Cultural Dimensions on Equity Sensitivity: American vs. Chinese

Jiaxi Wang
Shawnee State University
jiaxiking@gmail.com

Introduction

The 21st century is an era of globalized economy. In the past three decades, a rapid emergence of globalized economy has been influencing all the countries, especially the U.S., Japan, the Europe Union, India and China.

Due to the rapid globalization, studies on how the culture and economy interact and impact each other have been gaining popularity among researchers all over the world. On one hand, International Business Corporation (IBC) is now known as a common form of organizations (McDougall, Shane & Oviatt, 1994). On the other hand, the immigration population is seen growing in developed counties. Since one system or an organization structure cannot be suitable for all groups of people, it is essential that organizational and motivational researchers explore how these differences can be employed and made more beneficial in IBCs and/or the organizations where a large proportion of immigration employees are always found.

Equity sensitivity has long been a popular argument in organization-related studies (Huseman, Hatfield & Miles, 1987; Sauley & Bedeian, 2000). As the name suggests, it refers to the level of sensitivity to perceived fairness, or equity (Sauley & Bedeian, 2000). It has been argued that perceived unfair treatments in work places may lead to workers' negative emotions such as anger and/or resentment, which may be potentially engaged in organizational retaliatory behaviors, e.g., retribution against the perceived source of unfairness (Folger, 1993; Skarlicki & Folger, 1999). Alternatively speaking, an individual's equity sensitivity mignt significantly affect his/her behaviors and decision making in an organization.

There are numerous cross-cultural studies in the existing literature on equity sensitivity; however, little is virtually focused on the Chinese population.

Since the declaration of her open-door policy in 1978, China has expressed eagerness in joining in the rapid expanding global economy system. By the beginning of the 21st century, China has finally realized her dream - becoming a member of the most influential economic powerhouse in the world. Since China joined WTO in 2001, the country has been responsible for an average annual increase of 14% to the growth rate worldwide (China, 2012).

Unlike other commonly studied Eastern nations/regions, e.g., Japan and Taiwan, China is currently experiencing a rapid change in her norms and societal values (Barber, 2001; Lu, 1998; Pye, 1991). Under the guidance of the open door policy, China has been gradually transforming from a previous so-called socialistic society into a now more-like capitalistic society. Consequently, the Chinese value has been shifting from being more collectivist to more individualistic during the past three decades. Due to her increasing involvement in the global economy and uniqueness in terms of cultural value among the Eastern nations/regions, the Chinese' cultural values and organizational properties are worth probing into and comparing as such a study may enable us to better understand equity sensitive from a new perspective. to those of the western world.

Review of Literature

Construct of Equity Sensitivity

Equity, a phenomenon introduced to the public through Adam's equity theory (1963, 1965), describes how outcomes/efforts ratios would affect an individual's motivation in a work setting. As the theory explains, individuals would first compare themselves with others in a similar situation in terms of the ratio between the outcomes to the efforts they have put forth and the rewards they have received. Then the individuals would evaluate the results of the comparisons they had just made. Inequity is the notion that the outcome/effort ratios between the self and the compared individuals are perceived to be unequal (Huseman, hatfield & Miles, 1987). The theory further explains that inequity may cause tension and stress in the individuals involved, and these individuals may attempt to restore the equity through some means, such as

reducing one's own efforts, demanding an increase of own rewards, trying to reduce rewards of others, and so on and so forth (e.g. Bordia, Restubog & Tang, 2008; Restubog, Bordia & Tang, 2007; Huseman et al., 1987; Neuman & Baron, 1997; Sauley, Bedeian, 2000).

The early equity researchers generally assumed that the equity sensitivity among individuals have little variance (Sauley & Bedeian, 2000). However, more recent research findings discovered that a number of factors could affect one's perceptions and reactions to inequity (Bordia & Tang, 2007; Huseman et al., 1987; Neuman & Baron, 1997). Consequently, researchers began to view equity sensitivity as a construct that might be influenced by individual differences. Huseman et al. (1987) proposed a three level construct based on equity sensitivity. In their new construct, an individual can fall into one of the three categories depending on their equity sensitivity: Benevolents; Equity Sensitives; and Entitleds. Benevolents, as the name suggests, refer to those individuals who are more tolerant of inequity. As Huseman et al. (1987) have described in their study, "[Benevolents] are givers. Their contentment derives from a perception that their outcome/input ratios are less than that of others'. Distress will occur for Benevolents when the two ratios are equal or when the Benevolent's ratio is greater" (p. 225). The second category is the Equity Sensitive, which refers to those who would feel stressed when the outcome/input ratio is either too high or too low. In other words, they are the individuals that represented the equity sensitivity traits described in the traditional equity models. The last category is the Entitleds, known as getters. According to Huseman (1987) et al., the Entitleds prefer a higher outcome/input ratio compared to the other two groups. Namely, the Entitleds prefer high levels of outcomes than inputs. King, Miles and Day (1993) redefined the definitions for the Benevolents and the Entitled. According to the redefinitions, the Benevolents have higher levels of tolerance to under-rewards compared to people of other categories. The Entitled are redefined as individuals who fall into the Entitled simply because they would focus on the levels of outcomes and pay less attention to the degree of input offered.

The distinguished differences between the Benevolents and the Entitleds were studied and supported by Miles, Hatfield and Huseman (1994). In their study, Miles et al.

measured equity sensitivity scores through the equity sensitivity instrument (ESI) developed by King, Miles and Day (1994). A list of rewards was given to the participants for them to rate regarding the importance of each reward to them. The list of rewards contained extrinsic tangible rewards (e.g. money), extrinsic intangible rewards (e.g. praise) and intrinsic rewards (e.g. sense of accomplishment). The result suggested that the subjects belonging to the Benevolents group valued intrinsic rewards significantly higher while the subjects belonging to the Entitleds group valued extrinsic tangible rewards as most important.

Current research findings have suggested that one's equity sensitivity would influence his/her reactions to situations which might be perceived to be unfair (e.g. Jensen, Opland & Ryan, 2010). In other words, understanding the individual and group differences in equity sensitivities could potentially contribute to how an organization would perform its functions in terms of policy making and the working environments. Consequently, many researchers have devoted their time and efforts to the roles of equity sensitivity in organization settings.

Kickul, Gundry and Posig (2005) examined the relationship between equity sensitivity and perceived organizational justice. In their study, more than two hundred MBA students were enrolled as participants. The researchers measured the participants' scores for equity sensitivity via the ESI. They, too, measured, in their study, the perceived organization trust and perception of procedural justice, justice and social accounts. The data analysis reveals that the perceived organizational trust serves as a mediator variable between equity sentivity and perception of different types of justices.

As a result, one can argue that how employees perceive organizational justice levels could influence their behaviors in organizations. As Blakely, Andrews and Moorman (2005) pointed out, employees would be more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) if the perception of organizational justice was higher. Specifically, the results of their study indicated that all the members of the three equity sensitivity groups were more likely to engage in OCB when the perceived justice was higher. This difference is especially significant for the Entitleds group.

This finding was echoed in Restubog, Bordia and Tang's study (2007), which announced that the subjects' equity sensitivity serve as a moderating variable to their perceived psychological contract breach and the consequent behaviors. Overall, this finding was consistent with that of Blakely and his colleagues' due to the fact that subjects from the Entitled group showed a higher degree of changes (increase in deviant behaviors, decrease in OCB) as the perceived psychological contract breach was moving from low to high.

Cross cultural studies

In the past several decades, cross cultural studies began to gain motivational and organizational researchers' attention and interest. As Ambrose and Kulik (1999) put it, cross-cultural studies have become one of the new faces in the field of motivational research.

However, the cross-cultural differences in motivation are still an emerging field of study, which means that there are still relatively fewer studies devoted to exploring cultural effects on motivation at work places and organizations.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede is considered as a most influential researcher in cross-cultural studies. Having been cited over 20,000 times, Hofstede's theory of cultural values was adopted as conceptual framework by numerous cross-cultural researches in their studies (e.g. Wheeler, 2002; Allen, Takeda & White, 2005, Hui, Triandis & Yee, 1991). In his theory of cultural values, Hofstede (1980, 1983, 1991, 1997, 1998) described in great detail the four cultural dimensions: Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity vs. Femininity, and Individualism vs. Collectivism.

Power Distance, according to Hofstede (1997), is "the extent to which less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (p. 28). That is, in a culture where power distance is high, the social structure would be described as a pyramid, the power of which would be distributed unequally among different members. A classic example of a society with high power distance is absolute monarchy. At an individual level, as Wheeler (2002) puts it, "High power distance individuals feel that inequality is the correct order of things in the world…Individuals endorsing low power distance feel that inequalities should be minimized…" (p. 616).

Uncertainty avoidance is another dimension in Hofstede's theory. Uncertainty avoidance describes to what extent people can tolerate their uncertainties and ambiguities. Those who are higher on this dimension have lower tolerance to uncertainties as they would regard uncertainties as threat. These individuals would

prefer clear-set rules and regulations. Obviously, individuals who are low on the uncertainty avoidance dimension would prefer fewer rules as they have higher tolerance to uncertainties.

The third dimension of Hofstede's theory is Masculinity vs. Femininity. Masculinity is associated with traits such as assertive, ambitious and strong while femininity associated with traits such as caring, warm and tender. Similarly, a masculine society would value material success and view that males should be masculine, and a feminine society would highly appreciate interpersonal relationship and believe that both males and females should be able to show feminine traits.

Individualism vs. Collectivism is the fourth dimension and heavily studied by cross- cultural researchers. As the definitions of the two concepts suggest, individualism vs. collectivism is, actually, the "I" vs. "we" dimension. In an individualistic society, people are expected to take care of themselves and their few closest relatives (e.g. spouse, children); in a collectivistic society, people value group or clanship as most important. In such a society, people would mostly function within groups and be expected to take care of one another.

Culture and Equity Sensitivity

In his study, Wheeler (2002) tested the impact of Hofstede's four dimensions on equity sensitivity. Wheeler surveyed college students in the U.S. and in Taiwan. He found that all the dimensions were significantly correlated with equity sensitivity except for masculinity. Additionally, the American subjects were significantly different from their counterparts in all the dimensions and in equity sensitivity. Specifically, the subjects from Taiwan scored significantly higher in collectivism, femininity, uncertainty avoidance and equity sensitivity than did the subjects in the U.S.

Allen, Takeda and White's (2005) findings support Wheeler's findings. Allen et al. measured equity sensitivity between Americans and Japanese. The study employed the equity sensitivity instrument (ESI) which King et al. designed in1994. Besides, Allen et al. used two of the scenarios described in the Equity preference questionnaire (Sauley & Bedeian, 2000). Both scenarios are under-reward scenarios: a) same work, less pay;

b) less work, same pay. The results were consistent with what Wheeler found in his study. Specifically, the Japanese, who are higher on power distancing and more collectivistic, scored higher on the equity sensitivity (Entitleds). Furthermore, the authors noted that the Japanese subjects were more likely to react to the unfair scenarios with reducing efforts whereas the American subjects more likely to react with increase their own pay (e.g. ask for a raise)

Transition in China

In a large amount of existing literature, China is categorized into a typical country of collectivism (Bond, Wan, Liung, & Grachlone, 1985; Gudykunst & Kim, 1984; Wu, 1985). Specifically, the Chinese people are considered as collectivists who give priority to group goals instead of personal goals; their social behaviors are guided by norms, obligations and duties instead of personal needs and rights (Chan, 1963; Triandis, 1990; Trandis et al. 1990; Trompenaars, 1993; Tung, 1991). However, quite a few recent studies (e.g. Barber, 2001; Lu, 1998; Pye, 1991) agreed that China is undergoing a gradual transition from collectivism to individualism due to many possible factors. This individualistic tendency has brought about many changes in cultural and social dimensions in China, especially among the young people, the so-called Post-80s Generation.

Promoting Factors

A variety of factors be responsible for promoting China's transition from collectivism to individualism. Triandis (1990) stated that the economic condition can greatly influence a social transformation as an increased wealth and industrialization was believed to lead to individualism. In a similar vein, Yang (1988) argued that collectivism would be replaced by individualism through the process of modernization. Cao's (2009) study also identified economy as a potential factor for social transition. She believed that China's tremendous economic growth after the Open-Gate Policy in 1978 may help foster individualism in the country. In addition to the economic leap, Cao posited that political reform, education, and mass media all contributed to the individualistic trends. She explained that, as a planned economic system was being

transformed to market-driven economy, it would greatly deteriorate the traditional collectivist farming structure; influenced by the West, individual-oriented learning was significantly promoted to accommodate students' diverse individual needs; with the increase in intercultural communication and exchanges through internet, TV, newspapers and other medias, Chinese people would be better informed of the outside world, and, therefore, they became more aware of the alternatives and choices of life.

Life Goals, Social Relations and Communication

To explore how this transition has affected Chinese people's life, social relations and communication, Lu (1998) analyzed the interview data of twenty-eight native Chinese from three cities (12 from Beijing, 12 from Harbin and 4 from Shanghai). The analysis revealed a drastic change in life goals from serving collective interests to pursuing practical benefits. It also revealed that the social relationship is driven by material gains. In other words, the purpose of making friends and social contacts is no longer for conforming to collective values or moral altruism; instead, it is for attaining personal goals. While being asked for information about common topics in their daily conversations, almost all the interviewees expressed their individualistic concerns with money matters, such as extra income and investment. Conversely, no one mentioned that they had planned to make more contributions to the society or the local community. The study implies that, although some collectivistic values are still practiced, these values start to lose their appeals and are greatly challenged by the rising utilitarian individualism.

Another research conducted by Li, Zhang, Bhatt and Yum (2006) explored the changes in social relations. Questionnaires were used to measure self-construal across three cultural groups: Anglo Canadians (N=220), Mainland Chinese (N=212), and Indians (N=212). One of the conclusions was that the Chinese, though more interdependent than Canadians, were more independent than Indians in constructing their relationships with closest family members, close family members, closest friends, close friends, relatives, colleagues, and neighbors. This is a typical indicator showing that Chinese culture has become more individualistic.

The Post-80s Generation

Apart from studying the general social transformation, some researchers have directed their research attention to the tendency of individualization in the Post-80s Generation in China. Garrott (1995) surveyed 512 Chinese college students and found that the participants in general exhibited strong individualism towards life, rather than collectivism associated with traditional Chinese culture and society. After conducting a similar research, Stanat (2005) concluded that most of the Post-80s Generation was open-minded, pragmatic, self-oriented, strongly independent, showing far more individualist characteristics than their predecessors. Moore (2005) also confirmed such a transition by depicting current changes in China's younger generation. In particular, he identified a new kind of individualism valued by the Post-80s Generation through studying the slang term *ku* (酷) and individualistic practices of young Chinese. By analyzing questionnaire and interview data collected from eight Chinese universities, Moore not only summarized five most commonly mentioned features associated with *ku*, a symbol to individualism, but also concluded that this generation describes their individualistic tendencies in terms of freedom and open-mindedness. In contrary to the collectivist spirit promoted during the Cultural Revolution, the younger generation advocates "an openly and enthusiastically individualistic approach to life that values the bold and the innovative" (p. 374). Based on the previous research and her own personal experience, Cao (2009) offered a summary of the general features of the Post-80s Generation, demonstrating a clear individualistic trend in China. This generation develops a different life attitude towards job, money, family and life. Unlike their parents, these young people embrace more challenging job, spend more money on luxury goods, marry at an older age, and enjoy more freedom and pleasures of life. In addition, they desire self-oriented life style. According to Cao, the generation creates their own fashions, makes extensive traveling, enjoys various recreations, believes in freedom of speech, and expresses its own aspirations and ideas by inventing new literature and music forms.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the potential difference of cultural values between Chinese and the Americans, and examine how such a difference would impact the equity sensitivities between the two groups of people.

Hypothesis

The present study aimed to explore the potential difference in cultural dimensions, equity sentivity and reactions to the scenarios that are deemed to be unfair between the young adult generations (i.e. those who were born between 1980 and 1994). The following hypotheses were tested.

> H1. There will be a significant difference in each of the four cultural dimensions between the American and the Chinese samples.

> H2. Equity sensitivity will be significantly different between the American and the Chinese samples.

> H3. Level of individualism would significantly influence the equity sensitivity scores.

> H4. The Chinese and the Americans will be different in their reactions toward the two unfair scenarios.

Method

Data were collected from both the American and the Chinese population. A survey instrument was employed for the subjects from both populations. Specifically, the survey instrument was developed in English, and then translated into simplified Chinese by scholars who are efficient in both languages and familiar with the Chinese culture. The two versions were then compared and contrasted via a pilot study to eliminate potential problems such as inconsistency. Then, the Chinese version was back-translated into English. Both English versions were administrated to two small groups of American undergraduate students to test its validity and reliability. Some modifications were then made to the Chinese version. Same procedure (i.e. back

translation, pilot test, modification) was repeated until the validity and the reliability of the English versions meet a satisfying standard.

Cultural dimensions

Each participant's cultural dimension orientations were measured by the survey instrument designed by Dorfman and Howell (1988). The survey consisted of 26 statements. The participants read and then rated each of the statements with a 1-5 Likert scale (1 being *strongly disagree*; 5 being *strongly agree*). Some of the statements are "Group welfare is more important than individual rewards", "Women value working under more friendly atmosphere than men do" and "Standard operating procedures are helpful to employees on the job."

Equity Sensitivity Orientation

Equity sensitivity was measured with the ESI designed by King et al. (1994). The ESI is consisted of five questions. Under each question, there are two choices: one represents the Benevolents orientation and the other the Entitled orientation. The participants were asked to allocate a total of ten points between the two choices depending on how much they agree with each option.

A sample question is:

1. It would be more important for me to

_____ A. Get from the organization
_____ B. Give to the organization

Reaction to Unfair Scenarios

Every participant was given one of the two unfair scenarios described in Allen, Takeda and White's study (2005). Scenario A involves a situation of equal work, less pay; whereas scenario B involves a situation of equal pay, less work. The participants then rated a list of potential reactions to the scenario they have read with a Likert scale

ranging from 1-7 (1 being *no way*, 7 being *for sure*). The rating was based on how likely the participant would engage in the reactions described. Some of the reactions include "Reduce your effort. For example, code fewer questionnaires per hour in the future", "Begin looking for a new job outside of the university" and "Do something to try to reduce the other person's pay. For example, ask the secretary if perhaps a mistake was made calculating the other student's paycheck."

Background questionnaire

A standard background questionnaire was used. The questionnaire consisted of items such as "age", "years of education", "years of working experience"…etc.

Participants

Fifty-seven American junior-year students and 113 Chinese junior-year students participated in the present study. A total of eight medium-sized public institutions were involved with four from the United States and four from China. All participants were undergraduate students from universities in the U.S. and China respectively.

Procedure

The survey instruments were uploaded onto Http://www.survygizmo.com. The survey link was given to the instructors from the universities that will be used in the present study. Then the instructors shared the link to the students via email. Those who successfully completed the survey received some extra credits in their respective courses as reward (approximately 5 % of the total grade points) from the instructors.

Data analysis

The following data analyses were used for the present study.

First, two sample student's t-tests were performed to investigate whether significant differences existed between the two groups in terms of cultural dimension orientation, equity sensitivity, reactions to unfair scenarios.

Second, a Multi-Linear Model was used to determine the effects of cultural dimensions on equity sensitivity. The group variable was a dummy coded variable for nationality (American = 0, Chinese = 1).

Results

As was previously stated, the purpose of this study was to explore cultural differences between Americans and Chinese and its impact on equity sensitivity. Three questions were tested. First, what are the cultural differences between young adults in China and in the U.S.? Second, how are the two populations different in their equity sensitivity orientations? Third, how would such differences affect their responses to work-place unfairness?

Demographic Information

A brief summary of the demographic information (including gender, age and years of working experience) between the two sample groups is provided in Table 1.

All 170 subjects were either enrolled as undergraduate students or graduates with bachelor degree at the time when answering the survey. It is interesting to note that the Chinese sample had significantly lower overall working experience compared to their American counterparts (T (168) = 5.789, $p < 0.01$).

Table 1
Demographic Information

Survey Item	American (n=57)	Chinese (n=113)
1. Gender	Female:90.5% Male: 9.5%	Female:68.9% Male: 31.1%
2. Age (years)	Mean: 21.37 SD: 2.2 Min:19 Max 27	Mean: 22.12 SD: 3.04 Min:18 Max 31
3. Years of working experience (years)	Mean: 3.02 SD: 2.41 No working experience:15.8%	Mean: 1.02 SD: 1.95 No working experience:61.9%

Cultural Dimensions

Two sample Students' T tests were used to assess the cultural mean dimension differences between the American sample and the Chinese sample. Significant differences were found in all but the power distancing dimension. Specifically, for the individualism dimension, the Chinese sample had a higher average score, which suggested higher level of collectivism (Mean ≈ 3.56, SD ≈ .63) than did the American sample (Mean ≈ 3.30, SD ≈ .44), T (150.80) ≈ -3.151, $p < 0.01$; for the masculinity dimension, the Chinese sample had an average score of 3.09 (SD ≈ .57), significantly higher than their American counter parts (Mean ≈ 1.97, SD ≈ .62), T(104.42) ≈ -11.58, $p < 0.01$; For the uncertainty avoidance dimension, the American sample scored higher (Mean ≈ 4.52, SD ≈ .44) than did the Chinese sample (Mean ≈ 3.81, SD ≈ .54), T(135.52) ≈ 9.152, $p < 0.01$. No significant difference was found for the power distance dimension between the American sample (Mean ≈ 2.28, SD ≈ .34) and the Chinese sample (Mean ≈ 2.3, SD ≈ .56), T (162.37) ≈ -.272, $p ≈ 0.79$.

Equity Sensitivity

Significant equity sensitivity mean difference was found between the two samples. The Americans were found to be more benevolents-oriented, and the Chinese were found to be more entitled-oriented, T (118.8) ≈ -9.66, $p < 0.01$.

Figure 1 offered a graphical comparison of the equity sensitivity scores between the two samples. Figure 2 offered a graphical illustration of the score distributions of the two samples. Furthermore, linear regression analysis indicated that none of the four cultural dimensions contribute to the equity sensitivity scores.

Reaction to Workplace Unfairness

Each participant was randomly given one of the two scenarios to read. Among all 170 participant, 77 were given scenario A, and the remainder were given scenario B. Figure 2 and figure 3 provided a detailed review of the participants' responses to the potential reactions regarding to the scenarios. Overall, the American and Chinese samples had very similar scores for the scenario A, which involves equal work amount but unequal payment. For the second scenario, which involves equal payment but unequal work amount, significant differences were found for response choices 1, 3, 6, 8, 9.
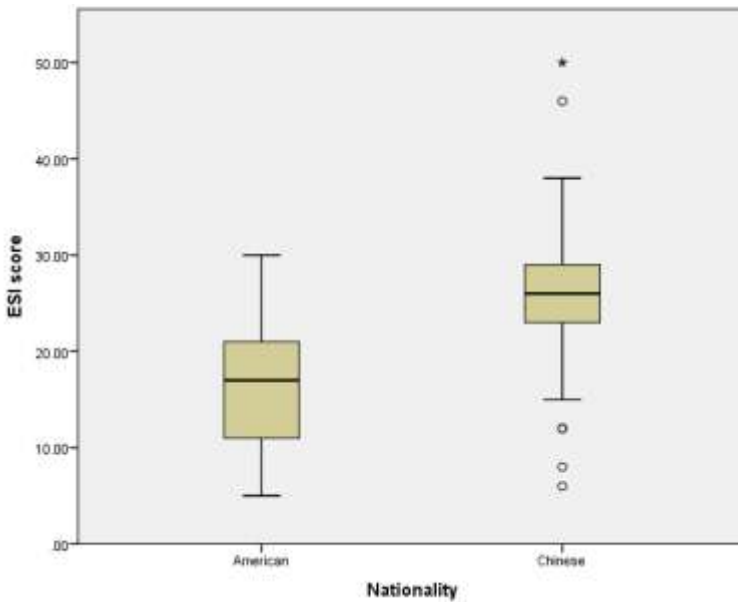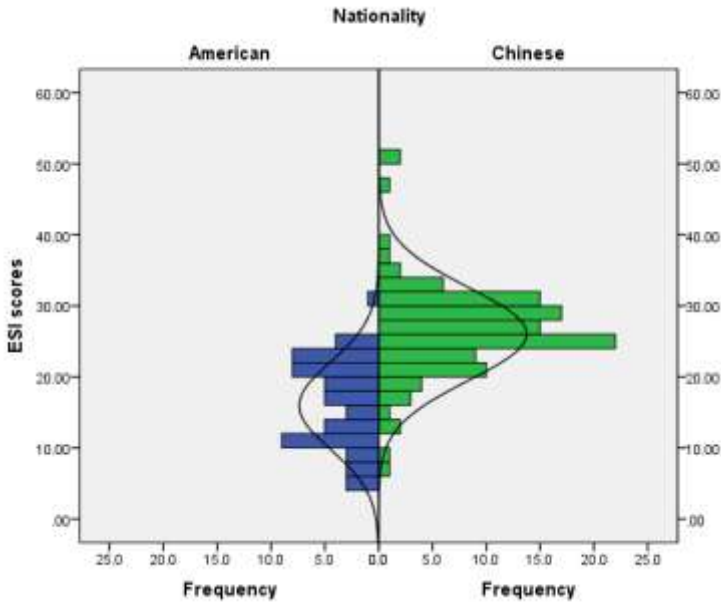
Figure 1

Figure 2

Table 2

Response Summary for Scenario A

Response choices	American (n = 25)	Chinese (n = 52)	Student's T score	p value
1. Reduce your effort.	Mean ≈ 2.16 SD ≈ 1.38	Mean ≈ 2.17 SD ≈ 1.54	-.038	.970
2. Try to increase your pay.	Mean ≈ 4.84 SD ≈ 1.89	Mean ≈ 4.27 SD ≈ 1.40	1.345	.187
3. Try to make the other person work harder for their pay.	Mean ≈ 2.68 SD ≈ 2.08	Mean ≈ 1.83 SD ≈ 1.47	1.846	.073*
4. Do something to try to reduce the other person's pay.	Mean ≈ 2.32 SD ≈ 1.57	Mean ≈ 2.10 SD ≈ 1.67	.573	.569

Response				
5. Think about reasons that justify why you are getting paid less.	Mean ≈ 4.80 SD ≈ 1.63	Mean ≈ 5.40 SD ≈ 1.70	-1.501	.140
6. Think about reasons that justify why the other person is getting paid more.	Mean ≈ 5.32 SD ≈ 1.18	Mean ≈ 5.40 SD ≈ 1.72	-.250	.803
7. Compare yourself to someone else instead of this student.	Mean ≈ 3.84 SD ≈ 1.28	Mean ≈ 4.08 SD ≈ 1.73	-.676	.501
8. Try to transfer to another part of this organization	Mean ≈ 3.60 SD ≈ 1.56	Mean ≈ 3.23 SD ≈ 1.53	.981	.332
9. Begin looking for a new job outside of the university	Mean ≈ 4.44 SD ≈ 1.83	Mean ≈ 3.98 SD ≈ 1.59	1.076	.288

* $p < 0.1$

Table 3

Response Summary for Scenario B

Response choices	American (n = 33)	Chinese (n = 61)	Student's T score	p value
1. Reduce your effort.	Mean ≈ 1.61 SD ≈ 1.14	Mean ≈ 2.41 SD ≈ 1.51	-2.896	.005***
2. Try to increase your pay.	Mean ≈ 3.94 SD ≈ 3.89	Mean ≈ 1.85 SD ≈ 1.54	.143	.887
3. Try to make the other person work harder for their pay.	Mean ≈ 2.85 SD ≈ 2.05	Mean ≈ 2.05 SD ≈ 1.37	2.01	.05*

4. Do something to try to reduce the other person's pay.	Mean ≈ 2.30 SD ≈ 2.36	Mean ≈ 1.70 SD ≈ 1.61	-.159	.874
5. Think about reasons that justify why you are getting paid less.	Mean ≈ 4.42 SD ≈ 3.92	Mean ≈ 1.41 SD ≈ 1.70	1.538	.128
6. Think about reasons that justify why the other person is getting paid more.	Mean ≈ 4.55 SD ≈ 3.95	Mean ≈ 1.23 SD ≈ 1.31	2.190	.032**
7. Compare yourself to someone else instead of this student.	Mean ≈ 4.00 SD ≈ 4.02	Mean ≈ 1.60 SD ≈ 1.58	-.048	.962
8. Try to transfer to another part of this organization	Mean ≈ 3.61 SD ≈ 2.93	Mean ≈ 1.60 SD ≈ 1.35	2.048	.045**
9. Begin looking for a new job outside of the university	Mean ≈ 4.79 SD ≈ 3.59	Mean ≈ 1.69 SD ≈ 1.44	3.447	.001***

* P < 0.1
** P < 0.05
*** P < 0.01

Discussion

In summary, the findings of this study supported the hypotheses that the principal investigator proposed at the beginning of the study. Specifically, the younger generations of adults (post 80s) in China were found to have a higher overall level of collectivism than do their American counterparts. This appears to be consistent with the typical notion that China is a highly collectivist society. According to previous findings from the 60s and 70s on http://geert-hofstede.com, China had an extremely low score of

individualism (20), whereas the U.S. had an extremely high score of individualism. Although the results from this study are consistent with previous findings, a closer look of the score distributions suggests that the gap of difference in individualism among the younger generations between the two countries is disappearing. Unlike the previous findings that China and the U.S. took the two extreme opposing sides of the individualism vs. collectivism scale, the scores of the present study suggest that the younger generations in both societies share a mixed attitude between individualism and collectivism, as illustrated in relatively small difference in the mean individualism scores.

Although the differences in the masculinity and the uncertainty avoidant dimensions are very limited from the past findings, it is worth noting that, unlike what past researchers found on China's power distance, the present study revealed that the current younger generations in China possess higher power distance than their parent or grandparent generations. Specifically, the present study did not find any difference, either, that the younger generations in China and the U.S. prefer an equality based power system in the work settings.

One of the major findings of this study is that the Chinese younger generation scored higher in the ESI, which potentially suggest that they are more entitled-oriented but less benevolent-based than their American counter-parts. This finding is very similar to what Allen, Takeda and White found in their study (2005). Based on this finding, it is reasonable to argue that institutional difference does exist between the Chinese society and the American society.

It is worth noting that, under the unfair scenarios, the Chinese participants, who are significantly more entitled, were more likely to reduce their own efforts whereas their American counter-parts, who are more benevolent, are much more likely to look for new jobs. Similar to what Allen, Takeda and White have suggested, this finding could lead to a conclusion that differences in societal/cultural values and practices may impact one's responses to unfair treatments in the work settings.

Specifically, in China, it is more difficult for one, especially a young adult freshly graduated from school, to find a career-starting position in the job market. Consequently, it would be rather unwise to quit the job without first securing a replacement job position.

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