



Individualism/Collectivism: A Comparative Study of Self Reliance and Competitiveness Between Rural and Urban Professional Students

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ABSTRACT

The present study of Individualistic and Collectivistic Orientations of Rural and Urban Professional Students on self-reliance and competitiveness dimensions show that the Rural professional students have Individualistic Orientation and the Urban professional students have low Individualistic Orientation i.e., they show Collectivistic orientation. The study revealed that the Rural professional students tend to show high self reliance and competitiveness and the Urban professional students tend to show low self reliance and competitiveness.

KEYWORDS : INDIVIDUALISM, COLLECTIVISM , SELF-RELIANCE , COMPETITIVENESS

INTRODUCTION:

Individualism and collectivism are used at the cultural level, whereas at the individual level of analysis (i.e., within-culture analyses), the corresponding terms are idiocentrism and allocentrism (Triandis et al. 1985). Idiocentrism and allocentrism are personality attributes that are often orthogonal to each other. Idiocentric individuals emphasize self-reliance, competition, uniqueness, hedonism, and emotional distance from in-groups. Allocentric individuals emphasize interdependence, sociability, and family integrity; they take into account the needs and wishes of in-group members, feel close in their relationships to their in-group, and appear to others as responsive to their needs and concerns (Cross et al. 2000). It is possible for individuals to be high or low on both allocentrism and idiocentrism, though this may depend on culture.

Cultures differ in the extent to which cooperation, competition, or individualism (Mead, 1967) are emphasized. At the psychological level, these differences are reflected in a personality dimension labeled allocentrism versus idiocentrism. Reliable ways to measure allocentrism in the United States were developed by Triandis, Leung, Villareal, and Clack (1985). Allocentrism was found to be positively correlated with social support (both quantity and satisfaction with it) and with low levels of alienation and anomie; idiocentrism was found to be positively correlated with (a) emphasis on achievement and (b) perceived loneliness.

Allocentrism-idiocentrism reflects at the psychological level the dimension that has been labeled collectivism versus individualism (Hofstede, 1980), cooperation versus individualism (Mead, 1967), or collaterality versus individualism (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961) at the cultural level. As Deutsch (1949, 1962) has conceptualized the relationship of individuals and groups, it can take three forms: Individual goals can be positively (cooperation), negatively (competition), or not (individualism) correlated with group goals.

An attempt was made by the investigator to assess the individualistic and collectivistic orientations of rural and urban professional students on self reliance and competitiveness dimensions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study the self reliance of rural and urban professional students in individualistic and collectivistic orientations.
2. To assess the competitiveness of rural and urban professional students in individualistic and collectivistic orientations.

HYPOTHESES:

H1: There is a significant difference between rural and urban professional students towards self reliance.

Hsu (1983) has argued, in individualist cultures, such as the United States, self-reliance is often associated with competition, which is not

the case in collectivist cultures. In collectivist cultures the in-group competes with outgroups, but people compete as in-group members rather than as individuals.

H2 : There is a significant difference between rural and urban professional students towards Competitiveness.

Ramamoorthy and Carroll (1998) built upon the studies by Triandis (1995) and Wagner (1995), among others to develop the IC dimensions. The five dimensions reported in their study refer to competitiveness, value attached to working alone, beliefs about the subordination of individual interests to group's interests, and beliefs about the detrimental effects of pursuit of personal goals on group goals

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY:

To Individualistic and Collectivistic Orientations of Rural and Urban Professional Students on self-reliance and competitiveness dimensions, 200 professional students from Rural background and 200 professional students from urban background are selected through random sampling from 6 engineering colleges.

PROCEDURE :

The 19 - item scale of Wagner (1995) are used to measure Individualistic /Collectivistic orientations with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree as anchors. These 19 items were designed to measure the following dimensions of Individualism /Collectivism : solitary work preferences, competitiveness, self-reliance, supremacy of individual interests, and supremacy of individual goals. The items designed to measure collectivist orientations were reverse coded to maintain consistent directionality.

ANALYSIS OF DATA :

t-tests are performed to calculate the individualistic and collectivistic orientations of rural and urban professional students and their attitudes towards fairness in appraisals and procedures and reward systems in HRM practices..

RESULTS:

The results were tabulated in Table - 1 , Table - 2 .

Table - 1 : Means and S.Ds of scores on Self Reliance among Rural and Urban Professional students under Individualism/Collectivism.

TABLE - 1

S.No	Locality	N	Mean	S.D	S.E	't' value	p- value
1.	Rural	200	51.42	3.55	.35	47.74	0.01
2.	Urban	200	26.04	3.26	.31		

An observation of Table-1 indicates that self reliance in rural professional students obtained the highest means of 51.42 with an S.D of 3.55 indicating that they have high self reliance under individualism/collectivism compared to that of urban professional students. . However, in order to test whether there are significant differences between the groups , the data are further subjected to ‘t’ – test . With regard to individualistic /collectivistic orientation , there are significant differences between rural and urban professional students (t = 47.74) at p ≤ 0.01level.

Table - 2 : Means and S.Ds of scores on Competitiveness among Rural and Urban Professional students under Individualism/Collectivism.

TABLE – 2

S.No	Locality	N	Mean	S.D	S.E	‘t’ value	p - value
1.	Rural	200	35.82	3.01	0.30	44.31	0.01
2.	Urban	200	18.52	2.59	0.25		

An observation of Table-2 indicates that self reliance in rural professional students obtained the highest means of 35.82 with an S.D of 3.01 indicating that they have high competitiveness under individualism/collectivism compared to that of urban professional students. . However, in order to test whether there are significant differences between the groups , the data are further subjected to ‘t’ – test . With regard to individualistic /collectivistic orientation , there are significant differences between rural and urban professional students (t = 44.31) at p ≤ 0.01level.

DISCUSSION :

The results of Table-1 indicate that there are significant differences between rural and urban professional students in self reliance.

The rural professional students preferring to work alone highly self reliant and with an emphasis on personal goals are less likely to be loyal to the team, as observed by Ramamoorthy & Flood, 2011. Showing that the highly self reliant rural professional students can be placed under individualists and urban professional students under collectivistic. And high self-reliance reflect more horizontal individualistic tendencies wherein an individual perceives himself/herself to be independent and sees others as different. Thus , they stress inequalities in teams.

The results of Table-2 indicate that there are significant differences in the attitudes of rural and urban professional competitiveness.

Natural and social scientists argue that competitions and the right dose of competitiveness significantly determine not only the future of the individual but even the evolution of the whole species (Darwin, 1859 & Williams, 1966) and research findings of Leibbrandt, Gneezy & List (2013) suggest that human can evolve traits to specific needs, support the idea that socio-ecological factors play a decisive role for individual competitiveness and provide evidence how individualistic and collectivistic societies shape economic behavior and stated that fishermen from individualistic societies are far more competitive than the fishermen from collectivistic societies.

Louise Overgaard,2010 stated that individualistic culture favour competition , self-reliance and self-interest rather than group interest and personal growth and fulfillment .

CONCLUSION :

The rural professional students show more individualistic orientations and show high self-reliance and competitiveness than the urban professional students and the hypotheses are accepted by the obtained results.

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