

Scoring Directions for Handout 3-9

Critical Thinking Activity: Independent and Interdependent Selves

Concept: Collectivist cultures encourage the development of the interdependent self while individualist countries promote the independent self. This activity will measure student's self-controls

In each case, total scores can range from 14 to 98, with higher numbers reflecting higher degrees of independence or interdependence

To assess your strength of independent self add up the scores you placed before items 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, and 28

To assess your strength of interdependent self add up the scores you placed before items 3, 4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, and 27

Theodore M. Singelis's research suggests that an independent self-construal includes an emphasis on

- **Internal abilities, thoughts, and feelings**
- **Being unique and expressing the self**
- **Realizing internal attributes and promoting one's own goals**
- **Being direct in communication**

Similarly, Singelis explains that an interdependent self-construal is a "flexible, variable self" that emphasizes

- **External, public features such as status, roles, and relationships**
- **Belonging and fitting in**
- **Occupying one's proper place and engaging in appropriated actions**
- **Being indirect in communication and "reading others' mind."**

Singelis has shown that self-construal provide an important link between culture and behavior. In responding to the criticism that cross-cultural studies often use culture as a "catch-all' variable to explain all differences between national and ethnic groups, Singelis propose that the effects of culture are often mediated through an individual's self-image. In short, culture shapes attitudes, values, and concepts of the self. These individual differences, in turn, affect behavior. Among the fascinating links Singelis has uncovered between these two selves and behavior is one between self-construal and embarrass ability. As predicted, he found embarrassability to be negatively associated with an independent self-construal and positively related to an interdependent self-construal. In addition, Asian Americans were more susceptible to embarrassment than European Americans.