Macro-Level Factors & their Influence on Family Perceptions in Two Cultures

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Abstract

Values, political beliefs, and family perceptions are sensitive to cultural change, which embraces change in the political, economic, and other societal-level spheres. This study investigated the impact of culture-level individualism and gender on family perceptions and the interrelations between the macro-level and individual level factors in South Korea and Hungary, two countries that have undergone recent social change. The study included data from 288 university students. Cultural and gender influences on Postmodernist values, democratic beliefs, political interest, political conservatism, perceptions of family relatedness and democratisation were found, and the overall model of interrelations between all the variables was tested using SEM (structural equation modelling) analysis.

Key words: Family perceptions, Culture, Gender, Postmodernist values, Political beliefs.

Factores Macro y su Influencia en las Percepciones Familiares en Dos Culturas

Resumen

Los valores, creencias políticas y percepciones familiares son sensibles a los cambios culturales, los cuales implican modificaciones en las esferas política, económica y a otros niveles sociales. Este estudio investigó el impacto del nivel de individualismo cultural y el género en las percepciones familiares y en las inter-relaciones entre factores de nivel macro e individual en Corea del Sur y Hungría, dos países que han experimentado cambios sociales recientes. Este estudio incluyó los datos de 288 estudiantes universitarios. Se encontraron influencias culturales y del género en los valores post-modernistas, creencias democráticas, intereses políticos, conservadurismo político, percepciones de la conexión familiar y la democratización. Para probar el modelo general de relaciones entre todas las variables se usó el análisis de Ecuaciones Estructurales.

Palabras clave: Percepciones familiares, Cultura, Género, Valores post-modernistas, Creencias políticas.

Culture and gender have an important role to play in shaping values and beliefs, as well as perceptions of family relatedness and democratisation. The family can be viewed as embedded in the socio-cultural environment, making a contextual approach to studying the family, which takes the societal and ecological factors into account, particularly valuable (Georgas et al., 1997, p.304). Despite the significance of family life, the increasing importance of individuation means that family and gender relations need to be continually re-evaluated (Thornton & Young-DeMarco, 2001).

This study presents a multi-level model that delineates the links between family perceptions, and factors at societal and individual levels. We examine interrelations between macro-level factors, and values and beliefs measured at the individual level, and perception of family relatedness and democratisation. At the individual level, Goodwin & Gaines (2004) found that the correlation between fatalistic beliefs and relationship quality was moderated by country, suggesting a possible influence of the level of Individualism on the extent to which negative beliefs about the relationship actually affected the quality of the relationship. At the group/family level, Kagitcibasi (1996) notes that, as family is an integral part of the society, beliefs, expectations, and values regarding family are sensitive to both cultural history and social change. Rindfuss and his colleagues (1992) claimed that individuals' socialisation experiences in the family are important in connecting the individuals to the norms, values, and customs of a society which are continued and maintained in the intimate social setting of the family. Trent & South (1992) also outline the influence of experiences that are typical to individuals' social or ethnic group on family perceptions, suggesting links between individuals' cultural and social background and their attitudes towards the family. Although the directions and nature of these interrelations can be viewed in different ways, this study will focus only on one-directional influences, from the macro-level factors to individual-level factors, then leading onto family perceptions.

Culture

Georgas et al. (2001) outline the significance of the impact of culture on various family outcomes; in their study, culture accounted for 20% of the total variance on the perceived emotional distance in the family. Kagitcibasi (2007) claimed that these cultural views lead to differences in the meaning and structure of the family in different societies. She found that traditionally, the Western families tend to emphasise autonomy, whereas the Eastern families emphasised relatedness. The dimensions of Individualism and Collectivism may be one way of examining the manner in which opposing cultural views shape individuals' relationships with close others. Those from individualistic cultures place more importance on autonomy and independence of the self, whereas those from collectivistic cultures emphasise harmony and cohesion to the groups and entities they belong to (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Markus & Kitayama (1991) claimed that these cultural views shape the perception of self in relation to others, and have implications for the individuals' behaviours. For instance, tendency for

interdependent and malleable self-views is found in Mexico, where the need for affiliation, belonging, and acceptance is high (Diaz-Loving, 2005). Georgas and his colleagues (1997) found that for the members of the extended family, the strength of emotional closeness was higher in the more collectivistic countries of Cyprus and Greece than in the more individualistic countries of Britain, Germany, and the Netherlands. Cultural differences in social desirability can also be found. For example, Diaz-Loving (1998) discussed that Mexicans, in comparison to Americans, are likely to show higher acceptance of hierarchical relations and obedience to authority, especially at the family level.

Hofstede (2009) provides a series of cultural-level Individualism (IDV) scores which can be used to inform cross-cultural comparisons. This score has correlations with social, economic, and historical aspects of a nation; a country's Individualism score was highly correlated with its Gross National Product (GNP), Human Development Index (HDI), international transparency, and religious and philosophical background (Basabe & Ros, 2005). This suggests that this cultural dimension has close ties with the social and cultural factors and economic state.

In our study, we focus on two cultures- Hungary and South Korea- that have undergone significant but rather different social transformations and development in the last few decades. Such changes are liable to have important implications for individual' values and political beliefs (e.g. Inglehart, 1997; Schwartz & Bardi, 1997), and in our study, cross-cultural differences in the political beliefs and Postmodernist values were investigated as mediators of family change.

Changes in Central/Eastern Europe have been dramatic in the past decades. Inglehart (1997; 2008) claims that the shift to Postmodernist values occur as individuals place stronger emphases on autonomy, self-expression, and the quality of life. Postmodernist values were considered less important in the Eastern European countries compared to the Western European ones (Schwartz & Bardi, 1997). Less importance was placed on autonomy and egalitarianism values in the Eastern European countries, possibly because of the economic hardships and political conditions the citizens faced. In particular, Schwartz & Bardi (1997) suggest that the constraints and instabilities that were brought to the citizens pushed them to adhere strongly to conservatism and hierarchy values, favouring social order and self-discipline.

The political unrest of the recent decades could also have resulted in high level of mistrust toward the government and lose of interest in politics, as well as low level of Postmodernist value endorsement. These types of changes were reflected in the values in different settings, especially in countries that have undergone or undergoing social change. Flanagan (2003) points to the rising importance of active involvement in politics among the young generations through learning of new principles of social contract, where participation in most community, family, and social affairs is becoming highly encouraged. Thus, he claims that changing social norms had impact on values and attitudes desired in children at school and in the family in Hungary and other Eastern European countries, and that these changes had implications for political stability as well. Hungary is unique among these countries, however, for its high Individualism; it scores 82 on Hofstede's Individualism, which is higher than most other ex-Communist countries.

South Korea, with its strong Confucian traditions, is seen as a collectivistic country, where there is emphasis on harmonious, cooperative, and strong interpersonal relationships and group identities. Indeed, on Hofstede's Individualism dimension, South Korea scores 18, which places her on the highly collectivistic end of the continuum. Political changes in South Korea have been dramatic throughout the second half of the twentieth century. Despite the establishment of the first democratic government in the history with the first president in 1948, the war with North Korea, heavy influence from the United States, rapid economic and social development, and the ruling military dictators, have left the country under authoritarian leadership. Strong protests against authoritarian rule in the 1970s and 1980s have led onto democratisation and restoration of free elections in 1987 in South Korea (US Department of State, 2009). The desire for better democracy, along with growing distrust for the political situations, politicians, and the government and more active voicing of opinions and participation has been observed in South Korea (Dalton & Shin, 2003). Moreover, Dalton & Shin (2003) argue that these changes in political views and opinions are coupled with more democratic values, positive views toward democracy, and belief in democratic government by the Koreans.

In discussing the family culture in Korea, the influence of Confucianism and the virtue of Filial Piety are one of the most important themes (Cumings, 2005). Hierarchical relations among family members determined by age, gender, and the role in the family, and strict adherence to the defined roles have been characteristic features of a Korean family. Moreover, Cumings (2005) notes the collectivistic nature of the Korean family, where each person is regarded as a 'building block' of the family as well as the society, and his/her attachment and relatedness to the family very strong (p.16).

Family, Gender, & Culture

Family Relatedness

This study discusses the impact of culture and gender on one of the family perception variables, 'family relatedness'. Family relatedness combines the concepts of family bond, cohesion, intimacy, and closeness. North and her colleagues (2008) found a particularly strong link between family cohesion, defined by the strength of the family bond and relatedness in the family, and personal happiness. In discussing 'relatedness', Markus & Kitayama (1991) argue that although the appreciation and need for maintaining relatedness with others is universal, its significance can differ depending on the emphasis placed on either the independent or the interdependent self (p. 229). The dimensions of Individualism-Collectivism, and the emphasis on the independent versus interdependent selves, can thus influence the perception of appropriate level of family relatedness and the degree of independence from the family.

Cross-cultural differences in the level of family allocentrism, or norm-

oriented family relationship, were found in Eastern cultures (Chinese and East Indian samples), and Western culture, White Canadian samples (Lay et al., 1998). This finding demonstrates that cultural background and teachings, which promote the sense of either independent or interdependent self, affect the level of family relatedness and its importance in that culture. The importance of the concept of familism, which includes aspects of family relatedness, on the individuals' social, personal, and psychological developments has been emphasised in various literature (e.g., Yabiku, Axinn, & Thornton, 1999). This study compares the perceptions of family relatedness in the more individualistic country of Hungary and the more collectivistic country of South Korea to confirm the cultural influence on views regarding self in relation to family. It can be hypothesised that South Koreans, due to the collectivistic influences, would perceive this dimension to be more important than Hungarians, and score higher.

Family Democratisation

Family democratisation incorporates views about decision making, gender roles, and equalities in the family. It includes what Larson (1974) termed as 'family power', views, norms and attitudes concerning family decisions and conflict managements. Family members can view relations in the family as equal or hierarchical, attribute certain roles to the members, and have differing expectations about each members of the family (for example, deciding that the father has the most say in the decisions or that the mother is in charge of child-caring). Socio-cultural context often shapes the expectations and opinions about gender roles and gender equality in the family. Normative gender expectations reflect the culturally shared norms of the society about the men and women's roles in the family (Kwon et al., 2003). In South Korea, for example, the strong influence of Confucianism, with heavy emphases on social hierarchy and clearly defined roles for the different genders and ages, has led to clearly divided gender roles and hierarchical relations in the family (Kwon et al., 2003). Therefore, we might find stronger beliefs in family democratisation among Hungarians than South Koreans.

Gender

Gender differences in beliefs such as importance of egalitarianism in work and family have been found to be significant and relatively invariant across cultural, demographic, and situational factors (Sidanius & Pratto, 2001). Markus & Kitayama discuss gender differences in construals of the self, where women are more likely than men to construct interdependent self and are naturally more inclined to form close ties and deep-rooted relatedness with those around them. Roberts & Helson (1997) found that women find it easier to combine individuality or autonomy and relatedness successfully, which can be seen as desirable. These findings provide ample reasons to believe that gender differences exist in self-beliefs in relation to

close others, and that these can lead towards differences in various family processes and meanings.

The processes and the benefits of family integration might also be dependent on the individual's gender, their experiences of gender relations, interactions, and roles (Yabiku, Axinn, & Thornton, 1999). In particular, gender differences in the importance of gender equality in the family seem to exist in many cultures, where women view it as more important than men. These findings demonstrate that women and men may differ in the way they view relationship dynamics and roles, and interact with close others.

Postmodernist Values

Values and value systems serve as 'frames of reference that guide individuals to behave or think in certain ways in the situations and contexts they face' (Feather, 1979, p.1619). It is thus important to consider individuals' value priorities when looking at other aspects of the beliefs and opinions they hold. Schwartz (1990) claims that values vary in importance, transcend situations, and that the relative importance of certain value types might be closely linked to the interests that are specific to those from individualistic or collectivistic cultures (p. 142).Values, in the context of culture, include beliefs about what is considered to be good, right, and desirable that is shared among the members of the same cultural group (Schwartz & Bardi, 1997, p. 386). Oishi and his colleagues (1998)' study of values found significant relationships between values and Individualism-Collectivism, and self-concepts. Using Schwartz (1992)' individual value types, they found that those from the collectivistic cultures placed more emphasis on the values that favour conservation and serving the group rather than self, whereas those from the individualistic cultures placed relatively high importance on the values serving self-interest. Therefore, values and value priorities are culture-sensitive, for they often reflect the goals transmitted to the individuals through social learning and experiences that are specific to the culture.

Although relatively stable, values are also sensitive to societal influences, and can thus be influenced by general social trends as well as unique historical and cultural background (Bardi & Goodwin, in press; Feather, 1979, p. 1629). Roberts & Helson (1997) claim that individuals are turning away from traditional roles, social norms and values and are paying more attention to the aspects of self including thoughts, feelings, and traits. Therefore, while culture has influence on values, social change often leads to changes in the existing value priorities and goals. Schwartz & Bardi (1997) discuss the adaptive nature of values; economic or political climate, such as communism, can impact on the formation and change of values. The relationship between cultural values, cultural change, and economic growth has been found, the types of values that are emphasised, such as Autonomy versus Embeddedness and Hierarchy versus Egalitarianism, and changes to these value priorities in conjunction with economic development are repeatedly demonstrated in this and other studies of value change (e.g., Allen et al., 2007; Schwartz, 2004).

The current study focuses on the Postmodernist values. Inglehart (1997, 2008) distinguishes between different priorities in people's values using two dimensions of opposing emphases: traditional versus secular-rational values and survival versus self-expression values. Whereas traditional values place emphases on religion, authority, and national pride, rational-secular values would include the opposites. Survival values stress both the survival of the individual and the society, self-expression values stress enhancement of the individuals' freedom of choice, control, and overall well-being. Inglehart (1997) proposes that individuals in the 'Postmodernist' societies are likely to be high on secular-rational and self-expression values and those in the 'Modernist' societies the opposite. This pattern reflects the interaction between the sociocultural conditions and values priorities, for certain conditions of a society are likely to encourage individuals to endorse certain types of views and values that will be useful or beneficial to them. Both the level of economic development and cultural history and background that is unique to the country accounted for most of the cross-national differences found (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). The observed changes included shifts of opinions and preferences toward many aspects of life, such as individuals' beliefs about the self and identity, relationships, the family, and the larger society (Beck, 1997; Giddens, 1992; Inglehart, 1997).

De Graaf & De Graaf (1988) have suggested the role of Postmaterialism, or Postmodernist values, as a predictor variable for aspects of the individual including political attitudes and beliefs, where Postmaterialist attitudes influence the individuals' political interest, party identification, political dissatisfaction, and voting behaviour (p. 51). The rising importance of individual freedom and quality of life, and decreasing importance of material success and maintenance of status quo, result in more democratic ideals for the society. Postmaterialism is also correlated with anti-establishment orientation, less nationalism, enthusiasm and support for 'third force' movements in countries with long histories of dominant two-party systems, and peace movements (Lesthaeghe & Meekers, 1986, p. 229). Moreover, Inglehart (1981) claims that those holding postmaterialist values are only about one third as likely to hold conservative views compared to those holding materialist values, and that they are likely to favour new ideas and social change. Therefore, the impact of gender and the cultural dimensions of Individualism and Collectivism on Postmodernist values, and its relations to political beliefs and family perceptions will be one focus of this study.

Political Beliefs

Political ideologies are often discussed in conjunction with values, various other aspects of political beliefs that the individual hold, and individual and societal factors that are at work. Barnea & Schwartz (1998) discuss the importance of value priorities in predicting support for political parties. They find that those who attribute importance to conservation values, which emphasise the importance of protecting social order, certainty, and the status quo, were predisposed to vote for conservative parties. Inglehart (1990) claims that political culture is closely tied to

and embedded in values, which are shaped by years of historical experience shared, transmitted, and altered by generations. Michauld and her colleagues (2009) also discuss both the effect of cultural values, which include the social norms and rules for behaviour and individual's interactional patterns, and the role of political knowledge on political ideologies. This points to the importance of investigating the links between societal factors that shape individuals' values and beliefs, and mediating values and political beliefs.

These values and beliefs also impact on family perceptions. Conservatism is linked to societal, individual, and family level factors. For example, Van Hiel and his colleagues (2004) argue that cultural conservatism is highly related to authoritarian parent-child relationships, traditional work ethics, and conventional female roles. Feather (1979) found significant positive relations between total conservatism and national security and family security, and a negative relation with equality. Jost and his colleagues also claim that resistance to change and opposition to equality are the main components of political conservatism (e.g., Jost et al., 2003). Therefore, it can be hypothesised that higher political conservatism will predict weaker support for family democratisation, that there will be gender differences in level of political conservatism, although the direction of this relation is unclear, and that women will demonstrate higher support for family democratisation. Societal atmosphere impacts on political opinions and beliefs, where changes and instabilities in the country may lead individuals to hold more conservative political opinions in association with the psychological needs to reduce uncertainty and threat (Jost et al., 2007). It is possible, thus, to posit that the security and stability of the country influence the individuals' general and political conservatism, and that these conservative views in turn can have impact on family perceptions, especially in regards to democratisation within the family. Inglehart (1997) demonstrated the link between societal change and increasing tolerance for non-traditional family forms and women's freedom of decision concerning the family. For the purpose of the study, political conservatism is measured as political orientation, as there is a significant correlation between level of political conservatism and left-right political orientation (Collani & Grumm, 2009).

Democratic beliefs are likely to be related to cultural beliefs, values, and norms (Kim et al., 2002). How democracy is understood, how strong the belief that democracy is good, and how these beliefs form and spread across different aspects of life can be dependent on the factors that shape or influence both cultural and political atmosphere surrounding the individuals. Greater affluence, a higher emphasis on emotional as well as physical well-being, and social equality are likely to lead to belief in democracy at the societal level and democratic beliefs at the individual level (Lipset, 1994). A growing importance of individual rights and freedom, which arise from increasing stability in the society, leads individuals to hold more democratic beliefs, and this in turn can allow for more democratic institutions (Inglehart, 2000). These patterns of change have been observed in the parts of the world where rapid economic and social development took place, such as in East Asian countries of South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore (Lipset, 1994). The relationship between cultural-level individualism, individual-level democratic beliefs, and family closeness/dependence and family democratisation will be

closely investigated in this study.

Differences in endorsement of Postmodernist values or political beliefs in South Koreans and Hungarians can also be traced to the recent political histories of these nations. Although both have gone through significant political changes, expansion of democracy spread to East Asian countries earlier than to ex-Communist Eastern European countries (Lipset, 1994). Moreover, it can be said that these changes were less abrupt in Asia than in Eastern Europe, where the former ideology and system of government was replaced with new democracy. In this sense, comparing the beliefs and values of South Koreans and Hungarians can be useful in understanding the possible effects of historical events, in this case the nature, magnitude, and recency of political change.

Hypotheses

In this study, culture and gender are considered as macro-level factors, as contextual factors that shape the experiences of the individuals. This conceptualisation of culture, where it is seen as an independent variable that influences factors such as level of development and psychological processes at the individual level, is commonly found in cross-cultural psychology (Miller, 2002). Individuals actively construct, and co-construct with others, explanations and stories that enable themselves to understand and make sense of the world around them, as well as self-concepts and identities, in their particular social context (Haste, 2004). In this sense, variables such as culture and gender provide individuals with a context in which they formulate and stabilise a view of the self, close others, and the world. Therefore, it is possible to conjecture that family perceptions are influenced by these macro-level factors via individual values and beliefs.

In this paper, these links and the mediating effects of the political beliefs and Postmodernist values on family perception will be investigated. The following can be proposed as hypotheses:

1) With the relatively more stable social, economic, and political conditions in recent years, Koreans would score higher on Postmodernist values, demonstrate less support for conservative parties and more democratic beliefs, and show more political interest than Hungarians.

2) Culture should impact on family perceptions, with values and political beliefs mediating the relationship. Higher democratic beliefs should be conducive to beliefs in more democratic family relations, represented as family democratisation in this study.

3) Postmodernist values, which should be related to both democratic beliefs and political interest, should also lead to more support for family democratisation. Therefore, higher level of Postmodernist Values should be positively related to democratic beliefs and political interest, and predict higher support for family democratisation.

4) South Koreans, who are believed to be more collectivistic than Hungarians, should emphasise relatedness in the family, and score higher on perception of

family relatedness.

5) Males and females in each culture, depending on their cultural teachings and differential socialisation experiences, might have different value priorities or hold different views about politics and the family. Therefore, there might be interactional effects of culture x gender on political beliefs, Postmodernist values, and family perceptions where cultural or gender effects might be minimised or mediated by each other.

6) Significant gender differences in family perceptions should be found, where women should rate the importance of family closeness and family democratisation higher than do men.

Method

Participants

The participants for this study consisted of university students from South Korea and Hungary. The study was run in South Korea and Hungary simultaneously in the Fall of 2009. Both samples of South Korean and Hungarian were relatively homogenous: Most of the participants were from the culture of original; all of the participants included for the final analysis were born in the country, spent most of their lives in the country, and were fluent in their national language. In order to ensure relatively equal and matching socioeconomic status of the participants across groups, participants from universities in medium-sized cities were recruited for the study. All sessions began with the researcher's introduction to the study and brief explanation of the participants' duties and responsibilities. All participants included in the study gave informed consent prior to their participation, and were debriefed at the end of the session. After deleting cases with large amount of data missing, the final selected data included 140 Hungarians [M age= 22.49, SD=4.16; 49 men (35%) and 91 women (65%)], and 148 Koreans [M age= 22.01, SD=2.04; 97 men (65.5%) and 51 women (34.5%)].

Questionnaire

With the original items in English, Korean and Hungarian versions of the questionnaire were created and back-translated (e.g., Van de Vjiver & Hambleton, 1996). Translators were both fluent in both the language to be translated (English) and the translated language (Korean or Hungarian). For most parts of the questionnaire except for demographic questions and the political orientation scale,

Individualism (IDV): According to Hofstede (2009), country-level Individualism score measures the relative importance of autonomy and independence in each country. Instead of measuring Individualism directly in the study, the country-level score provided in Hofstede (2009) is applied.

Demographic Information: Participants were asked to give information on their age, nationality, and gender.

Family perception: This part included 8 questions regarding views toward the family relationship, and participants were asked to rate how much they agree to each of the statements ranging from 1 (very strongly disagree) to 6 (very strongly agree). Four selected questions taken from Kagitcibasi (2007)'s *Autonomous-Related Self-in Family Scale* were included to test the participants' level of closeness, sense of relatedness, and family relatedness to the family. The questions included statements such as 'A person may be attached to his/her family', and at the same time 6-point Likert scale with forced choice method was used; participants were asked to choose from 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 6 *(very strongly agree)*, based on their level of agreement or the opinion regarding the statement. Data with missing values for items were deleted listwise in order to avoid the problem of invariance. It was believed that the missing or incomplete cases in the study were completely at random and the number of missing cases in each of the variables was quite small, which then validated the choice to employ the method, as discussed in Acock (2005)., expect respect for any differences of opinion' Four items from Spence & Helmreich (1978)'s *Attitudes toward Women Scale (AWS)* that are relevant to areas related to gender equality and women's role in the family, such as 'Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing laundry' are included to test the participants' views on family democratisation.

Postmodernist Values: Inglehart (1997)'s 12-item *Index of Materialism & Postmaterialism* was used to measure the participants' endorsement of Postmodernist values. Instead of the ranking method of the items originally proposed by the author, a rating method employing 6-point Likert scale was used in order for this scale to be congruent to the rest of the scales used in the questionnaire. For all 12 items, participants were asked to rate the extent to which they think each goal is important. Modernist value items included statements such as '*Maintaining a high rate of economic growth'*, and Postmodernist value items included statements such as '*Progress towards a less impersonal, more humane society'*. Placing the two types of values on each end of the continuum (Modernist versus Postmodernist), the final composite score for the Postmodernist value was computed by subtracting the mean of all the statements advocating Modernist value from the mean of those advocating Postmodernist value.

Political Beliefs: 6 questions regarding participants' level of interest in politics and belief in democracy were used. Questions included: *how important do you think politics is?; how interested are you in politics?; do you believe in democracy?; how important it is for you to live in a country governed democratically?; how much do you believe in the goodness of democracy?; did you vote in the last national election?*. These items were categorised into two aspects of political beliefs: political interest and democratic beliefs. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to test the relevance of the items tapping on these dimensions. For the item measuring the level of political conservatism, participants were asked to rate their beliefs on the political dimensions of conservatism, socialism, and liberalism was added. Participants were asked to rate their position on each of these dimensions on a scale of 1 to 10. A final score for political conservatism was

calculated by subtracting the mean value on socialism and liberalism from the conservatism score.

Analysis

Firstly, the impact of culture and gender, the independent variables, on other variables were tested. Mean scores of the variables were compared by culture and gender using one-way ANOVA tests. Moreover, two-way ANOVA analyses tested the independent and interactional effects of the independent variables on the other variables. Correlations between all of the variables included in the model were tested as well, in order to look at the significance of the relationships between the variables. Structural equation modelling (SEM) technique was used for confirmatory factor analyses of the sets of variables in the model, the family perceptions and the political beliefs, and for testing of the full hypothesised model. In the analyses, both the goodness of the fit of each of the models and the regression weights of the pathways in the model were considered, and these results are reported in the following section.

Results

ANOVA: Correlations between the Variables, Culture & Gender Effects
For the purpose of this part of the analysis, the significance of culture and gender's influences on the individual-level political beliefs and Postmodernist values, and the family perception variables are considered together. Culture and gender, the independent variables in the study, were found to have significant influence on aspects of political beliefs and Postmodernist values, and the two family perception variables. The results from one-way ANOVA tests comparing scores from the more individualistic and more collectivistic cultural groups and the male-female gender groups demonstrated that culture and gender had different but significant impact on political beliefs, Postmodernist values, and family perceptions. The correlations between all the variables are demonstrated in table 1. Some significant correlations were found among the individual-level factors; Postmodernist values were correlated with the level of political interest r (286) =.14, p<.05, and democratic beliefs were correlated with political interest r (286) =.33, p<.01.

Cross-cultural and cross-gender effects were investigated. Analyses of interactional effects of culture and gender on all of the mediating and dependent variables in the study were not significant; none of culture x gender effects for Postmodernist values F(1, 286)=.16, democratic beliefs F(1, 286)=.29, political interest F(1, 286)=.56, political conservatism F(1, 286)=. 90, family relatedness F(1, 286)=.04, and family democratisation F(1, 286)=.25 was significant at p<.05 level. These results suggest that in all probability, culture and gender influence the variables independently.

Table 1
Means, standard deviations, and Pearson's correlations between variables included in the model

	M	SD	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Individualism	49.11	32.04	.31**	-.14*	-.22**	.05	-.32**	.04	-.04
2. Gender	-0.49	-0.5		-.11	-.05	.09	.02	.16**	.14*
3. Political Conservatism	0.25	2.94			.10	-.06	.10	.05	.08
4. Postmodernist Values	-0.12	0.99				.02	.14*	-.03	.03
5. Democratic Beliefs	2.33	0.9					.33**	-.23**	-.19**
6. Political Interest	2.61	0.74						-.06	-.05
7. Family Closeness	4.89	0.88							.24**
8. Family Democratisation	4.24	0.65							

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Culture had influence on Postmodernist values, political conservatism, and political interest; Cross-cultural differences were significant for three of the variables, Postmodernist values $F(1, 286) = 13.41$; $p<.01$, political conservatism $F(1, 286) = 5.33$; $p<.05$, and political Interest $F(1, 286) = 33.25$; $p<.01$. Koreans held more Postmodernist values than Hungarians, showed less support for conservative political parties and less interest in politics. For the family perception variables however, culture did not have any direct impact; Cultural influence on family relatedness $F(1, 286) = .01$ and on family democratisation $F(1, 286) =2.03$ were not significant at $p<.05$ level. On the contrary, gender did not have significant impact on the political beliefs or Postmodernist values, and had influence only on the family perception variables. For the family perceptions variables, gender had direct impact on Family relatedness $F(1, 286) = 6.86$ and Family democratisation $F(1, 286) = 7.51$, and the effects were both significant at $p<.05$ level. Women scored higher than men for both of the variables. Neither culture $F(1, 286) =.14$ nor gender $F(1, 286) =.19$ had significant influence on democratic beliefs.

In the following section, the results from the structural equation modelling testing the significance of the individual pathways between the three levels of variables, the independent, mediating, and dependent variables, and the fit between the implied and the observed covariance matrices will be discussed in greater detail.

Model fitting

Three models, including two measurement models for different levels of variables and a structural model including all latent variables, were tested independently for their abilities to account for the hypothesised model. Full diagrams of the measurement and structural models for the study including parameter estimates and regression weights of the estimates can be found in Figures 1 to 3. Two separate testing of measurement models, one for the family perception variables and their indicators (Measurement Model I), and the second one for political belief variables (Measurement Model II) were performed, to check the validity of the groups of items testing each of the variables. After checking for these variables, full structural model was drawn and its goodness of fit with the hypothesised model was tested. Fit indices of chi-square (CMIN= minimum discrepancy) divided by degree of freedom (CMIN/df), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) are reported for the analysis of the final model in the study. We can assume a good fit if the CFI is greater than .9, RMSEA is below .08, and relative chi-square (CMIN /df) below 3 (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Maxwell et al., 2005). As can be found in table 2, analyses of the measurement models proved the adequacy of both models. Fit indices for the full structural equation model including all latent and manifest variables for the study, also indicate good fit (CMIN/df=1.335, p=.052; CFI=.968; RMSEA=.034). Reporting of the specific results of the full SEM model, which includes each of the parameters and their regression weights follows in the next section.

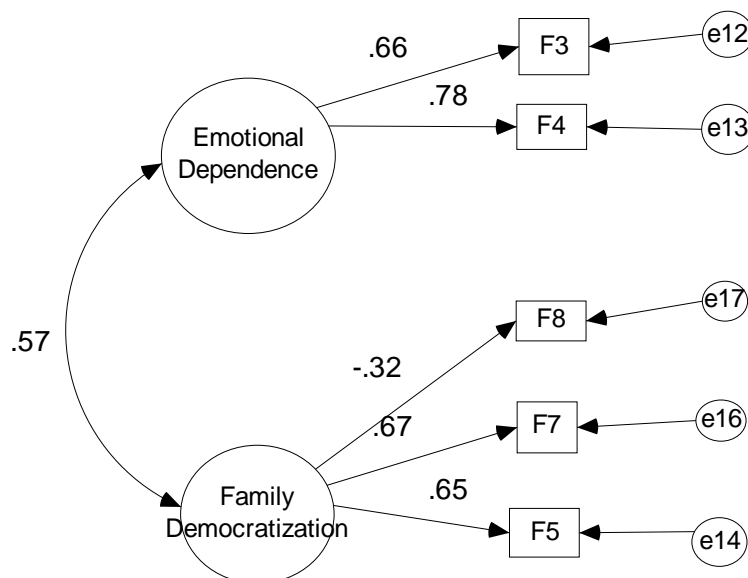Figure 1. Measurement Model I (Dependent Variables)

Figure 1. One measurement model for the family perception variables and their indicators was performed, to check the validity of the groups of items testing each of the variables.

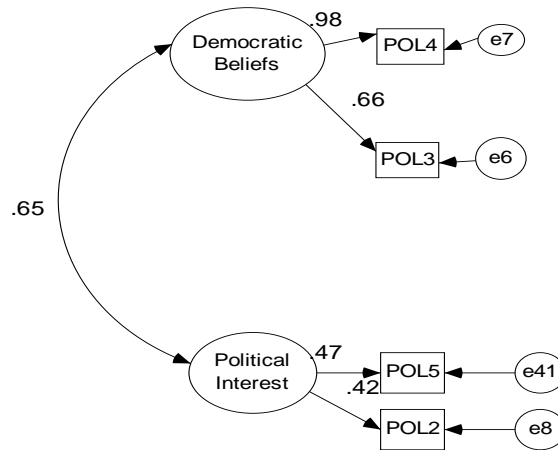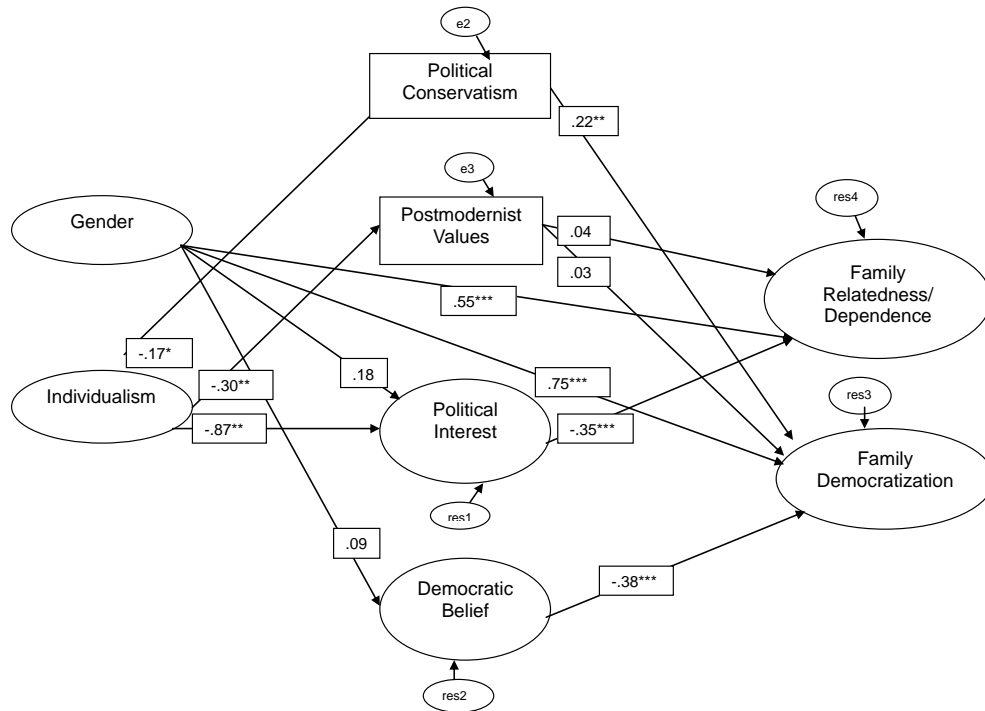Figure 2. Measurement Model II (Mediating Variables)

Figure 2. A second testing of measurement models for political belief variables was performed, to check the validity of the groups of items testing each of the variables.

Figure 3. Full SEM Model

CMIN/DF=1.335 ; p=.052 ; CFI=.968;
RMSEA=.034

Figure 3. These results suggest that stronger belief in democracy and higher political conservatism predict stronger belief in family democratisation, or, equality in the family, and that higher interest in politics predicts stronger belief in the importance of family closeness.

SEM results

In this part of the analysis, culture is represented by the country-level Individualism (IDV) score provided by Hofstede (2009). Country-level Individualism had significant impact on Postmodernist values β=-.30, p<.01, political conservatism β=-.17, p<.05, and political interest β=-.87, p<.01, but not on democratic beliefs β<|.10|. Higher score of country-level Individualism predicted lower political conservatism, political interest, and level of Postmodernist values. Political interest and democratic beliefs did not have mediating effect on gender's influence on family perceptions. However, gender had a direct effect on family perception; gender had a significant influence on family relatedness β=.55, p<.001, and family democratisation β=.75, p<.001 which indicates that the females perceived family relatedness/dependence and democratisation to be more important than the males in this study. Mediating variables in this study had various significant effects on family perceptions: 1) Democratic beliefs on family democratisation β=-.38, p<.001; 2) Political interest on family closeness/dependence β=-.35, p<.001; 3) Political conservatism on family democratisation β=.22, p<.01. These results suggest that stronger belief in democracy and higher political conservatism predict stronger belief in family democratisation, or, equality in the family, and that higher interest in politics predicts stronger belief in the importance of family closeness. However, Postmodernist values failed to predict family perception.

Discussion

This study investigated the impact of culture and gender on values, political beliefs, and family perceptions. The results are in line with the findings from other studies; the links between culture and value priorities (Schwartz, 1994), cultural heritage and values (Inglehart, 1900; 2000), political instability and societal conditions and value priorities (Schwartz & Bardi, 1997), culture and political views and participation (Ross, 1997), culture and the family (Kagitcibasi, 2007) have been demonstrated. This study demonstrated that that macro-level factors of culture and gender, affect individuals' values and beliefs, and furthermore, their family perceptions, and the interrelations between these variables were found to be significant in the SEM analysis.

Firstly, let us consider cross-cultural differences in the political dimensions, Postmodernist values were found to be significantly different amongst the students from the two countries. In accordance to Inglehart (1997; 2000), these cross-cultural differences can most likely be accounted by the differences in the historical and cultural backgrounds, as well as recent developments in the social and political spheres of these countries. In particular, Inglehart (1997; 2008) noted that the shift to Postmodernist values reflect the broader societal change which is reshaping different dimensions of life, including political outlook, gender roles, and religious/spiritual beliefs. This study clearly demonstrated cross-cultural differences in the endorsement of Postmodernist values, level of political interest, and political

conservatism in the two countries.

Cultural influences on the dimensions under investigation were also examined by a modelling the culture and gender effects. This study found that Hungarian students had lower levels of Postmodernism than the students in South Korea did. Inglehart (1997) argues that stable conditions of a country lead its citizens to adopt more Postmodernist values, and in this sense, the lower endorsement of Postmodernist values in the Hungarians may reflect the current changes and instabilities in political and other arenas of life in Hungary. Consistent with previous work, societal conditions of the country, and the ensuing Postmodernist values were closely related to political beliefs and attitudes, such as political interest (De Graaf & De Graaf, 1988). Inglehart (1997) claims that Postmodernist values extend to family values as well, where emphasis on women's self-realisation grows, and women's place and role outside the house are recognised and encouraged. However, an examination of the link between Postmodernist values and family democratisation did not find a significant relationship in this study. This may be due to the method of calculating Postmodernist values here, considering Postmodernist values and Modernist values on each end of the spectrum and deducting one score from the other, rather than following the standard ranking method suggested by Inglehart (1997), where individuals are categorised as 'Postmodernist', 'Modernist', or 'Mixed' depending on which two most important goals they have selected.

In this study, individuals from the more Individualistic country of Hungary were more interested in politics more than the Koreans, believed more in a democratic society, and were more likely to vote in national elections. These factors are also likely to be influenced by macro-level factors other than Individualism such as cultural background and economic development. The impact of cultural background on self and political beliefs is commonly found. For example, Basabe & Ros (2005) have noted the link between Confucianism and low Individualism, where the centuries-long beliefs held by the Asians lead them to believe less in challenging the existing order, and thus may be less inclined to make political participation or believe in their own political influence. On the other hand, the importance of considering recent economic development and current societal condition is also often highlighted. The claim made by Inglehart and other proponents of social change and Postmodernist values is that economic development and stability leads individuals to have more participation in politics, declining beliefs in institutional forms of government, and increasing support for third parties, peace movements, and equality. For example, Kim and his colleagues (2002) argued that rapid social change and economic development in East Asian countries such as South Korea and Taiwan brought democratic ideals and beliefs to these countries. Therefore, in investigating political beliefs in countries like the ex-Communist states of Hungary, or the new democratic states of South Korea, and have undergone rapid and significant changes, and feature different cultural backgrounds, it becomes difficult to predict whether the more traditional cultural influences prevail, or if social change brings significant changes to these beliefs. Future studies should thus attempt to separate out these two lines of influences, and examine them more closely.

Gender did not have a significant influence on the political factors (political interest, democratic beliefs, or conservatism). However, gender had a direct positive relationship with the family perception variables of emotional closeness and family democratisation. Our finding that women place higher importance on close relationship to their family, and on democratic family values, is in line with Duncan & Smith (2002)'s claim that individuals' own gendered expectations impact women's roles in the family. Our findings are also in line with Sidanius & Pena (2003)'s claim that gender differences in egalitarian views are caused by the behavioural predispositions and learning and experiences in the early years, and are thus relatively invariant across culture. Re-negotiation of gendered roles in the family, as is suggested by Duncan and Smith (2002) seems to be influenced by gender directly, and by culture indirectly, through shaping of other types of views. The significance and strength of these links can be found on the diagram of the full SEM model (Figure 3). Along with gender, both political conservatism and democratic beliefs were significant predictors of family democratisation, where lower level of conservatism and stronger democratic ideals were conducive to more democratic family relations. This link between conservatism and family democratisation is in agreement with earlier work (e.g. Feather, 1979), who found significant negative relations between conservatism and the importance placed on equality values.

Beck (1997) discusses the importance of socialisation experiences in the family as a way of making 'the spirit of democracy the spirit of a society' (p.156). How individuals are brought up by their parents in the family influence their democratic views, and it is also likely that their socialisation experiences reflect the societal norms and atmosphere. In advocating democratic views and relations, individuals' attitudes can carry over from the broader level of society to the more intimate setting of family and vice versa. Delsing and his colleagues (2003) argued that in recent decades, more equal relations in the family have become the norm alongside an overall democratisation in the social spheres. This study confirmed the link between individuals' level of democratic beliefs in politics and in the family, which suggests that democratic views usually extend over different arenas of life. Those who held more democratic political views also perceived equality in family as important. This result clearly suggests a link between individuals' perception of equality and democracy both in the politics and the family, and universality of these beliefs across different spheres of life/settings.

Many researchers have looked into political conservatism and other aspects of individual beliefs and values that are believed to be interlinked. Previous research has demonstrated the close link between political conservatism and individuals' resistance to change, reluctance to accept new ideas, uncertainty avoidance, authoritarianism, and opposition to equality (Kossowosk & Van Hiel, 2003; Jost et al., 2007; Van Hiel et al., 2004). Those who were high in political conservatism were also found to exhibit tendencies to resist change or new ideas, avoid uncertainty, believe in authoritarianism and hierarchy, and oppose equality. The results of this study indicate that political conservatism influenced the perception of family democratisation, whereas those who are high in political conservatism also believed less in the importance of equality in family roles and

relations, and less in equal gender relations and decision making at home. This finding confirms previous work by Jost and his colleagues (2003), that resistance to change and opposition to equality are the main components of political conservatism.

Country-level Individualism score also had significant relations to the individuals' political conservatism. The results seem to indicate that the Hungarians, who are higher in Individualism than the Koreans, tend to be more conservative. However, as discussed in the previous paragraphs, other factors such as economic growth, country-level or individual-level affluence, or recent political changes can be affecting this relationship, and thus it is unclear if the differences in conservatism can be explained by Individualism or rather, if they reflect the societal, cultural, or political atmosphere of the countries. Archival research suggests that right-wing ideologies become more attractive at times of social, economic, or political turmoil (Jost et al., 2007). In this sense, it might be the case that the Hungarians, who are going through the more recent political instability and other rapid social changes, advocate conservative ideas and choose more conservative leaders than the Koreans do.

Postmodernist values did not have a significant influence on either of the family perception variables, which leads us to speculate that the issues relating to Postmodernist-Modernist values might not have such a direct connection to the issues and views regarding the family covered in this study. According to Inglehart (1997), individuals whose basic survival needs are guaranteed will become more Postmodernist, which means they will value goals such as ensuring autonomy and freedom of individuals and ensuring high quality of life more than they value material wealth or strength of the nation. He also suggested that Postmaterialistis, or those who hold Postmodernist views, are more likely to advocate more equal relations in the family, be more accepting toward the non-traditional family forms, and be more open toward women's choice in the family and the work. However, the results of this study did not find this link, which suggests that individuals' position on this value orientation might not always predict their perceptions of the family, or the importance of closeness and equal relations in the family. However, this study found very little correlations between Postmodernist values and other variables. Alternatively, it may be possible that views regarding the family stand independent of individual values, for value priorities concern individuals' views on the larger society and are broader in spectrum than their views on the family in specific. Including other value priorities such as those theorised by Schwartz might be useful in investigating the link between individual values and family perceptions further.

Concluding Remarks

This study has a few methodological and theoretical limitations. The length of the questionnaire used in the study was cut short for practical reasons. In the future, use of a lengthened questionnaire, which includes full scales rather than only individual items for enhanced reliability of the scales, is advisable. Future

studies should also include more macro-level variables, for the inadequacy of country-level Individualism alone as indicator of cultural differences was clear in this study. The relation between the level of economic development and the level of Postmodernist values endorsed, as well as the link between the more individual-level economic variables of education, employment, wealth, and income, and the types of family attitudes are often found (e.g., White & Rogers, 2000). Therefore, inclusion of economic indicators such as GDP per capita can be helpful in explaining for recent cultural and social trajectories of different countries, as well as accounting for the differences in childhood experiences. Bergh (2007) demonstrated in his study that social or cultural change, and especially economic development, led individuals of both sexes to views these relations in a more egalitarian way. Thus, impact of economic development on views regarding gender roles and decision making in the family should be investigated.

Moreover, the impact of social change on other aspects of family relationship and perceptions should also be examined further. Roseneil & Budgeon (2004) argue that even the concept of 'family' is changing in the current times, with the breakdown of the traditional family forms, increasing levels of divorce, and rising importance of individuation and gender equalities. A more comprehensive study of the impact of contextual factors and social change on family perceptions across cultures will be useful. There is a possibility that social change is mediating the link between the cultural dimensions of Individualism-Collectivism and family perceptions, where individuals from the individualistic and collectivistic cultures have come to merge their views together, perceiving the benefit and the importance of having both independence and interdependence in the family (Kagitcibasi, 2005; 2007). Future studies should thus look closely into differing types of self-beliefs, prevalence of new type of self-belief, the autonomous-related self, across cultures and between generations, and the links between the self-beliefs and perceptions of the self in relation to the family.

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