06$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$. † $p < .001$.

States are both similar and different with respect to the values they wish to instill in their children. Within-group differences in child-rearing values are substantial, and even within themselves, parents vary in their emphases when different methodologies are used to probe their views.

With respect to similarities, both Taiwanese and U.S. mothers most often mentioned values associated with proper demeanor, and least often those associated with decency in the open-ended task. Mothers of 3- to 4-year-olds place much effort into socializing appropriate behavior and encouraging politeness, respect for others, and good manners/habits, values that are all associated with the category of proper demeanor. In contrast, mothers may believe that 3- to 4-year-old children are unable to grasp abstract concepts associated with the category of decency. Nonetheless, when forced to respond to a set of 22 predetermined values, mothers in both cultures rated and ordered honesty as one of the three most important values (see also, Baer et al., 1996; Gonzalez-Ramos et al., 1998; Kohn, 1969). In contrast, obedience and humility were consistently considered the least important values. This might be expected in an individualistic society such as the United States, but not in a supposedly collectivist society such as Taiwan.

With respect to cultural differences, U.S. mothers mentioned individuality more frequently than did Taiwanese mothers, which is consistent with previous studies (e.g., Harwood et al., 1996; Harwood et al., 1999; Richman, Miller, & Solomon, 1988). However, U.S. mothers also mentioned connectedness more often, perhaps expressing an emotional need that Taiwanese mothers take for granted. According to Peng, Nisbett, and Wong (1997), people often express stronger preferences for what they lack than for what they have (termed "deprivation-based preferences"). U.S. mothers might also attempt to strike a balance between values linked to self versus others, and connectedness may avert the risk of self-interest that is associated with an individualistic orientation. As Triandis (2000) warned, people who live in individualistic societies "pay attention to their own needs only and abandon interpersonal relationships that are not optimally beneficial to them" (p. 147).

Taiwanese mothers mentioned achievement more often than U.S. mothers, which is consistent with the results of Olsen (1971) and Lin and Fu (1990). The values of not wasting and spending money appropriately were mentioned only by Taiwanese mothers, perhaps reflecting Confucian principles and political and economic developments of the past 50 years. Taiwanese people had lived under martial law since Kuomintang (KMT) government lost its political power to the Communist Party in Mainland China and fled to Taiwan in 1949. The Taiwanese first elected their president in 1996. Despite their rigid authoritarian control, KMT offered more economic freedom to the Taiwanese people. Economic advancement is the only path to independence and hope in Taiwanese society. Unsurprisingly, the values of not wasting, spending money appropriately, and achievement are salient in this sociopolitical climate.

Of interest is the finding that, compared to U.S. mothers, Taiwanese mothers' child-rearing values were less focused on any specific category. Taiwanese child-rearing values demonstrated greater variability and less consistency across tasks, which might be attributed to rapid social and political changes. Taiwan's specific history, as a Chinese society that had been colonized by Japan for 50 years before World War II, and deeply influenced by the U.S. culture since the Cold War, might drive complexity and diversity in mothers' child-rearing values.

A contribution of this study was the use of three different methods to assess mothers' child-rearing values; clearly, no single method completely captures the complexities of mothers' views. Open-ended probes permit an in-depth exploration of diverse perspectives but are time consuming and may overlook implicit value systems. Rating and ordering methods reveal mothers' implicit values in a timely manner, yet participants' responses are restricted to a set of preidentified constructs, and personal interpretations remain unexplored.

In general, mothers' responses on the rating and ordering tasks converged, but mothers' responses to the open-ended versus rating and ordering tasks revealed modest divergence. For example, Taiwanese mothers rated and ordered assertiveness as more important than U.S. mothers, yet only 4 Taiwanese mothers (vs. 12 U.S. mothers) mentioned assertiveness in the open-ended task. These contrasting patterns reveal the distinction between implicit and explicit child-rearing values. In the open-ended task, many mothers had difficulty reporting five or more different values, stating that they seldom thought of values when raising their children. Like breathing air without being aware of its existence, values affect decisions but are not always explicit. Mothers might consider certain values central when prompted but may not be able to recount them spontaneously.

Finally, this study underscores two challenges to cross-cultural inquiry of parenting views. First, one-to-one correspondences between words and phrases do not always exist. As an example, assertiveness, a value that was generated in our pilot study with U.S. mothers, does not have a Chinese word equivalent, suggesting that assertiveness is not an explicit value in the Chinese culture. We therefore translated to the closest Chinese phrase "to express one's opinions firmly and to protect one's own right." Although few Taiwanese mothers spontaneously mentioned assertiveness, "to express one's opinion firmly and to protect one's right" was a desirable child-rearing value for Taiwanese mothers in forced-choice situations. Second, participants from different societies might interpret even the same labels or constructs differently. We attempted to address this challenge by asking mothers to provide definitions of values. Mothers' definitions yielded high agreement with the exceptions of obedience, humility, and following social rules. Some U.S. mothers defined these values positively (e.g., "obedience means he can listen, which is especially important for

safety”), whereas, for others, these values implied “passivity” or “submissiveness.” One mother defined humility as “self-effacing, putting herself down, not taking credit,” and another as “being passive.” One mother said that obedience “sounds like conforming, thinking inside the box.” Another stated,

I don't like that word. It's very harsh to me. It's like a dog. I don't want my child to be obedient and do what anyone tells them to do. I don't think that's right. If someone tells them to do something and they know deep down inside that it's wrong, they should be able to say no.

A few Taiwanese mothers also interpreted these values negatively. For example, one Taiwanese mother said: “I would not want him to blindly follow social rules. I want him to have his own mind.” In general, however, Taiwanese mothers defined obedience as listening to mothers for safety, displaying good behaviors, not hurting others, eating regularly, and doing homework. Taiwanese mothers did not view humility as “self-effacing” or “passive.” Rather, being humble meant not showing off or not demonstrating pride in front of others.

CONCLUSION

Findings from this study indicate that the dichotomy of cultural collectivism versus individualism does not adequately capture the child-rearing values of mothers in Taiwan and the United States. People living in interdependent societies utilize a variety of strategies to handle different situations and settings; there is persistent tension between being an individual and being a person in relationships with others. In some instances, independence and interdependence conflict, but in others, they facilitate each other. Some mothers mentioned that if their children learned how to get along with others, they would have many friends, which was important to the development of their self-esteem. This suggests that collectivism is sometimes viewed as an avenue toward individual growth. Consequently, independence and interdependence are not in opposition or mutually exclusive. Rather, mothers in the two societies embraced both individualist and collectivist values.

NOTES

1. Sample size ($N = 81$) was determined by power analytic procedures for a medium effect size (.40) for power of .80 using a two-tailed test at $p < .05$ (Cohen, 1988). For example, a two-tailed t test of $ES = .40$, $p = .05$, $n = 80$, power = .81, a two-tailed test for differences between proportions of $ES = .40$, $p = .05$, $n = 80$, power = .81, and a power of χ^2 at $p = .05$, $u = 4$, $ES = .40$, $n = 80$, is .83.

2. Tainan, the ancient capital of Taiwan, is situated on the southwest of the island. It is the oldest and now the fourth-largest city of Taiwan with a population in excess of 700,000. With its long history, Tainan is rich in historic sites and cultural heritage (cited from World-Wide Chinese Network, 1998, <http://taiwan.wch.com.tw/en/tainan/index>).

3. Harwood et al. (1995) suggested six categories; miscellaneous and self-control were nonapplicable here.

4. All 22 predetermined values were mentioned by mothers in the open-ended probes. However, no mother in either group mentioned humility. Additional values mentioned were religion, happiness, health/fitness, appreciation, value/respect nature, not being materialistic, achievement in the future, successful adult, being tolerant about other people, and self-protect.

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