Cultural Emphasis on Honor, Modesty or Self-Enhancement

Implications for the Survey-Response Process

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1   INTRODUCTION

We ask and answer questions every day. But beneath these seemingly straightforward interchanges lie a series of cognitive and communicative processes, which when better understood, allow for better understanding of how cultures and questions influence answers (for reviews see Schwarz, 1999; Sirken et al., 1999; Sudman, Bradburn, & Schwarz, 1996; Tourangeau, Rips, & Rasinski, 2000). In answering questions, people take into account what the question likely meant, bring to mind relevant information, and then edit this information to form a response (Strack & Martin, 1987; Tourangeau, 1984). Each of these steps may be influenced both by features of the questionnaire and research context as well as by the culture within which the research is taking place.

What the question likely means, its pragmatic meaning, influences both what comes to mind and the response-editing process. Advances in two fields, cultural (and cross-cultural) psychology and cognitive survey methodology, provide important insights into these processes. Unfortunately these fields have not converged so their insights have not been integrated. This integration is addressed in the current chapter and its companion chapter, by Schwarz, Oyserman, and Peytcheva (this volume). Much of the current cultural and cross-cultural literature focuses on the contrast between Western individualism and East Asian collectivism and the Schwarz and colleagues' chapter provides an insightful overview of this literature.

In the current chapter, we move beyond East Asian, Confucian-based collectivism, to address another form of collectivism, honor-based collectivism, a kind of collectivism prevalent in other parts of the world-- including the Middle East, Mediterranean and Latin American countries. Because relatively less empirical work has focused on honor-based collectivism, we emphasize this literature in the next section of this chapter, providing an overview comparing

collective cultures of honor with collective cultures of modesty and individualistic cultures that could be termed cultures of self-enhancement. Much of this literature is ethnographic and even when quantitative research exists, it does not have in mind the needs of survey researchers. However, this literature does highlight issues that survey methodologists should start attending to. To begin to create a bridge between this literature and the concerns of survey methodologists, in the second section of this chapter we briefly summarize the communicative and cognitive processes involved, making predictions about how culture of honor should influence pragmatic meaning, judgment and recall, and response editing. Because direct evidence is limited, we highlight work of our own in this area.

2 HONOR, MODESTY, AND SELF-ENHANCEMENT: DISTINGUISHING CULTURE'S BASIC DIFFERENCES

Though societies differ in many ways, researchers have been interested in identifying a few key dimensions of culture that are associated with systematic differences from which general predictions can be made (see Oyserman, Kemmelmeier & Coon, 2002 for an integrative process model). To date the individualism-collectivism dimension has captured most popular appeal and concerns whether cultures emphasize individuals or groups across a variety of domains (e.g., Hofstede, 1980). Simply defined, *individualism* is the extent to which individuals are perceived as a basic unit of analysis while *collectivism* is the extent to which groups (and individual membership within groups) are perceived as a basic unit of analysis (see Oyserman & Sorensen, in press, for a review). Individualism highlights separateness, each person is a unique and worthwhile individual. Collectivism highlights connectivity between and among persons; persons gain meaning and worth through connection.

While early research on collectivism was informed by its Mediterranean-based forms (see Triandis, 1989), the form of collectivism most often studied is Confucian-based. In this form of collectivism, focus is on harmony – modesty, fitting in, not sticking out, and not bragging (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In their chapter, Schwarz, Oyserman and Peytcheva (this volume) summarize the literature comparing Western Europeans and North Americans with East Asians and the implications of these differences for survey response. This comparison is valuable and forms the bulk of the empirical cross-cultural literature.

However, understanding Confucian-based collectivism is not sufficient for survey researchers conducting studies elsewhere, including areas of emerging interest such as the Mediterranean region (including Spain, Greece, and Turkey), Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa. In these regions, an alternative form of collectivism, focused on honor, has been reported as we describe below. Within a culture of honor, the central collective dimension is maintaining a good reputation – both within the group and with regard to relationships with out-groups. Like Confucian-based cultures of modesty, cultures of honor are collective – groups and group membership matter and reputation is both gained and lost not only through one's own actions, but also through the actions of others with whom one is closely associated (typically kin but also other social groupings). Because cultures of honor are collective in focus, it is likely that at least some of the literature on cognitive consequences of collectivism is generalizable beyond East Asia. By examining differences between collective cultures of honor and collective cultures of modesty it will be possible to specify more specific predictions about how cultural dimensions or syndromes are likely to matter for survey researchers. In the following section, we focus on cultural differences in norms for self-presentation since these are likely to be influenced by whether cultures focus on maintaining harmony or maintaining a good reputation and to

influence how questions are understood, what comes to mind, and how information is edited and communicated within a survey.

2.1   Individualism

Individualism prescribes a world view in which individuals are encouraged to define themselves and others as unique and separate individuals with different goals, preferences, and attitudes (for reviews see Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989). Individualism makes salient norms of self-confidence and self-enhancement (Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999; Heine, 2007; Kitayama, Duffy, & Uchida, 2007; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Suzuki & Yamagishi, 2004; Yamaguchi, 1994). Individuals are assumed to be responsible for themselves and a key self-presentational goal is to positively present oneself (for a review see Heine, 2007; Oyserman et al., 2002).

Indeed, the mostly American literature on self-valuation demonstrates that Americans tend to have positive self-views (e.g., Baumeister, Tice, & Hutton, 1989) and to prefer information that maintains or enhances these positive self-views (e.g., Swann, Pelham, & Krull, 1989). This preference for positivity extends to family members. Westerners evaluate close family members more positively (Endo et al., 2000) and are less critical in evaluating their children's performance (Stevenson & Stigler, 1992) than East Asians. However, there is no reason to assume that this preference for positivity is not even more general. Because individuals, not groups, are salient, and relationships between individuals are based on joint interest, people in individualistic cultural settings are less likely to process information in terms of in- or out-group memberships; today's stranger could be tomorrow's friend (Oyserman, 1993; Oyserman et al., 2002). This implies that there are no strong prescriptions for the evaluation of

strangers (e.g., Bond & Smith, 1996; Iyengar, Lepper, & Ross, 1999, Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994).

2.2   Collectivism

Collectivism focuses attention on the importance of the social interface – groups, how one fits into them, one's position within the group, and the ways to maintain positive status as a group member. Recent reviews of the literature demonstrate a reliance on East Asian samples to study collectivism, although some data have also been collected with other samples, including Latino or Hispanic American and Mexican participants (see Oyserman, Coon, et al., 2002, for a review). Theoretical perspectives on cultural differences in psychological processes are rooted in research using Chinese and Japanese samples (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Nisbett, 2003) and there is little evidence that these can be generalized to other cultural contexts (perhaps with the exception of cognitive differences involving salience of contextual information, see Oyserman & Lee, 2008, for a review). In the section below, we focus on differences in self-presentational norms between collectivism emerging from East Asian and from other contexts.

East-Asian Collectivism. Confucian-based collectivism makes salient connections, nestedness of individuals within relationships, self-effacement, and modesty as ways of fitting in (Heine et al., 1999; Heine, 2007; Kitayama et al., 2007; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Suzuki & Yamagishi, 2004; Yamaguchi, 1994). Within Confucian-based collective societies, key self-presentational goals are to be modest, not to stick out (Heine, 2007; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989), and not offend others (Suzuki & Yamagishi, 2004). The difference in self-presentational goals between Western and East Asian contexts is important for survey researchers who might otherwise interpret modest responses among East Asian respondents as reflecting less positive

self-evaluation. A series of studies using more implicit measures of positive self-evaluation underscore the importance of taking into account norms of self-presentation. In these studies, Japanese respondents were more modest than Americans in their explicit responses, but no differences were found when more implicit measures such as the Implicit Association Test (Kitayama & Uchida, 2003) or tests assessing preference for letters in one's own name and numbers corresponding to one's birthday (Kitayama & Karasawa, 1997) are used, suggesting that differences are in self-presentation rather than true differences in self-valuation. Just as self-ratings are likely to be influenced by modesty and norms concerning not offending others, these norms are also likely to influence positivity of rating in-group and close others given the large overlap between the self and ingroup in Confucian-based collective societies. For example, when East Asian parents and teachers were asked to rate the performance of their children, their ratings were more negative than were those of American parents and teachers, in spite of the fact that the objective performance of East Asian children was better than that of American children (Stevenson & Stigler, 1992). These results suggest that survey responses about oneself as well as proxy responses about others to whom one is connected are likely to be filtered through a norm of modesty. The norm should be relevant whenever the question cues a connection to self or group membership – there would be no need for modesty in appraising others who are irrelevant to self or group membership.

African, Latin American, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern Collectivism. While East Asian Confucian-based collectivism highlights the need for modesty in self-presentation, in other regions of the world, another form of collectivism has been studied: honor-based collectivism. Honor is a form of collectivism based on social image and social reputation (Abu-Lughod, 1999; Cohen et al., 1996; Gilmore, 1987; Peristiany, 1965; Rodriguez Mosquera, Manstead, & Fischer,

2000; Rodriguez Mosquera, Fischer, Manstead, & Zaalberg, in press; Stewart, 1994). Honor-based collectivism does not highlight modesty but rather emphasizes the public nature of self-worth and the need to protect and maintain honor through positive presentation of oneself and in-group members. Honor is a social psychological construct in that having, maintaining, losing, and restoring honor involves others; honor requires that others respect the self and view the self as having positive moral standing, and only when this occurs can one feel self-pride (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Pitt-Rivers, 1965; Stewart, 1994).

Honor was originally studied by anthropologists in regions such as Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Egypt, and Algeria using ethnographic methods such as participant observation (e.g., see Peristiany, 1965). Across locations, these studies highlight honor as maintenance of good reputation – maintained through good family reputation, social interdependence, and maintenance of gender-specific codes of behavior (e.g., Abu-Lughod, 1999; Gilmore, 1987; Pitt-Rivers, 1965, 1977). Honor has also been studied extensively in Turkey, also primarily using qualitative methods (e.g., Kardam, 2005; Bagli & Sev'er, 2003). According to existing studies, honor is central to Turkish culture. A rich vocabulary to define and discuss honor is likely to be a reflection of the centrality of the concept in this culture (Sev'er & Yurdakul, 2001). In Turkish culture, one's honorable deeds are a valued possession, they reinforces close ties binding the individual, family, kin, and community (Ozgur & Sunar, 1982). Studies on the conception of honor in Turkey point to its strong relational form and reveal that honor belongs to individuals as well as family members (Kardam, 2005; Bagli & Sev'er, 2003) and that individuals strongly feel to defend their honor when attacked. Indeed, Turkey is one of several countries in which honor crimes persist (Kardam, 2005; Pervizat, 1998; Yirmibesoglu, 1997).

Moving beyond qualitative research on honor, social psychologists Cohen and Nisbett and their colleagues (Cohen, 1996, 1998; Cohen & Nisbett, 1994, 1997; Cohen, Nisbett, Bowdle,

& Schwarz, 1996; Cohen, Vandello, & Rantilla, 1998; Nisbett, 1993) and Rodriguez Mosquera and her colleagues (e.g., Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2000, 2002; Fischer et al., 1999) focused on the concept of honor using more quantitative methods. While Cohen and Nisbett focused on the United States, Rodriguez Mosquera and her colleagues focused on Spain. Taken together, this quantitative body of work on honor-based collectivism is important because it highlights manifestations of honor-based cultural norms in a variety of modern societies.

In particular, Cohen and Nisbett argue that honor norms are likely to develop anywhere where law enforcement is weak or absent, wealth is portable and economic outcomes are both variable and uncertain (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). They focused on the United States, examining existence of a culture of honor in the southern and western U.S. (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Honor in this social context is characterized by the willingness to use force or violence to protect one's social status and position. If that is the case, then laws and policies should allow for such forms of violence, adults should support it, and behavioral traces of honor responses should be observable in laboratory situations. Across a series of studies, the impact of honor was found across each of these domains. Action to protect honor is safe-guarded in the laws and social policies of the American South and West more so than in the American North and East (Cohen, 1996, 1998; Cohen & Nisbett, 1997). Survey data collected in telephone interviews with adults demonstrated that American Southerners and Westerners voiced greater support for honor-related violence (and not violence in general) than did American Northerners (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994).

This correlation between geographic location and honor-based values was further tested in a series of experiments with students from Southern and Northern states who were all attending the same mid-Western university. In these experiments, male students were randomly assigned to an insult or non-insult condition. Cohen and colleagues (Cohen et al., 1996; Cohen et

al., 1998) demonstrated that Southerners perceived insults in terms of threats to honor – they were both more likely to see insults as damaging their masculine reputation and more likely to engage in domineering and aggressive behavioral responses than Northerners. These results are likely to generalize to Latino or Hispanic cultures, as more recently studied by Cohen and colleagues (e.g., Vandello & Cohen, 2003).

In a series of studies, Rodriguez Mosquera and colleagues have demonstrated that within Europe, the expected differences can also be shown. Thus, social conceptualizations of honor are more salient in Spain than in the Netherlands (e.g., Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2000, 2002; Fischer et al., 1999). Spanish participants rate honor and honor-related values such as social recognition as more important than do Dutch participants (Fischer et al., 1999). When asked to describe honor, Spanish participants describe honor in relation to family and social interdependence; for Dutch participants, honor is not socially contingent (Rodriguez Mosquera, et al., 2002). Spanish participants respond more intensely to standardized insult vignettes than Dutch participants when insults threatened family honor, and this between-country difference is mediated by individual differences in concern for family honor (Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2002).

As shown by Rodriguez Mosquera and colleagues, honor in such societies includes both the individual and closely related others. In honor-based collectivistic societies honor is shared with close others and those in the individuals' important social groups (Mojab & Abdu, 2004; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2002). Honor is a form of collectivism in that one's own honor is implicated by the honor of close others; social respect can be lost through one's own failures as well as through the failures of close others or can be gained or enhanced through one's own successes as well as the successes of close others (Gregg, 2005, 2007; Stewart, 1994). Thus the

extent to which one's personal worth is determined interpersonally is a distinct feature of honor cultures (Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2000).

In honor-based collective societies, reputation matters, and reputation is a social construct that includes the esteem to which one's group is held, not simply personal attainments. Thus, in honor-based societies, positive evaluation of one's in-group is quite critical (Abu-Lughod, 1999; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., in press). Just as in other forms of collectivism, self- and social identities are highly connected (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989, 1994). This means that protection of social image is a core psychological concern in honor cultures. Social situations in which the personal or social self may be negatively evaluated are threatening and this threat needs to be responded to; not responding properly can lead to dishonor (see e.g., Gilmore, 1987; Peristiany, 1967). Whereas among Confucian-based collectivism, the way to maintain positive relations is through a norm of modesty, for honor-based collectivism, the way to maintain positive relations is through a norm of positive representation of the self and in-group and negative representation of out-groups.

3. CULTURE AND SURVEY RESPONSE

Next, we address how these cultural orientations affect the survey response process. Whereas the survey response process can be divided into three broad sections: question comprehension, recall, and response editing (Strack & Martin, 1987; Tourangeau, 1984), in the current chapter we focus in particular on the first and last parts of this process.

3.1 Making Sense of Questions: Pragmatic Inference Processes

As a first step, respondents need to understand the question to determine what information they are to provide. Here, respondents need to figure out what the researcher likely intends to find out (Clark & Schober, 1992). This can be called the *pragmatic* meaning of the question and it comes not simply from the words that are used but also from the context in which the question is presented (for a review see Schwarz, 1999). On the one hand, everyone uses context at least to some extent, on the other hand, given that collectivism highlights the importance of social context, it seems reasonable to predict that members of collective cultures might be chronically more sensitive to features of the social context. We detail the implications of this, focusing on one aspect of context, scale format.

In a sense, filling out a questionnaire can be thought of as a form of conversation, albeit a conversation in which only the researcher is asking questions and only the respondent is replying. Just as in any conversation, respondents rely on a number of tacit assumptions to make sense of their task and provide sensible answers given their understanding of the pragmatic meaning of questions in context (see Schwarz, 1994, 1999). Research conversations are one-sided in the sense that the researcher cannot be directly queried by the respondent, either because responses are elicited via a self-administered mechanism such as a questionnaire or because interviewers have been trained not to provide interpretations so as to standardize response. Therefore, respondents must draw pragmatic meaning from larger cultural context and the proximal contextual cues present in the research context. These contextual cues include what may at first glance appear to be "formal" features of questions, such as the numeric values used to represent points on the scale (Schwarz, 1999; Schwarz, Oyserman, & Peytcheva, this volume).

Suppose participants are asked in a survey to report on their success in life using a rating scale anchored with "not at all successful" and "extremely successful". To provide a rating, they have to determine the intended meaning of the end labels. For example, does "not at all successful"

refer to the absence of outstanding achievements or to the presence of serious failures? Given that survey contexts offer little opportunity to clarify the meaning of questions, to infer the intended meaning, participants may draw on the numeric values provided in the rating scale. Using German participants and survey-based experimental methods, Schwarz and his colleagues (1991) tested this possibility. They found that respondents did give systematically different assessments of how successful they have been in life when the numeric format of the rating scale is varied. On average scores were lower and about a third of individual respondents used the lower half of the range in responding when the scale was from 0 to 10. In contrast, when the scale was from -5 to +5, many fewer respondents used the lower half of the range and when the scores were recoded to range from 0 to 10, the average score was higher. Why would this be?

When the rating scale ran from 0 to 10, respondents seemed to understand the question as being one about the extent of success, as a unipolar construct -- one could have more or less success. When the rating scale ran from -5 to +5, respondents seemed to understand the question as being one about the extent of success or failure, a bipolar construct -- one could have more or less success (positive numbers) as well as more or less failure (negative numbers). Thus the numeric values used to make up the rating scales seemed to have affected participants' interpretation of the intended meaning conveyed by the anchor labels. To further test this interpretation, Schwarz and colleagues (1991) asked another set of German respondents to draw inferences about a target person based on the target persons' description of academic success. In all cases, the target person's rating was in the third position on an 11-point scale. What differed was whether the scale was a 0 to 10 scale or a -5 to +5 scale. A random half of participants read about a target person who rated his prior success as a '2' on a 0 to 10 scale. The other random half of participants read about a target person who rated his prior success as a '-3' on a -5 to +5 scale. Though all respondents viewed formally equivalent information (the third lowest response

on an 11-point scale with the exact same verbal anchors of "not at all successful" and "extremely successful"), would the pragmatic meaning be the same? Not if the -5 to +5 scale implied that success is a bi-polar construct and the 0 to 10 scale implied that success is a unipolar construct. If pragmatic inference differed then respondents should understand a '-3' response on the -5 to +5 scale as reporting some failures and a '2' response on the 0 to 10 scale as reporting not much success. Indeed, in the former case, respondents predicted that the target had experienced more academic failure, specifically that he needed to repeat more exams because he had failed them, than in the latter case.

Taken together, these studies, as well as a larger body of research on context effects on pragmatic inference suggest that research participants take into account even seemingly formal features of questionnaires in making inferences about what the questioner likely means. Once inferences are drawn, however, respondents still have to decide how they will respond. While the research on cultural differences simply suggests that higher collectivism should increase sensitivity to context effects (see Schwarz et al., this volume, for a review), as we have outlined in our section on culture's effects on self-presentational norms, there are likely to be effects of culture on this last phase of questionnaire response as well.

3.2. Recall, Response Formatting and Editing

Once respondents have figured out what a question is likely about, but before providing a response, they need to recall relevant information and figure out how to fit their own response into the format of the question and to edit their response to fit norms of propriety. This is a universal process, just as the search for pragmatic meaning is universal. All things being equal, members of all cultures attempt to present themselves in a favorable light. However, as we have outlined in the section on cultural norms for self-presentation, acceptable strategies for doing so, and the specific

content that is considered favorable, differ between cultures.

Specifically, while individualist cultures encourage a positive view of the self and others, they also further value honesty in interaction with strangers (Triandis, 1995). In contrast, Confucian-based collectivist cultures emphasize the maintenance of harmonious relationships with others and are more concerned with fitting in and saving face while honor-based collectivist cultures emphasize positive presentation of self- and in-group. For both forms of collectivism, some "editing" of the truth is considered acceptable in the interest of appropriate norm fulfillment (Ho, 1976; Triandis, 1995). Because norms differ, this would imply a specific pattern of culture by target interaction. Whereas individualistic positivity norms would result in positive ratings regardless of the target and modesty norms of Confucian collectivism would result in dampened ratings of self and in-group, but not influence the evaluation of out-groups, honor-based collectivism positivity norms would result in heightened ratings for self and in-group and lower ratings for out-group members. Thus respondents from individualistic, modesty-based and honor-based collective societies would edit their responses differently depending on whether the target of judgment was the self, a close other, or not an in-group member. Both individualistic and honor-based societies should promote self-enhancement (of self and in-group members, particularly close others) compared with modesty-based societies. Members of modesty-based societies would notice the different implications of unipolar and bipolar scales, but given the cultural imperative to be modest, respondents from modesty-based societies should be less likely to attempt to correct for the negative implications of the bipolar scale when rating themselves or close in-group others. Instead, the bipolar scale may even highlight concerns about modesty, resulting in lower self and close-family ratings. Conversely, members of individualism and honor-based societies should be loath to use the lower end of the bipolar scale when rating themselves or close family members. With regard to strangers, members of modesty-based

societies would have no reason to rate them in a way that may imply failures in their lives; to the contrary, one's own modesty may be expressed in positive ratings of strangers. However, self-enhancing individualistic societies offer no strong prescriptions for the evaluation of strangers, whereas derogation of out-groups is more acceptable in collective, honor-based societies.

In a direct test of these hypotheses, Uskul, Oyserman, Schwarz, Lee, and Xu (2008) replicated and extended Schwarz et al.'s (1991) design in a pilot and two experimental studies. Whereas the goal of Schwarz and colleagues' (1991) initial work was to demonstrate the impact of pragmatic meaning the goal of the Uskul and colleagues' (2008) studies was to demonstrate the interaction between pragmatic meaning and cultural norms. Whereas the Schwarz et al. (1991) studies included only German participants and did not explicitly take a cultural perspective, Uskul and colleagues (2008) compared participants from societies marked by individualism (Americans), honor-based collectivism (Turks), and Confucian-based collectivism (Chinese). Because a culture-based framework would lead to different predictions depending on whether a respondent is asked to report on self, in-group or non-group relevant others, they also moved beyond Schwarz and colleagues (1991) initial focus on self and own parents to also examine ratings of strangers of the same age as parents. To clarify that the dependent variable, success in life, was equally desirable across the three cultural groups, they asked college students in each country, how desirable being "successful in life" was to them, finding that life success was equally desirable – slightly higher than a five on a seven point scale - in each of the three cultures.

Results highlight the importance of using a culturally informed model. Culture-relevant effects were found for scales and pattern of responses in ways that suggest that effects are not due simply to differences in what unipolar and bipolar scales imply about the relative presence of positive attributes but also to differences in culturally-appropriate use of the affordances

provided by the scales to represent the self and close others. In both honor-based collectivistic and individualistic cultures, appropriate responses are positively enhancing of self and close others. In modesty-based collective cultures, modest descriptions of self and close others are appropriate responses. Results followed this pattern.

Specifically, Chinese respondents gave more modest ratings of their own success and that of their parents than either Turkish or American respondents, who were equally positive in their ratings of parents and self. With regard to the interaction of scale and question target, while Chinese respondents were modest in their assessment of self and parents independent of whether the scale was unipolar or bipolar, the assessments of Turks and Americans were higher when the scale was bipolar, just as were German participants in the original Schwarz and colleagues (1991) studies. Turks, Americans, and Germans all rated themselves and their parents as more successful on the bipolar scale than on the unipolar scale. Ratings of strangers of the same age as parents followed the expected pattern. Having been freed from modest self-presentational concerns, Chinese respondents showed the scale effect and rated strangers more positively when the scale was bipolar while Turkish respondents did not rate strangers more positively when using the bipolar scale as they did when they evaluated their parents. As expected, American respondents did not differentiate between ingroup and outgroup members and showed the scale effect in evaluating all three question targets.

In sum, for individualistic (American, German) and culture of honor (Turkish) groups, the implication of the negative numbers (presence of varying degrees of failure) was enough to shift responses about oneself or about parent's success up to the positive numbers (presence of varying degrees of success). Chinese participants also understood the scale in the same way, as can be seen by the fact that when there was no cultural modesty imperative (when providing a

proxy report on out-group members), Chinese also gave more positive responses when using the bipolar scale.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Whereas cognitive survey research to date has either ignored culture altogether or focused on a contrast between Western individualism and East Asian collectivism (for a review, see Schwarz, Oyserman, & Peytcheva, this volume), in the current chapter we have suggested that survey methodologists should also consider other forms of collectivism, particularly if their research participants are from Southern Europe and the Mediterranean, the Middle East or Africa. Our review of the culture literature highlights the influence of cultural norms on likely responses, even when the pragmatic meaning of questions does not differ. In particular, we focused on culture-based differences in both presentation style and distinctions between the self and close others on the one hand and distal or out-group others on the other hand. The literature on honor-based responses suggests that when cultures make salient an honor-based collectivism, respondents will focus on positive presentations of themselves and close others.

Our own research in this area, however preliminary, provides support for this prediction and suggests that honor-based and Confucian, modesty-based collectivism likely draw attention to different norms relevant to survey responding. While participants all try to put their best foot forward, this entails modest self- and close-other deprecation for Confucian groups, but not for honor-based groups. Moreover, these same underlying processes will produce differing results for proxy reports about distal, non-group relevant others. For Confucian groups, the modesty norm becomes irrelevant but for honor groups, positive statements about any others are unlikely to be viewed as irrelevant to honor, resulting in more negative proxy reports about distal others.

  Culture of honor research has documented that honor-based responses are relevant to a broad array of societies, including Southern Europe, the Mediterranean, Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa, and the American West and South. While current knowledge cannot address whether pragmatic understanding of questions differs, it is clear that the editing process is likely to differ across honor, modesty, and positivity cultures. Future research, targeting greater understanding of honor-based norms is highly relevant to the field of survey methods.

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