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CHAPTER 6

The Socialization of Self: Understanding Shifting and Multiple Selves across Cultures

Christine J. Yeh and Carla D. Hunter

Understanding the relationship between socialization experiences and individuals' functioning is the core of Western psychological theory and practice (Bandura, 1965; Erikson, 1963; Freud, 1943; Wiggins, 1973). Who am I? What is my role in my family, in society? How do I relate to other people? What types of behaviors are socially acceptable? How do I understand who I am in relationship to others? The answer to these questions lead many to have diverse life experiences. Despite such diversity of experiences, "the person" is a central component in the socialization process. Yet, most definitions of socialization focus on its goal: to effectively participate within one's cultural frame of reference. Schneider (1988) defines socialization as "the process of learning how to behave effectively in groups and adjust to particular cultures" (p. 238). Kagitcibasi (1996) states, "Human development is socialization, together with maturation. It encompasses the lifelong process of becoming social, becoming a member of society" (p. 19). Eggan (1970) considers socialization the primary method through which persons receive information about cultural norms. These definitions of socialization convey what the socialization process involves: specifically, knowledge of rules, knowledge of cultural norms, and effectively using social skills to interact with others through shared systems of meaning.

In Western psychology, personhood is central to the understanding of socialization. Therefore, the primary methods of building theory and carrying out research to understand the process of socialization have been through the study of individuals and their behaviors (e.g., Allport, 1950; Bandura, 1965; Erikson, 1963; Freud, 1943; Kohlberg, 1976; Wiggins, 1973). For example, in their study of racial socialization, Caughy, Randolph, and O'Campo (2002) state, "Measures of racial socialization have been limited to those in which the respondent, either parent or child, reports on the types of racial socialization practices engaged in by parents" (p. 48). In research and theory, persons are viewed as the embodiment of their socialization experiences. Thus, the self is considered an important participant and observer in his or her socialization.

During the 1970s, psychologists suggested the need to take a step back from the individual perspective of understanding socialization. Between 1970 and 1980 the

assumptions of American psychologists regarding the individual nature of personhood (or self), which are the basis for theories of socialization, were criticized. Theorists such as Gergen (1973), Hogan (1975), Lasch (1979), Rotenberg (1977), Sampson (1977), and Smith (1978) criticized the emphasis in American psychology on the individual self and assumptions that views of the self as independent and autonomous are universal. Research in anthropology on culture and personality and increased focus on indigenous perspectives of mental health gave rise to concepts such as “relational self” (Berry, 1976; Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 2002; Whiting & Child, 1953) and “indexical self” (Gaines, 1982; Grills & Ajei, 2002). These concepts are the focus of current research, theory, and conceptualization, which has extended our understanding of cultural selves (Kagitcibasi, 1996; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989).

Research in the past few decades across the fields of cultural, social, and counseling psychology, African psychology, and anthropology, sociology, philosophy, and religion has indicated that conceptualizations of the self as well as socialization vary across cultural contexts and social settings. This chapter reviews past and present research on socialization as it pertains to cultural conceptualizations of the self. We first discuss socialization from a Western perspective and highlight corresponding notions of self. Next, we provide examples of early and current research that demonstrate conceptualizations of self among different cultural groups. In particular, we address how cultural context impacts notions of self and influences multidimensional and shifting ways of being. Crain (1992) states that socialization is “the process by which societies induce their members to behave in socially acceptable ways” (p. 178). What it means to behave in socially acceptable ways varies across cultures and especially with regard to the expectations of the self. A review of socialization and self holds implications for understanding differing conceptualizations of self and the reciprocal interaction between culture and self. Our hope is that through understanding differing conceptualizations of self we continue to extend existing theory on socialization and selfhood, which may then impact our understanding of socialization in various cultures, for example, racial, gender, and ethnic socialization (Yeh & Hwang, 2000b).

RESEARCH ON SOCIALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELF

Socialization is considered to be the primary method through which the skills and knowledge needed to live and be a social being within a culture are transmitted. Socialization equips individuals with knowledge about the roles, expectations, cognitive skills, and strategies necessary to manage in society (Hutcheon, 1999; Jambunathan, Burts, & Pierce, 2000). Depending on one’s cultural reference point, the process of socialization may take differing forms. For example, in the West, parents, caregivers, and family units are considered primary socializing agents of children. The role of parents and caregivers in the socialization of children is the foundation of our understanding of social learning theory, attachment, moral development, and personality development (Crain, 1992).

In social learning theory (Bandura, 1969, 1973, 1977), learning through imitating others is emphasized. Through observation of others' behaviors children learn how to behave and the consequences associated with their actions. In attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1973; Bowlby, 1953, 1969), a breakdown in the attachment style between parents or primary caregivers and their children may have consequences for the child's capacity to be social and form intimate relationships while growing up and as an adult (Schneider, 1988). An important aspect of socialization also involves learning the culture's moral rules. In fact, Grills and Ajei (2002) posit that "the concept of God, in every culture, indicates the values and ideals of human functioning upheld by that culture" (p. 79). Last, theories of personality development also rely on the role of early parental figures in the development of children. Positive or abnormal personality development is associated with poor or dysfunctional early socialization experiences (Corey, 2005; McWilliams, 1994).

Theories of socialization are embedded in the culture in which they are developed. Simply stated, "How the self is construed in a cultural context has direct implications for socialization" (Kagitcibasi, 1996, p. 69). Assumptions embedded in the aforementioned theories are that the self that is being socialized is independent, autonomous, and self-contained and possesses stable internal attributes and values (Kagitcibasi, 1996; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989). In Western cultures such as the United States, the goal of socialization is the development of an independent and autonomous adult, termed a referential self (Grills & Ajei, 2002). Although autonomy in an adult is an expectation that is consistent with the norms of Western culture, sociologists and psychologists also recognize that individuals are social beings. Hutcheon (1999) states, "To exist as a social being is to be forever emmeshed in some form of social interaction—in addition to the inevitable transactions with one's physical surroundings" (p. 45). Such a view of personhood in a relational context extends our conception of self and furthers our understanding of the influence of social groups and social interactions. However, the self that is discussed, even as a social being, is an individualistic self and is qualitatively different from a self that is connected to other selves, spirit, and nature, the self upheld in non-Western cultures.

Geertz's (1973, 1975) seminal research with people in Bali highlights a different conceptualization of self as one that is connected to others through kinship, birth order, and social status. Geertz describes the variety of ways by which individual Balinese are referred. For example, each person is provided a name, yet birth order is given precedence over the specific name. Furthermore, the Balinese rely on *teknonyms*, which are assigned to adults at the birth of the first child. Teknonyms are cultural referential points that take the form of "mother or father of Jim" (Schneider, 1988, p. 115). Teknonyms intimately and enduringly connect children to the adults in the family. Discussing Geertz's work with the Balinese, Schneider summed it up best when he stated:

Imagine yourself in this society. Shortly after birth you would be named say, "Masjof," but most people would refer to you as "Firstborn." When you married you would keep your name until you had your first child, when you would become known as "mother of Roshed."

This would be your name until Roshed or one of his siblings produced a child, when your name would change again to “grandmother of Nowkan.” (p. 115)

In comparison to the Balinese example, Western notions of self are quite different. In American culture, terms such as grandmother and mother designate roles and are not culturally embedded as part of the self. Kagitcibasi (1996) notes that in parent education classes in the United States, mothers are taught to separate themselves or “let go” of infants and their tendency to “merge” is considered harmful. Providing further evidence of differing conceptualizations of self, Choi (1992) found differing interaction styles between Korean and Canadian middle-class mothers and their young children. Choi found that Korean mothers tended to speak for their children, whereas Canadian mothers encouraged their children to be autonomous. Research conducted by Choi is consistent with early research by Caudill and Schooler (1973), in which communication styles between American and Japanese mothers also differed with respect to the emphasis on autonomy. American mothers encouraged their children to express their needs and desires, whereas Japanese mothers perceived their children’s needs and desires to be connected with their own. Hence, early socialization practices seem to have strong implications for the realization of diverse conceptualizations of self and expectations for individual functioning in a social world. Using an example from African psychology, Obasi (2002) notes that in the African experience, health is connected to one’s soul, one’s spirit, the creator, and knowledge of one’s destiny. Thus, sickness represents a disconnection in the relationship among these interconnected experiences, which are the essence of the African concept of personhood. Furthermore, in our qualitative research (Yeh, Hunter, Madan-Bahel, Chiang, & Arora, in press) with indigenous healers, notions of self as multidirectional and multilinear are linked to indigenous healers’ understanding of persons and the causes of illness.

The results of experimental research with young adults and adults provide further evidence of differences in cultural understandings of self. Using the Twenty Statements Test (TST), an open-ended questionnaire that consists of 20 sentence completions that begin “I am . . .,” Cousins (1989) demonstrated that Japanese high school and college students tended to describe themselves according to their social roles and their relationships to their social units; European American high school and college students described themselves using internal attributes. When the TST was modified to include a specific context, Cousins found that Japanese respondents used more internal attributes than American subjects. Cousins hypothesized that Japanese respondents were able to use internal attributes because they were provided with social contexts for their responses, highlighting that the self exists in relation to others and may also be context-specific. Although long considered to be universal, Western notions of self as autonomous are culturally specific. Racially and ethnically diverse groups possess different conceptualizations of the self, which include one’s role in the family of origin (Nsamenang, 1992), connectedness with others through shared relationships (Bond, 1986; Hsu, 1985), and connectedness to nature and spirit (Grills & Ajei, 2002; Heelas & Lock, 1981; Hunter & Lewis, in press; Marsella, DeVos, & Hsu, 1985; Nsamenang, 1992; Obasi, 2002; Shweder & Levine, 1984).

Historically, socialization has been discussed as a one-way process in which cultural norms are transmitted to individuals, usually from parent to child. Parents are considered primary socializing agents for children in the transmission of cultural norms. Furthermore, socialization is considered to occur primarily through verbal expression and overt behavior, in comparison to other means of socialization that are based on the use of affect, such as shame and guilt (Eggen, 1970). But this view of socialization that entails the perceptions of humans as passive receivers does not account for the construction of social reality (Corsaro & Eder, 1995) and shared cultural meaning (Heppner, Kivlighan, & Wampold, 1999). A view of socialization and socializing agents as passive also does not account for the shaping and reshaping of cultural norms (Hutcheon, 1999).

The socialization process is a complex system of ongoing reciprocal interaction (Hutcheon, 1999). For which Western notions of a stable, autonomous, and unique self seem insufficient. If we consider the self as existing outside the boundaries of linear time, we may view socialization as occurring simultaneously in the past, present, and future. Thus, to view socialization as multidirectional is to understand the concept of the shifting selves, multiple selves, and the idea of selfways. Therefore, a dynamic theory of self is necessary to address the differing ways socialization takes place and how meaning is transmitted and recreated in a cultural system. The social constructivist perspective is particularly helpful in furthering our understanding of the dynamic nature of socialization.

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM AND SELF

An important idea undergirding the literature on socialization and self is the notion of social constructivism. Specifically, according to the constructivism paradigm, notions of truth and reality are abandoned in favor of the notion that ideas about the world, especially in the social world, are constructed in the minds and experiences of individuals (Heppner et al., 1999). These constructions are shaped by culture, media, customs, traditions, social interactions, roles, and deeply rooted belief systems. Although such constructions exist and can be described to others, they are not necessarily representations of truth.

Social constructivism is based on four assumptions: (1) cultures create and share ways of understanding reality; (2) understanding is a social product; (3) understandings are persistent because they're useful (they reinforce social structures), not because they represent truth; and (4) understanding provides a map for social action and behavior (Heppner et al., 1999). To be able to conceptualize cultural selves in terms of these assumptions contributes to a deeper appreciation for the necessity of a shifting selves paradigm.

Constructions may be simple, complex, naïve, or sophisticated and may change over time, across context, or as a result of education, experience, or maturation (Heppner et al., 1999). In the context of understanding cultural selves, reality is created and recreated by cultural participants in various cultural systems and groups. Although there may be agreement that a particular event occurs, it is the *meaning* attributed to that event that is relevant. If we accept the assumption that

selves are shaped by context and culture, then selves must continually shift, adapt, and change.

Understanding social constructivist perspectives of self is especially relevant in the counseling field because clients' perceptions and understandings of experience often conflict with a counselor's assumptions and worldviews (Sue & Sue, 2003). For example, if a client refuses to talk about her family, there are clearly numerous possible explanations. The client may be avoidant, resistant, private, or, in certain cultural frameworks (see Kondo, 1992, for an excellent discussion of this), she may be protecting the privacy and honor of her family by not revealing personal matters. A particular challenge in working across cultures is understanding how clients "construct" their experiences. This is especially difficult for counselors who are not aware of their own worldviews and who cannot separate their perspectives from their client's (Sue & Sue, 2003).

The idea that cultures share understandings of reality or truth is not new. Previous literature indicates that many cultural groups have shared worldviews (Carter, 1991; Sadowsky & Johnson, 1994; Sue & Sue, 2003). Specifically, based on the cultural value orientations model by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), Carter describes how particular cultural groups have shared understandings of time, relationships with nature, nature of people, and activity. For example, certain cultural groups, such as Puerto Ricans (Garcia-Preto, 1996; Inclan, 1985), tend to endorse a present time value, whereas European Americans exhibit more emphasis on the future.

Social constructivists do not disagree about the actual occurrence of an event (e.g., the client not talking about her family). Rather, they believe that it is the *interpretation* of the occurrence that is pertinent to social interactions and in conceptualizations of self. And socialization plays a key role in one's interpretation. Given the tremendous increase in clients from different cultural backgrounds in the counseling setting, the existence of multiple constructions and multiple truths is very common. In fact, it is the growth of multiple realities that may contribute to cultural misunderstandings and conflicts in the cross-cultural counseling process and social interactions (Heppner et al., 1999). For example, in the case of the client who does not talk about her family, it may be due to the fact that in her culture, it is a sign of maturity to keep family issues within the bounds and privacy of the family circle. This perspective may contradict the counselor's socially constructed assumptions that the client is exhibiting resistant or avoidant tendencies. The counselor may be socialized to make sense of the client's behavior by seeing it as negative, while the client is behaving according to her cultural norms.

Because constructions do not represent universal truths or realities, events, experiences, and perceptions are bound to one another through interpretive lenses. Social constructions have longevity because they reinforce social structures, positions, and relationships, not necessarily because they represent truth (Heppner et al., 1999).

THE CO-CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURE AND SELF

Social constructivism is related to the notion of mutual constitution in social psychology, which emphasizes that we are social and cultural beings. For example,

research has found that around the world, people smile. Yet, although this is a common ritual, it has different meanings (Bruner, 1990) and different consequences depending on the social and cultural context (Yrizarry, Matsumoto, Imai, Kookan, & Takeuchi, 2001). Similarly, understandings of self are informed by context, relationships between the people interacting, and cultural belief systems. Often, these understandings are tied to how we have been socialized to understand cultural norms. Individuals cannot be understood as separate from their settings. Instead, both individuals and contexts coexist in a process of mutual constitution (Bruner, 1990; Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998). Biology, genetics, and heredity are certainly critical aspects of social behavior and self, but research has highlighted that the self can shift depending on the situation and setting (Cousins, 1989; Kondo, 1992; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Yeh, 1996; Yeh & Huang, 1996).

Thus, cultural values and how one is socialized to interpret events influence behaviors, thoughts, and emotions. Individuals in turn help give shape and meaning to their experience within a cultural context. Differential meanings are attached to behaviors depending on the cultural context in which the behavior has occurred, and individuals act within the parameters of appropriate behavior as deemed by the cultural context. As a result, the same behavior may have different meanings in different cultural contexts (Fivush & Buckner, 1997) according to how one is socialized.

It is important to explore how various cultural artifacts (e.g., proverbs, media images, stories, rituals) shape the relationships between selves and the social world. In particular, cultural artifacts influence beliefs, ideas, and how meaning is made of events and people. Thus, socialization to one's culture holds important implications for the development of self. Those in the West view socialization as one-directional and developmental; the assumption is that children are socialized and that socialization ends when one becomes an adult. Yet socialization is an ongoing, multidirectional process, which influences a person's ways of being.

Markus and colleagues describe socially and culturally embedded selves as selfways (Markus, Mullally, & Kitayama, 1997). Selfways involve being able to shift across multiple "sociocultural patterns of participation" (p. 16) and characteristic manners of interacting as a person in the world. Hence, selfways incorporate an understanding and internalization of socialization and culture as multidirectional and ongoing, rather than unidirectional and developmental. Specific features of selfways include "sociocultural historical ideas and values," "sociocultural-historical processes and practices," "social episodes in local worlds," and "psychological tendencies" (pp. 17–21). Sociocultural-historical ideas and values are religious, philosophical, and historical, such as those demonstrated in the Declaration of Independence, Protestantism, and Cartesian philosophy in the United States and in Buddhism, Shintoism, and Confucianism in Japan (Markus et al., 1997).

According to Markus et al. (1997), sociocultural-historical processes and practices include everyday practices and influences, such as linguistic practices, proverbs, employment practices, and aspects of the legal system. For example, in the United States, common proverbs include "Pull yourself up by your boot straps"; "The early bird gets the worm"; and "Be true to yourself." These reflect a strong cultural emphasis on autonomy, assertiveness, and individuality. In contrast, in Asian cultures

such as Japan and China, common sayings include “An elder in the house is a treasure in the house”; “Five hundred years ago, all came from the same family”; and “To take care of your body is the beginning of loving one’s parents.” Such sayings reflect the psychological tendencies of respect for elders, family unity, and filial piety in Asian cultural values.

Social episodes in local worlds refer to relational interactions that reflect embedded values and beliefs. Markus et al. (1997) describe practices in the United States that encourage autonomy, such as telling guests to “help themselves.” In contrast, social episodes in Japan highlight the significance of group harmony. For example, children are expected to do school chores as a group, eat and serve lunch as a group, and learn to interact as interconnected members of a group. Numerous other examples of everyday events and social interactions reflect norms and values that are culturally constructed. Kim and Markus (1999) contrasted ordering a decaffeinated cappuccino with nonfat milk at a café in San Francisco with placing the same order in Seoul. In San Francisco, the practice of ordering such a specific cappuccino has an underlying meaning of uniqueness and standing out, which is consistent with Western cultural norms. In Seoul, the cultural expectation is that individuals order in ways that represent connectedness to others. Thus, ordering such a specialized drink may be frowned upon. In the United States, individuals are expected to be unique; in Korea, individuals are expected to conform to group norms.

Differential expectations of the person in varying cultural contexts have implications for the development of emotions, thoughts, behaviors, and perceptions (Fivush & Buckner, 1997) while cultural values reinforce group norms. Likewise, individuals’ behaviors, thoughts, and emotions have meaning in a cultural context. Thus, interaction in a cultural context provides meaning to individuals and reinforces or changes cultural patterns. Such a dynamic interaction between individual and culture is the foundation of mutual constitution and of the development and socialization of self. Kim and Markus (1999) note that behavior, for example, among East Asians, occurs within the prescribed norms that are reinforced by cultural context. Essentially, individuals learn appropriate behavior while understanding of their core self occurs according to the norms established by their respective cultures.

Hence, it may be posited that the self is constructed in a cultural context and the self in turn shapes the cultural context. For example, connection to others is one of the primary reasons for conformity to group norms (Kim & Markus, 1999). Socialization can be thought of as occurring in a cultural context that triggers cognitions regarding appropriate behavior, whether conformity or uniqueness. In Western societies, independent self systems are constructed within a cultural norm that values uniqueness and independence, and interdependent self systems are constructed within a cultural norm that values conformity to the group.

MULTIPLE SELVES

Historically, Western conceptualizations of self have focused on individual personality traits, the stability of internal attributes, and an emphasis on being and becoming an individual who has mastery over his or her actions (Epstein, 1973).

Cross-cultural perspectives of self have challenged this perspective as the dominant and sole theoretical conceptualization for understanding persons and their behaviors, thoughts, and perceptions (Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Markus et al., 1997; McGuire, McGuire, & Cheever, 1986). Increased understanding of the ways one can be a person has given rise to several new theoretical conceptualizations of personhood (i.e., spirit, relational). We focus specifically on how the self is understood from the perspective of either individualism or collectivism (Triandis, 1989). This is not to say that there are not within group differences among Americans, for example, women are generally more relationally oriented and connection to others is an important part of the self-system (Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2000). Likewise, spiritual persons may access a spiritual self in which connection to the universe, God, or a higher power is a major component of the self-system (Hunter & Lewis, 2004; Obasi, 2002). For ease of discussion, we have chosen to remain within the traditional individual and collectivism frameworks.

Individualistic cultures, such as those in the West, promote the development of independent selves. Personhood is viewed from the perspective of being an individual, one's internal attributes are given worth and are believed to guide behaviors, and individuals are expected to be unique, while social role and social context are deemphasized. Cultures in the East promote interdependent selves such that relationships, group expectations, and cultural contexts contribute to personhood. Thus, behaviors and thoughts occur within the norms of the culture, and relationships among others in the group are emphasized. One's way of being a person is intricately linked to others through social relationships, group norms, and cultural context (Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Markus et al., 1997; Yeh & Huang, 1996; Yeh & Hwang, 2000a). In addition, cultural context may be viewed as a prime for the accessibility of multiple selves, such as a public self, a private self, and a collective self. Relative accessibility of one's self system depends on the cultural norms and values in which one is raised. For example, in the United States, individuals are expected to be unique and value personal goals above the goals of the group. Relatedly, Americans may access self systems that are private, in contrast to Koreans, who may be primed by their cultural contexts to access a collective self.

The effects of priming on cognitive attributions for a novel event have been demonstrated experimentally among bicultural Chinese living in Hong Kong who have also been influenced by Western culture and Chinese Americans who were born in China but live in the United States. Cultural priming has also been experimentally demonstrated with European American and Korean high school students. In these experiments, European American students behaved consistently with cultural norms that represent individuality, uniqueness, and differentiation from others; Korean high school students made choices that represented conformity to the group. In essence, Korean high school students made choices that did not deviate from the majority.

SHIFTING SELVES

Bicultural competence is another theoretical perspective used to consider selves across varying cultural domains (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton,

1993). Bicultural competence involves the integration of two cultures without experiencing the tension between the two (Domanico, Crawford, & Wolfe, 1994). According to the alternation model of bicultural competence (LaFromboise et al., 1993), an individual adjusts his or her behavior to a particular cultural or social context, without having to make a commitment to a specific cultural identity. Underlying the theory is that the person is socialized to respond to and make meaning of two different cultures. The ability to adapt the self across situational contexts may require using different languages, coping strategies, interpersonal communication, and motivational styles of interaction (Ramirez, 1984). Theories of bicultural competence differ from notions of shifting selves (see Yeh & Hwang, 2000a) in that bicultural competence acknowledges only two main cultural identities (dominant and culture of origin), whereas shifting selves theory allows for multiple ways the self can be expressed and understood across numerous relational and situational contexts. Shifting selves also holds implications for understanding socialization in multiple contexts. For example, research in the area of racial socialization may explore under which circumstances and in which contexts racial socialization attitudes are strongest and weakest. In line with this, research studies may also explore how the self adapts and changes (shifts) to cope within various cultural contexts and in relationship to other racial and cultural beings. Yeh (1999) provides an example of this in her discussion of shifting self theory and invisibility among African American males.

Shifting selves are contextually and situationally informed, malleable, adaptable, and evolving. A recurring idea in most research and theory on the interdependent self has been the relational and contextual emphasis on conceptions of the self. In particular, in a cross-cultural study of self in Japan and the United States, Yeh (1996) describes the Japanese self as multidimensional and situationally based. The Japanese shifting self shapes and expresses itself in terms of important interpersonal obligations. The shifting self is integrated with one's social and relational, not individual, responsibility and responds and adapts according to influences such as feelings, place, time, and social situation. Yeh determined that the most significant influence on how the Japanese self is expressed is the present social relationship and attendant obligatory patterns of social interaction. Due to these factors, Japanese selves are not consistent across situations; rather, Japanese selves are defined by social and relational contexts.

In collectivistic cultures, the notion of interdependent and shifting selves has arisen as a way of understanding the multiple ways the self is expressed across varying social roles and cultural contexts (Yeh & Hwang, 2000a). Yeh and Hwang have discussed that one of the hallmarks of multiple and shifting selves in collectivistic societies is that meaning is given to the self through relationships and social interaction, an interdependent self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Thus, the self is meaningful in varying social contexts and social roles, which differs from how the self is expressed in individualistic cultures, where individuals develop an independent self-construal (Kanagawa, Cross, & Markus, 2001; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Socialization of the self in differing cultural contexts is also believed to give rise to how the self samples information from the environment, makes meaning out of cultural experiences, and determines which cognitions are

used to perceive and interact with the world (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Hong et al. (2000) used cultural icons such as the U.S. flag and a Chinese dragon, the Capitol building and the Great Wall, and Superman and Stone Monkey, respectively, as primes in two experimental conditions and a control condition. When shown a picture of a school of fish, participants in the U.S. prime condition attributed behavior to internal explanations, for example, "The fish in front is the leader." Participants in the Chinese prime condition were more likely to attribute behavior to external reasons, such as "The fish is being chased." In the control condition, in which primes were not used, participants attributed behavior equally to internal and external attributions. Bicultural individuals are believed to contain both cultures; the accessibility of the self that is utilized is primed by cultural contexts. Similar results have been found in studies conducted by Triandis (1989), Trafimow, Triandis, and Goto (1989), Kim and Markus (1999), and Hong et al. (2000). The results from these studies provide insight into how the shifting self may function and how culture serves as a prime for the development of independent and interdependent self systems (Markus & Wurf, 1987). In other words, priming provides experimental evidence for how culture shapes and maintains the accessibility of independent and interdependent self systems.

CONCLUSION

Traditional views of the self have been explored and explained using Western views of the self as stable, unique, and consistent across varying social contexts. Western views have influenced socialization and self theories and the ways we think about the relationship between culture and self. Such a perspective assumes that how culture is communicated to self through the process of socialization is unidirectional rather than multidirectional and ongoing. The cross-cultural psychology perspective has provided another model with which to view the self-system. In a non-Western approach, relationships to other persons, spirit, nature, and the creator are given importance as critical aspects of the self-system. Among cultural groups such as Koreans, Japanese, Chinese, Africans, and Latinos, the self is relational. Behaviors, thoughts, and cognitions occur from the perspective of relationships to other persons and are not individualistic. In addition, cultural norms and practices provide meaning to interactions and individuals' behaviors reinforce and/or change cultural meaning through the dynamic interaction of mutual constitution. Thus, reality is shaped and reshaped and the self is able to shift across contexts.

Socialization is an integral aspect of understanding the ability of the self to shift in a variety of social contexts. The process of socialization is considered by many Western theorists to be the key to understanding how persons learn to be persons. The cultural psychology and African psychology perspectives highlight that differing conceptualizations of personhood do exist. According to one's socialization experiences, a dynamic changing self, an interrelated self, and an interconnected self are consistent with cultural norms. The notion of a stable and independent self may be viewed as maladaptive in cultural norms outside the United States. In American

psychology, the tendency has been to view Western norms as universal and individuals who differed from the American cultural norms were perceived negatively. Through understanding the socialization experiences of diverse people, the tendency in American psychology to pathologize may be decreased. Selfhood may also be viewed as inextricably linked to culture and the ability of the self to shift as an expression of one's culture.

The self is socialized in a cultural context, and so individuals' behaviors, thoughts, and emotions must be understood from a cultural perspective. The notion of selfways provides us with another perspective for understanding culture's and socialization's impact on the self. Understanding the cultural context helps to understand individuals' attributions, psychological needs, and actions. It is equally important to understand that the accessibility of the differing self systems can be primed or activated through the communication of implicit cultural messages. This is not to say that we must simply understand culture to understand the individual; rather, we must understand that cultural practices and individuals' self systems in a culture are co-constructed.

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