
21 The relation between gender and cultural orientation and its implications for advertising

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INTRODUCTION

Research points to gender differences in individualism and collectivism (e.g., Gilligan, 1982; Kashima et al. 1995; Maccoby, 1990; Singelis, 1994). At the broadest level, women appear to be less individualistic and more collectivistic than do men (Cross & Madson, 1997; Hofstede, 2001; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1995). For instance, women are more willing and able to care for others (Gilligan, 1982), are more aware of and sensitive to others' needs (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), are more likely to provide social support to others (Wellman, 1992; Wethington, McLeod & Kessler, 1987), view others as more sociable (Marcus & Lehman, 2002) and describe themselves in terms of relatedness to others (Rosenberg, 1989; also see Cramer, 2000), all of which are hallmarks of collectivism. In contrast, men are more likely to focus on themselves than on others (Clancy & Dollinger, 1993), to endorse competitive goals (Gaeddert & Facticeau, 1990), and to describe themselves as separate from others (Lyons, 1983), which are characteristics of individualism. These types of gender difference have often been discussed in terms of culturally relevant self-construals. The independent self construal is associated with uniqueness, self-reliance, achievement, and separateness, characteristics that parallel an individualistic cultural orientation, whereas the interdependent self is associated with connectedness, and a focus on social context and relationships, characteristics that parallel a collectivistic cultural orientation (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994). Thus, Cross and Madson (1997) noted that gender differences in human cognition, motivation, emotion, and social life may be traced to the distinct independent and interdependent self-construals constructed and maintained by men and women.

However, when it comes to the specific nature of gender differences in individualism and collectivism (INDCOL), results across studies have varied (see Gabriel & Gardner, 1999; Kashima et al. 1995). Some research has shown no gender differences on broad indicators relevant to INDCOL (e.g., Baumeister & Sommer, 1997; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999; Gaines et al.

1997). For instance, across five studies, Gabriel and Gardner (1999) consistently found no gender differences on a variety of tasks and behaviors related to the independent self (e.g., the number of independent thoughts listed on a 20-statement test; Kuhn and McPartland, 1954). Similarly, Gaines et al. (1997) and Baumeister and Sommer (1997) presented evidence that men and women do not differ on individualism, and Kashima et al. (1995) reported no significant gender differences on both collectivism and aspects of individualism (e.g., agency, assertiveness), concluding that gender is linked to relationality, not to INDCOL broadly.

Although the broad constructs of individualism and collectivism have considerable utility, this broad-brush dichotomy is not without limitations, and finer distinctions can afford greater insights into a variety of cultural phenomena (Schwartz, 1990). In that vein, in this chapter we address whether considering different types of individualism and types of collectivism enhances understanding of the link between gender and these cultural orientation categories. We review the literature and then present new findings that support this contention. Finally, we consider implications for advertising.

Recent research suggests that cultures differ significantly on the emphasis given to status and hierarchy (Matsumoto, 2007). In particular, the distinction between the *vertical* and the *horizontal* types of individualism and collectivism highlights differences in the degree to which hierarchy vs. equality are emphasized (Triandis and Gelfand, 1998). This distinction may also track the nature of individualistic and collectivistic orientations that vary by gender, enhancing understanding of the motivational distinctions that characterize men's and women's cultural values. We suggest that considering the horizontal/vertical distinction enables a finer-grained understanding of the relations between gender and INDCOL.

VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM

People with horizontal cultural values or orientations value equality and view the self as having the same status as others. In contrast, people with vertical cultural values or orientations view the self as differing from others along a hierarchy – they accept inequality and believe that rank has its privileges (Triandis, 1995). This refinement of individualism/collectivism produces four cultural categories: Horizontal Individualism (HI), Vertical Individualism (VI), Horizontal Collectivism (HC), and Vertical Collectivism (VC) (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk & Gelfand, 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998).

Table 21.1 Values Characterizing Horizontal and Vertical Individualism and Collectivism

	Horizontal (Self at the same level as others)	Vertical (Self in a hierarchy relative to others)
Individualism	Self-direction	Improving individual status via competition
	Self-reliance	Seeking achievement, power, prestige
	Uniqueness Being distinct and separate from others	Standing out Display of success, status
Collectivism	Maintaining benevolent relationships	Attainment of ingroup status via competition
	Common goals with others	Deference to authorities and to ingroups
	Social appropriateness Sociability	Conformity
	Cooperation	Harmony

Vertical individualists tend to be concerned with improving their individual status and standing out – distinguishing themselves from others via competition, achievement, and power. In contrast, horizontal individualists prefer to view themselves as equal to others in status. Rather than standing out, the focus is on expressing their individuality and self-reliance (Triandis & Singelis, 1998). In other words, VI and HI are distinct individualistic motivational profiles that differ in their emphasis on status and hierarchy. Vertical collectivists focus on deference to authorities and on enhancing the cohesion and status of their in-groups, even when that entails sacrificing their own personal goals. In contrast, horizontal collectivists focus on sociability and interdependence with others within an egalitarian framework (see Erez & Earley, 1987). Again, both profiles reflect interdependent, collectivistic values, but differ in the degree to which status/hierarchy motives are emphasized.

The articulation of these horizontal and vertical categories, summarized in Table 21.1, adds an important degree of refinement to the broad individualism/collectivism cultural classifications. Accordingly, research suggests that a consideration of this horizontal/vertical distinction enhances understanding of the link between culture and personal values, persuasion patterns, and self-presentational styles (see Shavitt, Lalwani, Zhang & Torelli, 2006 for a review).

We suggest that the horizontal/vertical dimension may also point to particular types of individualism and collectivism that vary with gender. Specifically, men may be expected to be more VI, but not necessarily more HI, than women. Men emphasize power, and gain social status or dominance through achievement and personal success (Schwartz & Rubel 2005). Men (but not women) also gain satisfying interpersonal connections by achieving status and power over others (Baumeister & Sommer 1997; Maccoby, 1990). However, the emphasis on autonomy and capability that characterizes HI is likely equally relevant to men and women. Although men and women are socialized toward different roles and responsibilities, they both require self-reliance to accomplish the ends valued in their particular spheres. Indeed, prior research suggests that men and women do not differ on values associated with HI (e.g., self-direction; Nelson & Shavitt, 2002; Oishi et al. 1998).

Whereas it is generally accepted that women are more oriented than men toward interdependence and a collectivism, this difference is likely specific to horizontal collectivism (HC). Research indicates that women are more focused than men on sociability and on treating others with benevolence and loyalty (Cross & Madson, 1997). They value interpersonal relationships and their harmony and stability more than do men (Cross & Madson, 1997; Feather, 1984; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999; Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). For instance, Gabriel and Gardner (1999) found that women focus on relational aspects of interdependence more than do men. However, one would not expect women to be higher in focus on deference to authority and in-group status (VC) than men. Indeed, masculine patterns of belongingness, which center on broader social collectivities (Gabriel & Gardner, 1999), may emphasize power hierarchies as a means to organize and lead the activities of those groups (Baumeister & Sommer, 1997). In sum, women's greater tendency toward collectivism may be limited to the horizontal (HC) and not necessarily the vertical (VC) variety.

However, cross-national research points to inconsistent relations between gender and these constructs. Chirkov et al. (2003) found that, in the U.S., men scored higher than women on both VI and VC; in Russia, men scored higher than women on VI only; in Turkey, men scored higher than women on VC only. Nelson and Shavitt (2002) found gender differences in the U.S. in VI (men > women) and HC (women > men) only; in a Danish sample, gender differences emerged in VI (men > women) only. In a Singaporean and Israeli sample, Kurman and Sriram (2002) found women (vs. men) score higher on both HC and HI, and lower on VC.

Our studies attempt to understand these relations at a more phenomenological level. By examining self-rated subjective gender as well as sex differences, across a number of studies conducted with U.S. undergraduates,

we offer unique insights on relations between cultural value orientations and masculinity/femininity. Study 1 examines, in multiple samples, gender differences in scores on one of the standard measures of VI, HI, VC, and HC (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). Study 2 replicates these patterns using other measures of IND and COL that either emphasize status/hierarchy themes (Maslach, Stapp & Santee, 1985; Oyserman, 1993) or horizontal themes (Clark et al. 1987; Oyserman, 1993). Study 3 examines the relationships between subjective assessments of gender and VI, HI, VC, and HC. Study 4 extends the observed relationships to responses on behavioral scenarios relating to HI, VI, HC, and VC.

STUDY 1

Method

Study 1 was conducted on ten different samples of U.S. undergraduates enrolled at the University of Illinois in introductory business courses (total $N = 1091$; 53% men). Respondents participated in exchange for class credit. Overall, 57 percent of participants were Caucasians, 18 percent were Asians, and 4 percent were African-Americans. Respondents completed Triandis and Gelfand's 16-item scale designed to measure VI, HI, VC, and HC (4 items each) on 7-point Likert-type scales with 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. Examples included "I'd rather depend on myself than others" (HI), "It is important that I do my job better than others" (VI), "If a coworker gets a prize, I would feel proud" (HC), and "Parents and children must stay together as much as possible" (VC). This measure has been extensively used in cross-cultural research and has been found to predict a variety of phenomena, including socially desirable responding (Lalwani, Shavitt & Johnson, 2006), regulatory focus (Lee, Aaker & Gardner, 2000), self-enhancement motives (Sedikides, Gaertner & Toguchi, 2003), and personal values (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). For instance, Triandis and Gelfand (1998) found that VI predicted competitiveness and hedonism, VC predicted family integrity, and both HC and VC predicted sociability. These authors also administered numerous other scales commonly used to measure related cultural orientation categories, and found that their 16-item Likert-type scale correlated as expected with other scales. In addition, Briley and Wyer (2001) found that situationally enhancing cognitions relating to independence led to increased scores on Triandis and Gelfand's (1998) individualism measure, whereas enhancing cognitions relating to interdependence led to increased scores on the collectivism measure. Finally, in a separate data set with 3840 participants,

we assessed the factor structure and reliabilities of the 4 subscales. Results indicated that all items loaded on their respective subscales (all factor loadings > 0.58), and had acceptable reliabilities (e.g., HI: 0.74; VI: 0.76; HC: 0.71; VC: 0.74). Further details on the convergent and discriminant validity of the scale are given in Triandis and Gelfand (1998). Participants in Study 1 also responded to several demographic questions, including their gender, ethnicity, year of birth, and country of birth.

Results

A meta-analysis across the ten samples revealed that the relation between gender (dummy coded 0 = female, 1 = male) and VI (average $d = 0.68$) as well as that between gender and HC (average $d = -0.29$) were strong and significant at the 95% confidence interval. In contrast, the relation between gender and HI (average $d = 0.11$) was non-significant. The meta-analysis also suggested that men scored significantly higher than women on VC (average $d = 0.20$), although this relationship was weak. The analyses also revealed that 281 (0) additional studies averaging a null effect would be required to render the gender-VI (gender-HI) relationship non-significant and 46 (17) new studies averaging a null effect would be required to render the gender-HC (gender-VC) relationship non-significant. In other words, as expected, robust gender differences exist in individualism, but only for the vertical form, whereas robust gender differences in collectivism appear specific to the horizontal form.

STUDY 2

Although the findings from the ten different samples in Study 1 generally supported the predicted gender differences in cultural orientation, they were all examined using single indicators of HI, VI, HC, VC, and of gender. The subsequent studies were designed to replicate and extend those findings using alternate measures of INDCOL (Study 2) and of gender identity (Studies 3a and 3b). In Study 2, a number of measures were selected to correspond to the motives associated with either the vertical or horizontal forms of individualism or collectivism, in order to determine whether the same pattern of gender differences emerged.

Method

Seventy-eight U.S. undergraduates (40 men), enrolled in introductory courses at the University of Illinois, participated in exchange for

class credit. In addition to providing demographic information, they completed several different measures that were selected based on previous research on their convergence with the focal constructs (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998, study 4) and/or on the face validity of their items. Specifically, to tap motives associated with VI, Maslach et al.'s (1985) 12-item individuation scale ($\alpha = 0.86$) was employed. The individuation scale comprises such questions as, "What is the likelihood you will volunteer to head a committee for a group of people you do not know very well?" and "What is the likelihood you will perform on a stage before a large audience?" All items are measured on 7-point scales with 1 = not at all willing to do this, and 7 = very much willing to do this. We reasoned that responses on this scale, which taps the willingness to be a leader or to gain status and power for oneself, should reflect a particularly vertical form of individualism.

To tap motives associated with HI, Oyserman's (1993, study 4) 4-item individualism scale ($\alpha = 0.72$) was employed. This scale is comprised of such items as "Self-actualization is one of my highest values" and "It is important to me that I am unique", with responses measured on 7-point Likert-type scales anchored by 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. We reasoned that responses on this scale, which taps the motivation to be a self-directed and unique individual, should reflect a particularly horizontal form of individualism.

To tap motives associated with VC, Oyserman's (1993, study 4) 5-item collectivism scale ($\alpha = 0.83$) was employed. Example items include, "Whatever is good for my group is good for me" and "My aspirations are the same as those of others in my religion" with responses measured on 7-point Likert-type scales. We reasoned that responses on this scale appear to tap the willingness to subordinate personal goals to the goals of the in-group and show deference to that group's ambitions, which reflects a vertical form of collectivism.

Finally, to tap motives associated with HC, Clark et al.'s (1987) 14-item communal orientation scale ($\alpha = 0.71$) was used. Example items include, "When making a decision, I take other people's needs and feelings into account" and "I don't especially enjoy giving others aid" (reverse scored), measured on a 7-point scale anchored by 1 = very uncharacteristic of me and 7 = very characteristic of me. These items reflect an emphasis on sociability and cooperation, which should reflect a particularly horizontal form of collectivism.

A pretest ($N=110$) indicated that Oyserman's (1993, study 4) individualism scale, as expected, significantly correlated with HI ($r = 0.38$, $p < 0.001$), but not with VI ($r = 0.17$, $p > 0.08$), suggesting that it taps the horizontal, but not the vertical, aspects of individualism. However,

it also correlated with HC ($r = 0.21, p < .05$) and VC ($r = 0.29, p < .01$), suggesting that it taps collectivism as well. Another pretest ($N=78$) confirmed that Maslach's individuation scale significantly correlated with Triandis and Gelfand's (1998) VI scale ($r = 0.25, p < 0.05$), but not with their HI scale ($r = -0.04, p > 0.72$), HC scale ($r = 0.07, p > .52$), or VC scale ($r = 0.13, p > .27$). Oyserman's (1993, study 4) collectivism scale significantly correlated with VC ($r = 0.35, p < 0.001$), but not with HC ($r = -0.04, p > 0.72$), although it also correlated with VI ($r = 0.27, p < .05$) and HI ($r = 0.28, p < .05$), suggesting that it taps individualism as well. Finally, Clark et al.'s communal orientation scale significantly positively correlated with HC ($r = 0.31, p < 0.005$) but not with VC ($r = -0.09, p > 0.41$), VI ($r = -0.12, p > .30$) or HI ($r = -0.22, p = .06$), a pattern consistent with prior research (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998).² Although the intercorrelations for Oyserman's scales suggested that they tapped a broader-than-expected profile of cultural values, at least as captured by Triandis and Gelfand's measure, Oyserman's subscales were somewhat more reflective of the intended cultural value categories than they were of other categories. The findings for Maslach's individuation scale and Clark et al.'s communal orientation scale supported our expectations about the specific hierarchy versus equality themes that they tap.

Results

Our pattern of results indicated that this broader set of scales converged with the pattern reported in Study 1. Independent sample *t* tests indicated that men scored significantly higher than women on Maslach et al.'s individuation scale (tapping VI; $M_{\text{men}} = 4.98, M_{\text{women}} = 4.50, t(76) = 1.88, p < 0.05$; Cohen's $d = 0.43$), but not on Oyserman's individualism scale (intended to tap HI; $M_{\text{men}} = 5.11, M_{\text{women}} = 4.88, t(76) < 1.00, n.s.$; Cohen's $d = 0.22$). In contrast, women scored higher than men on Clark et al.'s communal orientation scale (tapping HC; $M_{\text{men}} = 5.15, M_{\text{women}} = 5.52, t(76) = 2.10, p < 0.05$; Cohen's $d = 0.55$), but not on Oyserman's collectivism scale (intended to tap VC; $M_{\text{men}} = 3.80, M_{\text{women}} = 2.75, t(76) = 3.61, p < 0.001$; Cohen's $d = 0.82$). These findings converge with those of Study 1, and are consistent with the notion that the individualism of men (compared to women) in our samples is more characterized by vertical individualism and not by horizontal individualism. In contrast, the collectivism of women (compared to men) in our samples is more characterized by horizontal collectivism and not by vertical collectivism.

STUDY 3

In the next study, we included a subjective measure of masculinity/femininity (Stern, Barak & Gould, 1987) to examine whether the links between gender and VI and HC observed here reflect distinct masculine and feminine cultural value orientations. If a feminine focus is associated with a type of collectivism that emphasizes cooperation and social relationships (HC), and a masculine focus is associated with an individualism that emphasizes status, power, and prestige (VI), then one would expect a distinct pattern of correlations between VI and self-rated masculinity on the one hand, and HC and self-rated femininity on the other.

Method

One hundred and fifty-eight U.S. undergraduate students (47 percent men), enrolled in introductory courses at the University of Illinois, participated in exchange for class credit. They completed the 16-item Triandis and Gelfand (1998) scale to measure HI ($\alpha = 0.70$), VI ($\alpha = 0.80$), HC ($\alpha = 0.72$), and VC ($\alpha = 0.65$), and demographic measures. They also completed Stern, Barak and Gould's (1987) sexual identity scale ($\alpha = 0.92$), which measures the subjective gender of the respondent by asking them to complete 4 items on a 5-point scale with 1 representing "very masculine", 2 representing "masculine", 3 representing "neither masculine nor feminine", 4 representing "feminine", and 5 representing "very feminine". The four items are: I FEEL as though I am —, I LOOK as though I am —, I DO most things in a manner typical of someone who is —, My INTERESTS are mostly of a person who is —. Higher scores on the scale indicate greater femininity (and lower masculinity).

Results

As expected and as shown in Table 21.2, subjective femininity significantly correlated with HC ($r = 0.24$, $p < 0.005$), but not with VC ($r = -0.09$, $p > 0.25$). Moreover, subjective femininity negatively correlated with VI ($r = -0.37$, $p < 0.001$), and to a lesser extent with HI ($r = -0.18$, $p < 0.02$). Further, the partial correlation between VI and femininity controlling for HI was significantly negative ($r = -0.34$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that the relationship between femininity and VI was independent of HI. In contrast, the partial correlation between HI and femininity controlling for VI was not significant ($r = -0.12$, $p > 0.10$), suggesting that the effect of HI on femininity was owing to its shared variance with VI. Taken together,

Table 21.2 Correlations between subjective gender and cultural orientation in Study 3

	HI	VI	HC	VC
Femininity	-0.18*	-0.37***	0.24**	-0.09

Notes:

The femininity measure used was adapted from Stern, Barak, and Gould (1987). High scores on the measure indicate greater femininity and lower masculinity.

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

these findings based on self-rated perceptions of one's femininity converge with the previous sex-difference studies in showing that femininity is associated with higher HC and lower VI.

STUDY 4

The previous studies suggested that U.S. men and women differ in specific types of individualism and collectivism. This study was designed to examine implications for the way men and women respond to behavioral scenarios describing situations they may encounter in their day-to-day lives. We examined whether men would be specifically more likely to choose action options that emphasize status and competition (VI), whereas women would be specifically more likely to choose action options that emphasize sociability and cooperation (HC).

Method

Fifty-nine students (24 men, 35 women) at a large university participated in exchange for class credit. Two respondents' data were deleted for failure to follow instructions. Respondents completed Triandis, Chen and Chan's (1998) measure comprising 16 behavioral scenarios. Each of the scenarios presented the participant with an HI, VI, HC, and VC response option, and participants were asked to rank the two best behavioral choices. Examples included the scenarios:

You and your friends decided spontaneously to go out to dinner at a restaurant. What do you think is the best way to handle the bill? 1) Split it equally, without regard to who ordered what (HC), 2) Split it according to how much each person makes (VI), 3) The group leader pays the bill or decides how to split it (VC), 4) Compute each person's charge according to what that person ordered (HI).

Suppose your fiancé(e) and your parents do not get along very well. What would you do? 1) Nothing (HI), 2) Tell my fiancé(e) that I need my parents' financial support and he or she should learn to handle the politics (VI), 3) Tell my fiancé(e) that he or she should make a greater effort to 'fit in with the family' (HC), 4) Remind my fiancé(e) that my parents and family are very important to me and he or she should submit to their wishes (VC).

Participants also responded to a number of other measures, including demographic items tapping age, country of birth, ethnicity, gender, and year of move to U.S. (if applicable).

Results and Discussion

Independent sample *t* tests revealed that out of the 16 scenarios, men selected the VI option 8.13 times as one of the two best behavioral choices, whereas women selected it 7.12 times ($t(55) = 2.13, p < 0.05$). In contrast, women picked HC behavioral options more often than men did ($M_{\text{men}} = 8.17, M_{\text{women}} = 9.18, t(55) = -1.95, p < 0.05$). There was no significant difference between men and women in either the number of HI ($M_{\text{men}} = 9.83, M_{\text{women}} = 9.36, t(55) = 0.78, p > 0.43$) or VC ($M_{\text{men}} = 5.88, M_{\text{women}} = 6.33, t(55) = -0.98, p > 0.33$) options selected. These findings extend the previous results to choices on behavioral scenarios and are suggestive that men are more likely to endorse actions that characterize vertical forms of individualism but not horizontal forms. In contrast, women are more likely to endorse actions that characterize horizontal forms of collectivism but not vertical forms.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Men and women in our U.S. samples do not appear to differ broadly in individualism and collectivism. Instead, a consideration of the horizontal/vertical distinction yields new insights into the relation between gender and cultural value orientations. Specifically, we find that men (and those high on subjective masculinity) consistently score higher than women on measures of one type of individualism – vertical individualism. That is, the male or masculine form of individualism appears especially focused on status, power, and achievement through competition (VI). Correspondingly, women (and those high on subjective femininity) do not consistently outscore men on collectivism. The female or feminine form of collectivism appears especially focused on sociability, common goals, and cooperation (HC). Our findings replicated across multiple measures of HI, VI, HC, and VC, as well as across multiple gender-identity indicators (including self-rated masculinity and femininity measures).

These findings offer support for the value of the horizontal/vertical distinction by revealing patterns not anticipated in the literature on gender and cultural self-construal. In particular, whereas some have concluded that men and women do not differ in dimensions of self-construal relevant to IND (Baumeister & Sommer, 1997; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999), we find that men consistently score higher than women on VI. Traditional masculine social roles that emphasize achievement and power gained through personal success may contribute to the robust gender difference observed here.

Results also shed light on the motivational underpinnings of gender differences that have been proposed and observed in prior research. Specifically, COL in women appears to emphasize common goals, camaraderie, and cooperation (HC). This is consistent with the relational interdependence identified in previous studies as a characteristically female cultural orientation (Cross, Bacon & Morris, 2000; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999; Kashima et al. 1995; see also Wang, Bristol, Mowen & Chakraborty, 2000). However, women do not appear always to be higher in COL or interdependence. If anything, men report a somewhat greater emphasis on deference to authority and to in-groups, the vertical form of collectivism (VC).

Although cultural value systems can be dimensionalized into a more comprehensive set of categories (Schwartz, 1990), our investigation was restricted to the dimension of individualism/collectivism as it is the most commonly used distinction in cross-cultural research (Triandis, 1995). Moreover, because our samples were U.S. student participants, our findings do not speak to the relation between gender and cultural values in other societies or populations. Nevertheless, this research offers a refinement in our understanding of the relation between gender and a very broadly used classification of cultural orientation.

Future research could examine the degree to which these patterns predict a broader set of judgments and behaviors as a function of gender, as well as the role that qualities of the various orientation scales play in the patterns that have been observed. Overall, broad gender differences in individualism and collectivism may differ depending on whether one is considering the horizontal or vertical varieties of these categories. That is, the horizontal/vertical distinction appears to be important in predicting or qualifying the nature of gender differences in cultural orientation.

ADVERTISING IMPLICATIONS

What does the distinction in horizontal/vertical cultural values among men and women imply for international advertising? Existing studies on

advertising and consumer persuasion provide limited insights into the role of status and hierarchy in advertisements targeted to men and women. A straightforward implication of our findings is that men may find advertisements emphasizing improving individual status via competition, seeking achievement, power, prestige, standing out, display of success, and status more persuasive than women. In contrast, women may find ads that emphasize maintaining benevolent relationships with others, pursuing common goals with others, social appropriateness, sociability, and cooperation as more appealing than men.

Wiles, Wiles and Tjernlund's (1996) analysis of magazine advertising in the United States (VI) and Sweden (HI) focused upon the depiction of IND values. Not surprisingly, it thus revealed strong similarities in the values depicted in advertising across these two societies, with predominating themes of leisure, youthfulness, private life, and ideal body shape. However, Nelson (1997) observed that differences in the gender roles depicted by male versus female models in this same data set were consistent with U.S.–Swedish differences in equality of the sexes and, in turn, with cultural differences relevant to the horizontal/vertical distinction. In U.S. ads, women were more likely than men to be portrayed engaging in housework and child care, whereas the reverse was true in Swedish ads. Nelson concluded that, rather than depicting uniformity in the values of these two cultures, the observed differences in gender roles in the advertisements pointed to distinct vertical versus horizontal patterns of individualism, respectively. Nelson's observation appears consistent with content analysis results on inequality in the relationships depicted in humorous ads across cultures (Alden et al. 1993).

We also found relevant evidence in a large-scale analysis of the prevalence of advertising appeals (Shavitt, Johnson & Zhang, in press). A content analysis of 1211 magazine advertisements in 5 countries (Denmark, Korea, Poland, Russia, and the U.S.) revealed differences in ad content that underscore the value of the horizontal/vertical cultural distinction. Patterns in the degree to which ads emphasized status benefits and uniqueness benefits corresponded to the countries' vertical versus horizontal cultural classification. In particular, the prevalence of status in ad appeals – including depictions of luxury, or references to prestige, impressing others, prominence, membership in high status groups (e.g., Ivy League graduates), endorsements by high status persons (e.g., celebrities), or other distinctions (e.g., “award-winning”) – corresponded to the cultural profiles of the countries. Ads in a VI society (the U.S.) and three VC societies (Korea, Russia, Poland) evidenced a greater emphasis on status benefits than did ads in an HI society (Denmark). Indeed, status appeared to be a dominant ad theme (relative to appeals that

emphasized pleasure, uniqueness, or relationships) in all of the vertical societies that were examined. In contrast, pleasure appeals dominated in the HI society.

In sum, across studies of advertising content, findings have converged on the notion that advertisements in vertical versus horizontal cultural contexts depict more hierarchical relations or put more emphasis upon status (see Shavitt et al. in press; Shavitt et al. 2006). Future research could examine the degree to which such ads vary in persuasiveness for men versus women. Further studies could address whether, for instance, men would be more persuaded than women by status appeals that are focused on “sticking out” and being admired, whereas women would be more persuaded than men by appeals that are focused on maintaining benevolent relationships with others, sociability, and cooperation.

Interestingly, status appeals have not been a significant focus of cross-cultural research, despite their prevalence in modern advertising. Indeed, the broad INDCOL cultural framework does not lend itself to predictions about the prevalence of such appeals. This further underscores the value of examining the horizontal/vertical cultural distinction, for the development of cross-cultural theory and for the understanding of gender differences.

NOTES

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1. The hypothesized relationships between gender and HI, VI, HC, and VC were observed in the pretests as well.

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