A Third Model of Self-Construal: The Metapersonal Self

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This research adds a third model and measure of self-construal to the current psychological literature: the metapersonal self-construal. This model extends previous theory and research, which has established two self-construal orientations to date: the independent and interdependent self-construal. The research presents a series of studies investigating the theoretical and psychometric properties of the third model and measure. Study 1 produced a valid and reliable 10-item self-report scale of the metapersonal self. Study 2 determined the scale to be low in social desirability bias. Studies 3 and 4 examined the convergent and discriminant validity of the three self-construal scales. Investigations among several variables showed that three unique but related self-construal constructs exist and evidence supports the theoretical underpinnings of each construct.

The concept of the self has had a long history in the field of psychology (for a review see Pervin, 2002). This attention has resulted in a very extensive body of published research (e.g., Allport, 1955; Baumeister, 1998; Cloninger, Svrakic & Przybeck, 1993; Epstein, 1973; Fong & Markus, 1982; Gergen, 1982; Hilgard, 1949; Lecky, 1945; Markus, 1977; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Markus & Sentis, 1982; Pedersen, 1998, 1999; Robins, Norem, & Cheek, 1999; Rogers, 1947, 1951, 1961; Singelis, 1994; Swann & Read, 1981; Wylie, 1961, 1974). The tremendous interest and attention to the self reveals the importance of this psychological construct.

Within the comprehensive literature of self-psychology lies the specific construct and process of self-construal. Self-construal is the process of the relationship that develops between one's own self, others, and between the self and others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). This process was described by early writers such as Kelly (1955) and then continued in later writings by Baumeister (1998) and others (e.g., Singelis, 1994).

Kelly (1955) initially introduced the notion of personal constructs into the psychological literature. He stated that individuals construed the meaning of events through an abstraction process and by placing constructions upon the experiences. These interpretations or construals, according to Kelly (1955), are one's reality.

Baumeister (1998) again describes this process in terms of construing the self. He noted that people develop a sense of self through reflexive consciousness, the interpersonal aspects of the self, and through the executive function. Reflexive consciousness is how one thinks about one's self. For example, how one thinks of failures and successes, how one contemplates the future or makes sense of personal events. This is the process of consciously looking back toward it's own source and constructing a concept of one's self.

The interpersonal aspect of construing the self allows one to examine selfhood by examining the self in social context. When one feels angry, shy, embarrassed, or exhilarated by a particular interpersonal interaction, this reveals the interpersonal aspect, or the self in relation to others.

Finally, the executive function or the agent of the self is the decision-maker. It is also the one who takes specific action. This process involves personal experiences such as quitting smoking, donating to the local food bank, or beginning an exercise program.

It is through these three processes that a relationship between a "separate self" and "independent other" develops. When one construes the information about a relationship between the self and others, this process is specifically known as self-construal. Self-construal is conceptualized as a constellation of thoughts, feelings and actions with respect to one's relationship to others and to the self, as distinct from others (Singelis, 1994).

In 1991 Markus and Kitayama specifically noted that though there was a growing body of psychological and anthropological evidence that people hold divergent views of the self, most psychologists continued to hold the Western view of the individual, that is, the view of an independent, self-contained, autonomous entity. Furthermore, they noted that the psychologists' understanding of self-construal up to that point had arisen from a monocultural approach to the self. These authors expanded this Western view with a more culturally divergent view that included both Western and Asian views (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Though there are many global views of the self to date (e.g., Emavardhana & Tori, 1997; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997; Sedikides, Gaertner & Toguchi, 2003; de Silva, 1990; Oyserman, Sakamoto, & Lauffer, 1998; Unemori, Omoregie, & Markus, 2004), the self-construal literature has remained where Markus and Kitayama have left it.

That is, the current literature specifically on self-construal has two distinct orientations: the independent and interdependent self-construals (Markus & Kityama, 1991). The literature has also produced a valid and reliable self-report measure to assess these two constructs (Singelis, 1994).

The Independent Self-Construal

Previous research on self-construal has focused on the relationship between the self and others. In particular, the major focus has been on the degree to which people see themselves as separate from others or connected with others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994; Triandis, 1988, 1989, 1994).

The independent self-construal is defined as a bounded and stable self, which is separate from social context (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994). The constellation of elements that comprise the independent self-construal includes one's own internal abilities, thoughts, and feelings (e.g., I am strong, I am thoughtful, I am energetic). The self is then expressed as a unique being that promotes one's own goals and focuses on one's abilities, attributes, and characteristics rather than on others (Singelis, 1994).

When referring to others, individuals with an independent self-construal will consider others in terms of characteristics and attributes (e.g., he is intelligent, he is achievement striving) rather than on relational factors (e.g., he is my brother). This construct is also described as individualism (Allik & Realo, 2004) and agency (Diehl, Owen, & Youngblade, 2004). It is noted by Pervin (2002) that this view is based on the Western view of the individual as independent and self-contained. When studying the self in other cultures, however, another view of the self emerges.

The Interdependent Self-Construal

It is suggested in both anthropological and psychological studies that another self-construal exists when studying Japanese and other Asian cultures (Cross & Madson, 1997; DeCicco & Stoink, 2000; Han, 2002; Marsella, DeVos, & Hsu, 1985; Pervin, 2002; Morris, 1994; Wang, Bristol, Mowen, & Chakraborty, 2000). This is now known as the interdependent self-construal, which is defined as a flexible and variable self. This self-reference emphasizes external or public features such as statuses, roles and relationships (e.g., I am a professor, I am a mother) (Cousins, 1989; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Shweder & Bourne, 1984).

This self-construal is concerned with belonging and fitting in with others such that the self and others are not separate from situations, but are molded by them (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994). Markus and Kitayama (1991) are two key authors who have successfully described self-construal for both Western and Asian cultures. Authors have described this as collectivism (Allik & Realo, 2004) and communion (Diehl et al., 2004).

Though theory and research on the independent and interdependent self-construals have been well documented, many authors (e.g., Hill, 2006; Ho, 1995; James, 1902/1999; Friedman, 1983; de Silva, 1990) have noted and described a self-construal that is neither independent nor interdependent in nature. Therefore, a third self-construal construct has been described that is distinct from the other two.

The Metapersonal Self-Construal

It is clear that the two current self-construal constructs cannot describe the self-orientation of all

individuals. For example, people who hold an Eastern view of the self (Ho, 1995; Stroink & DeCicco, 2002), a transcendent self (Hill, 2006; Walsh & Vaughan, 1993), or a self-expansive view (Friedman, 1983) cannot be described in terms of the current two definitions of self-construal. Rather, these descriptions of the self are not bound by personal attributes nor defined only by social context because these self-references extend beyond the individual and close others (Westen, 1996). This orientation is decentered and free from egocentricity in that the individual is not focused entirely on the self or on ego-focused needs (Ho, 1995).

From the definition of self-construal, the process occurs via reflexive consciousness, the interpersonal aspect of the self and, the executive function of the self (Baumeister, 1998). Reflexive consciousness, or how one thinks about one's self, develops for the metapersonal self when an individual reflects on others or things and sees them as part of the self. For example, how one contemplates world poverty may reflect the metapersonal self if world poverty is seen as one's own poverty (e.g., if people are poor then I am poor because all people are a part of me). This process of the self consciously looking back toward its own source and constructing a concept of one's self, in terms of all others or all things, is one step in the process of developing the metapersonal self-construal.

The second step in developing this form of self-construal is the interpersonal aspect of construing the self, which allows one to examine selfhood in social context. When one construes the self as connected to all things, all groups, all life, and all of creation then this reveals the self in social context as metapersonal.

Finally, the executive function or the agent of the self is the decision-maker and the one who takes specific action. When the agent of the self behaves in a manner that takes into account all things (e.g., I do not purposely pollute the planet because it harms all life), then the executive function is that of the metapersonal self.

It is through these three processes that a relationship between a "separate self" and "independent other" develops and hence develops a self-construal. When one construes the information about a relationship between the self and others as one that includes all things, all life, all of creation, then this construal is the metapersonal self-construal.

This self-construal is conceptualized as a constellation of thoughts, feelings, and actions with respect to one's relationship to others and to the self, as distinct from the other two types of self-construal (Singelis, 1994). This view of the self is contrary to the Western view of the self-as-subject or the self-as-object (DeCicco & Stroink, 2000; Stroink & DeCicco, 2002; Westen, 1996). It is defined as a sense of one's identity that extends beyond the individual or personal to encompass wider aspects of humankind, life, psyche, or the cosmos (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993). The descriptive self-representations of individuals who refer not to individual attributes (as with the independent self), nor to relationships and social groups (as with the interdependent self), but to an essence beyond the individual and others to a universal focus (e.g., I am connected to all of humankind, I am part of a natural order) is that of the metapersonal self-construal. Given that related constructs of this self-reference have been recognized throughout the psychological literature in many forms (e.g., Boorstein, 1994; James, 1902/1999; Walsh & Vaughan, 1993; Wilber, 1979), a complete model and measure in terms of self-construal are warranted.

The Three Types of Self-Construal

It must be noted here that past research has also revealed the importance of cultural accommodation-hybridization (Oyserman et al., 1998). That is, it has recognized there are individuals who are high in both individualism, which is similar to the independent self-construal, and collectivism, which is similar to the interdependent self-construal. Similarly, DeCicco and Stroink (2000) and Arnocky, Stroink, and DeCicco (2007) have found individuals who are high in both the independent and metapersonal self-construals. These findings suggest that the three self-construals are not mutually exclusive and may co-occur, depending on how the self is developing. The current research on self-construal certainly suggests that further studies are needed to explore this notion both theoretically and empirically.

Linking the Metapersonal Self to Current Literature

As previously mentioned, the theoretical and conceptual view of the metapersonal self has been described throughout the psychological literature. This concept appears in areas as diverse as social and personality psychology (see Csikszentmihaly, 1993; James, 1902/1999, 1890/1950), cross-cultural psychology (for a review see Stroink & DeCicco, 2002, 2003) and the transpersonal literature (Boorstein, 1994; Pappas & Friedman, 2007; Walsh & Vaughan, 1993; Wilber, 1979). Descriptions

of this self-construal are cited as far back as 1902 in the writings of William James.

William James (1902/1999, 1890/1950) described a spiritual self in which the boundary between the self and the environment vanishes. This description of the self includes the feeling of unity with all things. That is, objects that were formally defined as outside the self become merged with the self. The spiritual self describes a self-construal unlike that of the independent or the interdependent self; rather, it is a self that includes all things. Similarly, Friedman's (1983) notion of self-expansiveness is one that implies the possibility of identification with any and all aspects of existence.

This self-reference has also been described as a permanent or transcendent view of the self (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993). When a person is able to shift from a personal focus of the self to a universal focus as described by Hill (2006), this describes the metapersonal self-concept. This shift is away from the me-focused or other-focused to a cosmic or universal view.

The metapersonal self is again described in the literature on close attachments when it is hypothesized that individuals can feel close to others because they feel at one with them (Aron & Aron, 1986, 1996; Brown, DeCicco, & Stroink, 2005: Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce & Lueberg, 1997). This concept of oneness occurs because people perceive themselves in the other. This is a sense of shared, merged, or connected personal identities (Cialdini et al., 1993). If this belief is held consistently by an individual and is not simply a state phenomenon, then the metapersonal self-construal would result.

Though there are descriptions of this third model of self-construal throughout the psychological literature there is no scientific measure of this specific construct to date. It is now the direction and focus of this paper to design a valid and reliable measure of self-construal that includes all three dimensions of this construct.

An Overview of The Studies

In order to test the theoretical conceptualization of the new self-construal construct, a series of psychometric studies were conducted. The psychometric approach adopted here was one that previous research has adopted when testing adherence to principles in underlying theory (e.g., Hewitt & Flett, 1991a; Kohn & O'Brien, 1977; Kohn, O'Brien-Wood, Pickering, & DeCicco, 2003; Statsoft, 1995). That is, our work is in line with studies providing validation of the measure-ment of a construct by demonstrating that the construct exists separately from existing or related constructs (e.g., independent and interdependent self-construal).

Five pilot studies (DeCicco & Stroink, unpublished data) initially indicated that further testing was warranted and therefore, complete scale construction and testing was undertaken. As is conventional with scale construction, social desirability of the scale was examined. Given the evidence from Studies 1 and 2, Studies 3 and 4 then tested scale reliability and validity. Convergent and discriminant validity was established through relations with variables that are theoretically and statistically linked to self-construal.

Study 1: Scale Construction

The initial steps in developing the measure of a psychological construct involve the generation of a large pool of items, and then selecting the best items based on reliability scores (Jackson, 1970; Statsoft, 1995). The purpose of Study 1 was to develop a reliable set of items, which were rooted in self-construal theory and fully tapped into the dimensions of the metapersonal self.

Method

Item Generation and Selection

Descriptive statements reflecting the metapersonal self-concept were derived from theoretical discussions by the authors and one expert in the field of self-psychology (McCann, 2000, personal communication). Items were initially chosen that identified the underlying principles of the construct that lead to self-construal. That is, items that represented reflexive consciousness (e.g., I see myself as being extended into everything else), the self in social context (e.g., I am aware of a connection between myself and all living things), and agency of the self (e.g., I feel a sense of responsibility and belonging to the universe). The items ranged from the highest end of the continuum (completely metapersonal) to the lowest end of the continuum (somewhat metapersonal). The items were also scrutinized and some were eliminated in order to minimize redundancy. Keeping within the conceptualization of the metapersonal self, the items were written to reflect beliefs (I believe that no matter where I am or what I'm doing, I am never separate from others), characteristics (I feel a sense of responsibility and belonging to the universe), cognition (I am aware of the connection between myself and all living things), and recurrent ways of construing the self (my sense of

identity is based on something that unites me with all other people).

Pilot Studies

(1) The initial list of 50 items was presented to 45 readers who were asked to answer each item on a 7-point Likert scale and to comment on the statements for readability and clarity. Responses range from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). The items were corrected, reworded, or deleted, depending on the reader's responses. The statistical package STATISTICA (Statsoft, 1995) was used for data management and analyses. The item means and standard deviations were examined and items that had extreme means were eliminated. This resulted in a 12 item-scale that could be rated on the 7-point Likert scale. The items represented the full range of the psychological construct being measured. The 12-item scale was then given to a focus group of 5 readers (psychology graduate students) for comment. No changes were made by the focus group.

(2) Two pilot studies were then conducted with university students (N=215) and one with community dwelling adults (N=243) in order to test the reliability of the 12-item measure. The reliability and item analysis module of STATISTICA (Statsoft, 1995) includes an option that allows the user to compute how many items would have to be added or deleted to achieve a particular reliability. No items were removed.

(3) Two new studies were conducted with university students (N1=118, N2=127) using the 12-item metapersonal scale and the 30 items measuring the independent and interdependent self-construals. The alpha coefficient for the metapersonal self scale was found to be good (.80) for both studies, based on conventional standards (Nunnally, 1978).

(4) Factor analysis was performed on the data with the 12 metapersonal items and the 30 independent and interdependent items. Three factors emerged with the analyses.

Testing and Scale Construction for Study 1

Given the findings from the pilot studies, Study 1 was then conducted to further test the scale's psychometric properties and to test the following: 1) The metapersonal self scale will be correlated with the independent self scale since they are theoretically related (DeCicco & Stroink, 2000; Stroink, DeCicco, Mehta, & Sathanantha, 2005) but fundamentally different constructs (DeCicco & Stroink, unpublished data), and not correlated with the interdependent scale (DeCicco, Stroink, & Brown, unpublished data). 2) The factor analytic structure of the 42 self-construal items will reveal 3 separate factors, though some crossover of items is expected (DeCicco & Stroink, 2000).

Participants

Participants for this study were 115 university undergraduate students (19 males and 96 females) studying psychology at a Canadian University. The mean age of the sample was 22.3 years (SD=3.73).

Measures

Participants completed a consent form and a 42-item Self-Construal Scale (SCS). This scale included 30 items from the Singelis (1994) scale of independent and interdependent self-construal and 12 metapersonal items. The items from the three scales were intermixed into one scale. A demographics page with age and sex was also included.

Procedure

Undergraduate students in a first year psychology class were asked to volunteer for participation in research. They were given 30 minutes of class time to complete the questionnaire package.

Results

Reliability

The means, standard deviations, alpha reliabilities and intercorrelations for the three self-construal scales appear in Table 1. The reliability was acceptable by conventional standards (Nunnally, 1978) for both the independent scale and the interdependent scales, at .79 and .75 respectively. The reliability for the metapersonal self-scale was acceptable at .77. When the items of the metapersonal self-scale were scrutinized with the statistical package, it appeared that the reliability could be improved by removing 2 items. Upon scrutinizing the items, they appeared to be redundant in terms of the underlying principles of the construct. Also, the statistical module indicated that the scale's alpha would be .80 if two specific items were removed. Removing the items resulted in a 10-item scale with the reliability of .80. Hypothesis 1 was supported with the metapersonal self-scale significantly correlated with the independent self-scale (r =.57, p < .01) but not supported with a small correlation between the metapersonal self and the inter-

dependent self (r=.21 , p<.05). These findings imply that the self-construal factors are related in some way and future research needs to explore this further.

Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed in order to test Hypothesis 2 (Table 2). A scree plot supported a 3-factor solution. Items loaded with values ranging from .35 to .76, however, there were several items that crossloaded onto 2 factors and needed to be assessed more closely. The criteria for fit in the model was followed by Hu & Bentler (1999) which was later partially replicated by Sivo (2006).

Seven items loaded on factor 1 (.36 to .76). These items reflected the metapersonal self-construal. One metapersonal item loaded onto factor 3, which represents the independent construct, and one item loaded onto factor 2, which represents the interdependent construct. Metapersonal item 6 did not significantly load onto any of the factors. Item 6 states: "I believe that intuition comes from a higher part of myself and I never ignore it." The reliability analysis did not indicate that this item should be deleted. However, further psychometric testing is warranted in future studies.

Eleven items loaded onto factor 2 (.35 to .72) and reflected the interdependent self-construal. Seven items loaded onto factor 3 (.47 to .68) reflecting the independent self-construal. Two items reflecting the independent self-construal and one item reflecting interdependence loaded onto factor 1 (the metapersonal construct). Also, one interdependent item loaded on both factors 2 and 3.

Some item overlap is expected since the items tap into the full range of the self-construal construct. Conceptually, individuals will have some elements of all three self-construal constructs and some may be high in all three. The alpha reliability of the scale was examined to explore if the three items should be deleted. It was found that the scale's reliability would not change if any or all of the three items were deleted.

Also, the means and standard deviations of the three items did not warrant deleting any of the items since they were consistent with the other items on the scale. Further testing is needed before eliminating the three crossloading items from the scale. At this point, both the theory and the reliability results suggest that a 10-item scale is warranted.

Discussion

Study 1 yielded a valid and reliable 10-item measure of the metapersonal self-construal construct (see Appendix). The results of factor analysis provide evidence that the metapersonal self, the independent self, and the interdependent self are distinct but related constructs. Factor analysis also indicates that three factors exist, with crossloadings for some independent and metapersonal items. Only one metapersonal self-item crossloaded onto the interdependent factor. This supports theoretical underpinnings, that the interdependent and metapersonal factors are not strongly related. The crossloadings between the metapersonal and the independent items suggest that there is a relationship between these two factors, as was hypothesized. These analyses also suggest that further studies are needed to fully distinguish the similarities and the differences between the metapersonal self and the independent self, or that individuals may hold one or more self-construals. Future research should address the possibility that individuals may be construing the self in this more complicated manner.

One limitation of the research is that the sample had far more females than males. This representation is normal for the university where the sample was collected and has been noted in previously published research (e.g., DeCicco, 2007a; King & DeCicco, 2007). Further studies should aim to address the gender bias if possible, since gender may influence the ways in which individuals construe the self. Another limitation is that this is the first series of studies to examine three constructs of self-construal. Though this research has begun the process of extending the self-construal literature, future research is definitely warranted.

In summary, the 10-item metapersonal self (MPS) scale appears to be a valid measure of the metapersonal self with high internal consistency. Furthermore, though the three constructs are separate, consistent with previous research (DeCicco & Stroink, 2000; Stroink & DeCicco, 2002), the metapersonal self-construal appears to be related to the independent self-construal.

The findings from Study 1 indicate further psychometric studies are warranted. Studies examining social desirability as well as convergent and discriminant validity are necessary.

Study 2: Testing Social Desirability

Study 2 was conducted to examine the relationship between the MPS scale and a social desirability

measure. Two samples were tested (N1=61, N2=236). It was expected that there would be a non-significant correlation between the MPS scale and the Marlowe-Crowne (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) social desirability measure for both studies.

Method

Participants

Participants for sample 1 were 61 university undergraduates (10 males, 51 females) with a mean age of 24.37 years (SD=4.36). Sample 2 included 236 university undergraduates (30 males, 206 females) with a mean age of 20.29 (SD=4.9).

Measures

Demographic Information: This measure included gender and age.

MPS Scale: This 10-item self-report measure was designed in Study 1.

The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960): The Marlowe-Crowne scale is a 33-item measure of social desirability widely used in the psychological literature.

Procedure

Undergraduate students were given a questionnaire package during class time and had 15 minutes to complete the questionnaires. Participation was anonymous and voluntary. Students were given a bonus point for participating in the study, as per their course outline, which identified bonus points for research participation.

Results

The correlation between the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Measure and the MPS scale in sample 1 was non-significant at -0.15. The alpha reliability for the metapersonal self-scale was 0.89. The findings were replicated with a second sample, where the correlation between the metapersonal self scale and the Marlowe-Crowne measure was .00. The alpha reliability for the metapersonal self-scale was .82 in the second sample.

Discussion

The non-significant correlation between the Marlowe-Crowne and the metapersonal self-scale in both samples of Study 2 suggests that the scale is free from social-desirability bias. However, further construct validation

is needed. Cohen (1992) suggests that to estimate power, researchers should use previous research. The estimate for N was based on previous studies (DeCicco, unpublished data).

Studies 3 and 4: Convergent and Discriminant Validation

One of the requirements when developing a new psychological measure is to demonstrate that the scale measures what it purports to measure (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955; Wiggins, 1973). The purpose of Studies 3 and 4 was to test the validity of the MPS scale in terms of emotions, racism, intolerance of ambiguity, self-ratings, forgiveness, and religious variables. These studies were designed to discriminate each of the three self-construal constructs as unique entities.

Study 3

Self-Construal and Emotions

It has been demonstrated in the literature that individuals with different self-construals or self/group attitudes also differ in terms of emotions (Brown et al., 2005; Esses, Haddock, & Zanna, 1993; Kitayama & Markus, 1994; Kitayama & Markus, 1994; Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Sato & McCann, 1998). Research suggests that individuals with an independent self will experience more ego-focused emotions such as anger, frustration, and pride (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Individuals with the interdependent self-construal will experience more other-focused emotions such as sympathy and shame (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Since the metapersonal self has been found to be correlated with the independent self but not with the interdependent self (Brown et al., 2005; Stroink et al., 2005; Nesbitt, 2005), examining the ego-focused emotions in relation to both the independent and metapersonal orientations is necessary. Therefore, the current study extended the research by assessing the ego-focused domains of anger, confusion, fatigue, and vigor, with both the independent and metapersonal self-construal scales.

Furthermore, since depression and anxiety have been specifically linked to self-construal (DeCicco, 2006; Sato & McCann, 1998) with the independent and interdependent self, it follows that these would also be examined with all three measures of self-construal. Again, this would confirm previous findings and extend the self-construal literature.

The following hypotheses were tested: 1) Consistent with previous research (Pervin, 2002) the independent self-construal will be correlated with the ego-focused emotions of vigor, fatigue, anger, and confusion. 2) There will be a negative association between the independent self-construal and depression, as found by Sato and McCann (1998). Also, consistent with the latter research, a negative association would be found between the independent self-construal and anxiety. 3) Consistent with previous research, the interdependent self-construal would be correlated with depression (Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000; Pervin, 2002; Sato & McCann, 1998). 4) There will be a relationship between the meta-personal self-construal and the emotions tested here. Though there is preliminary evidence supporting this hypothesis (DeCicco, unpublished data), this investigation is purely exploratory at this point.

Self-Construal and Intolerance of Ambiguity

The definition of the independent self-construal states that these individuals define themselves as a bounded and stable self, which is separate from social context (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994). The constellation of elements that comprise the independent self-construal includes one's own internal abilities, thoughts and feelings (e.g., I am strong, I am thoughtful, I am energetic). This definition implies that the independent self-construal has rigid limits around the self. However, information from outside the self (e.g., relational information) is not threatening or incorporated into the self.

The interdependent self-construal is defined as a variable self as compared to the independent self. This self-reference emphasizes external or public features such as statuses, roles, and relationships (e.g., I am a professor, I am a mother) (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Shweder & Bourne, 1984). This definition defines a self that is dependent on external information (e.g., relational information). Finally, the metapersonal self-construal definition suggests that the metapersonal self has a sense of identity that extends beyond the individual or personal to encompass wider aspects of humankind, life, psyche, or the cosmos (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993) into one's own self.

Given the three descriptions of self-construal, theoretically they should correlate differently with the personality variable of intolerance of ambiguity. Intolerance of ambiguity is defined as the tendency to perceive ambiguous situations as a source of threat (Budner, 1962).

The concepts of rigidity and intolerance of ambiguity are closely related both theoretically and historically. Budner noted that one's degree of tolerance and intolerance of ambiguity is related to self-image and self-evaluations. Self-image and self-evaluations are closely related to self-construal. Budner found that people who are intolerant of ambiguity tend to hold perceptions of the self that are more structured than those who are more tolerant of ambiguity. Based on this conceptualization, self-construal should be directly related to a measure of intolerance of ambiguity.

The following hypotheses are postulated: 1) Since individuals with an interdependent self-construal define themselves from situational information, it is hypothesized that there will be a positive and significant correlation between interdependent self-construal and intolerance of ambiguity and, 2) since individuals who hold a metapersonal self-construal view themselves as connected to all others and take all external information into the self, there will be a negative and significant correlation between the metapersonal self-construal and intolerance of ambiguity.

Self-Construal and Racism

The interpersonal aspect of the self, which is selfhood in relation to others (Baumeister, 1998), is directly related to racism. That is, racism is a construct based on intergroup relations (McConahay, 1983). If one perceives others to be more similar to themself in terms of race, then they are considered "in their group" and racist attitudes will not be held. In terms of the metapersonal self, since individuals who hold this self-construal see themselves connected to all people (hence all races) these individuals cannot be metapersonal and hold racist beliefs. Based on this theory, the following hypothesis was tested: 1) Since people with a metapersonal self-construal see their own selfhood in all people and all races, there would be a significant negative correlation between a modern racism scale and the MPS scale.

Racism is currently measured with items measuring old-fashioned racism and items measuring modern racism. Social and political items are used as filler items. Research has shown that old-fashioned racism has lessened to some degree but contemporary or modern racism attitudes are present (McConahay, 1983). Measures of racism currently include both old-fashioned and modern racism items for complete assessment and for comparison (McConahay, 1983; McConahay, Hardee, &

Batts, 1981). This study will use a modern racism scale that has converted items for a Canadian sample (Lalonde, Doan, & Patterson, 2000), which is more appropriate for the sample being tested in this study.

Self-Construal and Self-Ratings

In her early research Markus (1977) found that individuals who rated themselves high in the independent self-construal also rated themselves more likely to behave in independent ways than dependent ways. Similarly, she found that people high in the interdependent self-construal rating rated themselves more likely to behave in interdependent ways than independent ways. This being the case, individuals who rate themselves high in the metapersonal self should also rate themselves more likely to behave in ways that reflect the metapersonal self-construal. It is expected that people high in the metapersonal self would rate themselves high in those behaviors defined by that self-construal, and lower on those of the independent and interdependent self-construals. Therefore, the three self-construal orientations should be distinguishable by descriptive self-ratings by the participants.

Following from previous findings on self-ratings, self-rating scales were developed for each scale. The self-rating items came directly from the definition of each self-construal construct. The scales were developed in accordance with previous research on scale construction and validation testing (see Kohn et al., 2003). For the independent self-construal, the self-rating statement was: "People who have the 'independent self-construal' mostly see themselves as separate, unique individuals. When these people describe themselves they typically list their internal attributes that make them different from others (e.g., I am courageous, I am smart, I am strong). How accurately does this description of the independent self-construal describe you?" Participants circled the appropriate number from 1 (Not at all accurately) to 7 (Very accurately).

The self-rating scale for the interdependent self-construal stated: "People who have the 'interdependent self-construal' mostly see themselves in terms of their personal relationships and social groups. When these people describe themselves they typically do so in terms of their position in a relationship or groups (e.g., I am a daughter, I am Canadian, I am a boyfriend). How accurately does this description of the interdependent self-construal describe you?" Participants circled the appro-

priate number from 1 (Not at all accurately) to 7 (Very accurately).

Finally, the metapersonal self-rating stated: "People who have the 'metapersonal self-construal' mostly see themselves as having an awareness, or a sense of unity between themselves and all things (or all life). When describing themselves, these people typically do so in terms of having a connectedness to all things and to an essence that extends beyond the self (e.g., I am part of nature, I am part of the universe, I am all living things). How accurately does this description of the metapersonal self-construal describe you?" Consistent with the other self-rating scales, participants circled the appropriate number from 1 (Not at all accurately) to 7 (Very accurately).

Based on the self-rating scales, the following hypotheses were tested: 1) People who score high on the metapersonal self-construal scale will rate themselves more likely to behave in metapersonal-self ways. For example, people who score highly on the metapersonal self scale will score high in feeling connected to all things in the universe. Therefore, there will be a positive correlation between the metapersonal self-construal and a metapersonal self-rating. 2) Given the findings by Markus (1977), there will be a positive correlation between the independent self-construal and the independent self-rating. 3) Similarly, there will be a positive correlation between the interdependent self-construal and the interdependent self-rating. 4) There will be a negative correlation between the independent self-construal and the interdependent self-rating. 5) There will be a negative correlation between the interdependent self-construal and both the metapersonal and the independent self-rating scales. 6) Since the metapersonal self and the independent self have been found to be correlated in past research (Brown et al., 2006; Stroink et al., 2005; DeCicco, 2006; Nesbitt, 2005) there will be a positive correlation between the metapersonal self-rating and both the metapersonal and independent self-construal scales. People who rate themselves as having a metapersonal self will identify with both the metapersonal and the independent self-construals. However, people who rate themselves as independent on the self-rating scale will only be high in independent self-construal.

Method

Participants

Participants included 105 university students (15 males, 90 females). Their mean age was 20.5 years ($\underline{SD}$ = 2.28).

DeCicco & Stroink

Measures

A questionnaire package of the following scales was administered:

Self-Construal Scale (SCS): This 40-item scale consists of Singelis' (1994) 30-item independent and interdependent scale and the 10-item metapersonal self scale designed in Study 1.

Profile of Mood States (SV-POMS; Schacham, 1983): The short form measure consists of 37 adjectives and descriptive phrases which are rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The measure assesses the factors of tension/anxiety, depression/dejection, confusion/bewilderment, fatigue/inertia, and vigor/activity over the course of the past week. The POMS has been deemed both reliable and valid (Grove & Prapavessis, 1992d; Jianping, Haiyong, & Wenliang, 2004).

Intolerance of Ambiguity (ToA; Budner, 1962): A measure that assesses the tendency to perceive ambiguous situations as a source of threat, this 16-item measure has been found to be associated with other similar scales (Budner, 1962) and related to other relevant constructs (Jost et al., 2007; see Grenier, Barrette, & Ladouceur, 2005 for a review.)

Modern Racism scale (MR; developed by McConahay et al., 1981, and then adapted to a Canadian context by Lalonde et al., 2000): This adapted version is more appropriate for testing given that the participants were Canadian, and is deemed reliable and valid.

Self-Construal Self-Rating Scales: A self-rating scale for each self-construal construct was administered. The rating scales represent behaviors that reflect each of the three self-construals independently (see items on page 12).

Procedure

Undergraduate students in a first year psychology class were asked to volunteer in a research project. Students were given approximately 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire package.

Results

See Table 3 for the correlations among the three self-construal scales, intolerance of ambiguity, racism and, emotions. See Table 4 for the intercorrelations among the three construal scales and the self-rating scales.

Self-Construal and Emotions

Some of the hypotheses were supported for self-construal and emotions. The independent self-construal scale was positively correlated with vigor (r= .38, $\underline{p}$ < .01) and negatively correlated with confusion (r= -.21, $\underline{p}$ < .05), depression (r=-.32, $\underline{p}$ < .01), and anxiety (r= -.28, $\underline{p}$ < .01). There was no significant relationship with fatigue or anger. The interdependent self-construal scale was not significantly correlated with any of the emotion measures in this study.

The metapersonal self-construal scale was positively correlated with vigor (r= .28, $\underline{p}$ < .01) and negatively correlated with anxiety (r= -.26, $\underline{p}$ < .01). There were no significant relationships with anger, confusion, depression or fatigue.

Self-Construal and Intolerance of Ambiguity

The results supported both hypotheses for self-construal and intolerance of ambiguity. The metapersonal self-scale was negatively correlated with intolerance of ambiguity (r= -.26, $\underline{p}$ < .01) and the interdependent self-scale was positively correlated with intolerance of ambiguity (r= .26, $\underline{p}$ < .01).

Self-Construal and Modern Racism

The hypothesis tested for the metapersonal self-construal and racism was supported in Study 3. The metapersonal self-scale was negatively correlated with the scale for racism (r= -.32, $\underline{p}$ < .01).

Self-Construal and Self-Rating Scales

The metapersonal self-scale was positively correlated with the independent self-rating scale (r= .42 $\underline{p}$ < .01) and the metapersonal self-rating scale (r= .79, $\underline{p}$ < .01), and negatively correlated with the interdependent self-rating scale (r= -.39, $\underline{p}$ < .01). The independent scale was correlated with the independent self-rating scale (r= .35, $\underline{p}$ < .01) and the metapersonal self-rating scale (r= .40, $\underline{p}$ < .01), and negatively correlated with the interdependent self-rating scale (r= -.33, $\underline{p}$ < .01). Finally, the interdependent scale was positively correlated with the interdependent self-rating scale (r= .21, $\underline{p}$ < .05) and negatively correlated with the independent self-rating scale (r= -.28, $\underline{p}$ < .05).

Regression Analysis

Since there was a positive correlation between the metapersonal self-rating scale and both the meta-

personal scale and the independent scale, this relationship was further examined with a regression analysis. A regression analysis was conducted with the independent and metapersonal self scales predicting metapersonal self-rating (see Table 5). The results reveal that the metapersonal self-scale significantly contributes to metapersonal self-rating but the independent self-scale does not. These findings imply that though both scales were correlated with the metapersonal self-rating, only the metapersonal self-scale predicts metapersonal self-rating.

Discussion

Self-Construal and Emotions

Hypothesis 1 stated that the independent self-construal would be correlated with the ego-focused emotions of vigor, fatigue, anger, and confusion. It was found that only vigor was positively correlated with the independent self and confusion was negatively correlated with the independent self. This implies that people with an independent self-construal are high in energy and low in confusion. Since people with an independent self-reference define themselves within strict narrow limits, it seems reasonable that their level of confusion would be low.

Consistent with previous research (Sato & McCann, 1998), hypothesis 2 was confirmed in that the independent self was negatively correlated with depression. Furthermore, the research extends this finding with the negative correlation between the independent self and anxiety. Since anxiety and depression are highly comorbid, it is expected that both depression and anxiety would be negative correlates of the independent self. These findings imply that people with the independent self-construal are low in both depression and anxiety.

Hypothesis 3 stated that the interdependent self-construal would be correlated with depression and anxiety, however this was not found to be the case. Sato and McCann (1998) found a small, significant correlation (.11) between the interdependent self and depression. The findings in the current study found a correlation of .14 that was non-significant. One limitation of the current study was that a smaller sample size was tested than that of the Sato and McCann study. This may have resulted in the non-significant correlation. Given this limitation, the study warrants replication with a larger sample size. Further research should also

include the independent/interdependent measures used in this research and the sociotropy-autonomy scale used by Sato and McCann (1998, 2002) before firm conclusions are made regarding interdependent self-construal and depression.

Hypothesis 4 was purely exploratory and stated that there would be a relationship between the metapersonal self and several of the emotions tested. It was found that the metapersonal self-construal was negatively correlated with anxiety but not correlated with depression. There was no relationship with confusion, anger or fatigue. Interestingly, the positive correlation between vigor and the metapersonal self suggests a relationship between the metapersonal self-construal and higher levels of energy. This could mean that physical health and the metapersonal self are related. One recent study investigating the relationship between self-construal and well-being suggested that the metapersonal self predicts general well-being (Stroink et al., 2005). Overall, these findings indicate that further studies examining the relationship between the metapersonal self and emotions, and between the metapersonal self and health, are both needed and warranted.

Self-construal and Intolerance of Ambiguity

Hypothesis 1 was supported by the research and states that the independent self-construal would not be correlated with intolerance of ambiguity. This implies that people with an independent self-construal do not compare themselves to external situations and therefore would not perceive ambiguous situations as sources of threat. This finding is also consistent with the previous findings that the independent self is negatively correlated with anxiety. People who do not find ambiguous situations threatening should also be low in anxiety.

Hypothesis 2 was supported in that there was a positive correlation between the interdependent self and intolerance of ambiguity. This finding implies that people who define themselves in terms of specific groups will find ambiguous situations undesirable. The implication here is that for people with an interdependent self-construal there is a need to fit themselves into a group, and therefore ambiguous information would be intolerable.

Hypothesis 3 stated that the metapersonal self would be negatively correlated with intolerance of ambiguity. This hypothesis was in fact supported, which implies that people with a metapersonal self-construal,

who have a selfhood that is connected to all things, can tolerate ambiguous situations. In comparing the three self-construals, metapersonal individuals can tolerate ambiguous situations, interdependent individuals cannot, and there is no relationship between intolerance of ambiguity and the independent self.

Self-Construal and Racism

The hypothesis was supported with the negative relationship between the metapersonal self and racism. Since individuals with a metapersonal self see themselves as connected to all others, there should be a negative correlation with racism. These findings support theoretical underpinnings of the self-construal construct (DeCicco & Stroink, 2000).

Self-Construal and Self-Ratings

Hypothesis 1 of the self-rating data was confirmed with a correlation between the metapersonal self-construal and the metapersonal self-rating scale. Previous research has confirmed that individuals with a specific self-construal (e.g., independent) rate themselves more likely to behave in ways that are consistent with that self-construal (Markus, 1977). Consistent with these findings, individuals with a metapersonal self-construal rate themselves more likely to behave in ways that reflect the metapersonal self.

Similarly, and consistent with the theory, hypotheses 2 and 3 were supported with a positive correlation between the independent self-construal and the independent self-rating. Also, there was a correlation between the interdependent self-construal and the interdependent self-rating. These findings suggest that people with a specific self-construal will rate themselves consistent for behavior that represents their self-reference.

Hypothesis 4 was supported in that there was a negative correlation between the independent self-construal and the interdependent self-rating scales. This finding implies that individuals with an independent self-construal do not rate themselves as having behaviors that are consistent with the interdependent self-construal.

The data supported hypothesis 5 with a negative correlation between the interdependent self and both the metapersonal and independent self-ratings. This implies that individuals with a self-construal that is connected to specific groups do not identify themselves with metapersonal (connected to all others) or independent behaviors.

Finally, hypothesis 6 stated that there would be a correlation between the metapersonal self-rating and both

the metapersonal and independent self-construal scales. This hypothesis was supported which implies that people who rate themselves as having a metapersonal self-rating will have both the metapersonal and the independent self-construals. However, people who rate themselves as independent on the self-rating scale will only be high in independent self-construal. This was confirmed with the non-significant relationship between independent self-rating and the metapersoanal self-construal, and with a positive relationship between the independent self-rating and the independent self-construal. Further analyses with a regression predicting the metapersonal self-rating found that only the metapersonal self-scale significantly contributed to predicting the metapersonal self-rating. The independent self-scale does not add to the prediction of the metapersonal self-rating. These findings imply that though both scales were correlated with the metapersonal self-rating, only the metapersonal self-scale predicts metapersonal self-rating.

The results from Table 4 clearly show that the self-ratings for each of the three self-construal scales is consistent with the theoretical underpinning of each construct. The results are both empirically and theoretically consistent.

Study 4

Purpose

The purpose of Study 4 was to further test convergent and discriminant validity of the self-construal scales. Based on theoretical underpinnings (Enright, Gassin, & Wu, 1992) and previous preliminary research (DeCicco & Nesbitt, unpublished data; Nesbitt, 2005) forgiveness and religious beliefs, ritual, and practices were investigated in relation to self-construal.

Forgiveness

Historically, forgiveness has been intertwined with religious traditions (Enright et al., 1992). More recently, forgiveness has been studied as an interpersonal variable (McCullough, 2000). However, forgiveness is not simply forgetting about a wrong, condoning a wrong or pardoning a wrong (Enright et al., 1992). Rather, it is a complex process that moves one from negative affect, cognitions, and behavior to neutral or positive affect, cognitions, and behavior. Forgiveness should be related to the metapersonal self-construal because if someone holds an identity that includes all others, they will have a universal focus (Hill, 2006). The reason is that shifting

to the universal means shifting one's focus away from others and possible transgressions. In testing this theory, hypothesis 1 is that only the metapersonal self will be correlated with a measure of forgiveness.

Forgiveness will be measured in this study with a two-factor measure (McCullough & Hoyt, 2002). One factor is benevolence, which is the act of goodwill after a transgression. Examples of the items measuring benevolence are: Item 5) I want us to bury the hatchet and move forward with our relationship, and Item 17) I have released my anger so I could work on restoring our relationship to health. The second factor is revenge. Items measuring revenge are: Item 1) I'll make him/her pay, and Item 18) I want to see him/her hurt and miserable.

Religious Beliefs, Ritual and Practices

The metapersonal self must not be confused (but often is) with religious beliefs, practices, or religious importance. Religion or religiosity is defined as a set of behaviors, values, and attitudes that are based on previously established religious doctrine and institutionalized organization (DeCicco, 2007b; King, 2007). Spirituality on the other hand is defined as an unbounded set of personal drives, behaviors, experiences, values, and attitudes, which are based on a quest for existential understanding, meaning, purpose, and transcendence (King, 2007). Religiosity and spirituality are now treated as distinct constructs (Pappas, 2004) and the literature has produced a large number of measurement tools for each (e.g., MacDonald & Friedman, 2002; MacDonald, Kuentzel, & Friedman, 2002; Pappas & Friedman, 2004; Salsman, Brown, Brechting, & Carlson, 2005).

The metapersonal self-construal is a self reference that focuses on the universal and not on a deity or a religious doctrine. A relationship with a deity or a belief in a deity would describe that of the interdependent self. This self-construal focuses on the relationship with others (e.g., God) and with social roles (e.g., going to church).

The independent self-construal on the other hand is not theoretically related to religious beliefs since people who define the self as independent would be free to hold religious beliefs or not, depending on their own personal attitudes and interests. With this self-construal, information is not taken from outside the self (e.g., a deity), but rather the elements that comprise the independent self-construal include one's own internal abilities, thoughts, and feelings (e.g., I am strong, I am thoughtful) rather than external sources (e.g., my strength comes from God).

The independent self is expressed as a unique being that promotes one's own goals and focuses on one's abilities, attributes, and characteristics rather than on external sources (Singelis, 1994).

Therefore, hypothesis 2 tested in Study 4 was that only the interdependent self would be correlated with religious beliefs, importance, and practices since all of these concepts provide information about the self from social context. A similar notion has been examined in previous studies in terms of religious practices with a transcendent personality dimension (self-transcendence) (Cloninger et al., 1993).

Participants

Participants included 236 first year university undergraduates (30 males, 206 females) with a mean age of 20.29 (SD=4.9).

Measures

Self-Construal Scale (SCS): This 40-item scale consists of Singelis' (1994) 30-item independent and interdependent scale and the 10-item metapersonal self scale designed in Study 1. Participants responded on a 7-point Likert scale.

Forgiveness (McCullough & Hoyt, 2002): The forgiveness measure is a 20-item self-report measure. The scale consists of two factors, which measure revenge (negatively worded items, e.g., I'll make him or her pay) and benevolence (positively worded items, e.g., I have given up my hurt and resentment). The scale has been used extensively in the literature and has shown to be reliable and valid (e.g., McCullough, 2000; McCullough et al., 1998; Walker & Gorsuch, 2002).

Religious beliefs, importance and practices: Religious beliefs were assessed with a one-item demographic. Participants were asked the following question: Do you consider yourself to be religious? They responded by circling yes, not sure or no. A low score on religious beliefs represents responses that religion is important to them.

Religious importance and participation was assessed with the following questions: How important is religion to you? How often do you participate in organized religious practices? Participants were asked to respond on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important). Higher scores indicate higher levels of importance and more participation in organized religious practices.

Procedure

University undergraduate students were asked to participate in the research project and were given bonus points as per their course outline. They were given one hour to complete the questionnaire package.

Results

The mean, standard deviation, and alpha coefficient for each scale used in Study 4 are reported in Table 6. The alpha coefficient was acceptably high for each scale in this study, ranging from .90 to .70.

Table 7 illustrates the correlations between each of the three self-construal scales and forgiveness, religious beliefs, religious importance, and religious practices. As stated in hypothesis 1, the metapersonal self-scale is positively correlated with forgiveness (both revenge and benevolence).

As stated in hypothesis 2, the interdependent scale is correlated with religious importance and religious practices. It is negatively correlated with religious beliefs, which indicates a higher level of religious beliefs (lower scores on religious beliefs indicate higher importance). Finally, as expected, the independent self is not correlated with forgiveness or the religious items.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1 was supported in that the metapersonal self was correlated with forgiveness and not correlated with any of the religious items. This implies that the metapersonal self is not related to religious beliefs, religious importance, or religious practices. It is however related to high forgiveness scores. These findings support the theory that people who are high in the metapersonal self-concept will be more forgiving since they include all others into their own sense of self.

Theoretically, the metapersonal self-concept should not be related to religious beliefs since traditional religion would involve a belief in a God or Being outside of the self (e.g., Christ). Therefore, all the religious scales should be correlated with the interdependent self, where a God or Being would be outside of the self.

The distinguishing feature of the metapersonal self is that it is correlated with forgiveness where the independent self is not. This is in keeping with the findings by Brown et al. (2005), who found the metapersonal self to be correlated with agreeableness but the independent self was not. These findings suggest that though the independent and metapersonal self-construals are related, they have very strong differences as well (e.g., readiness to forgive or level of agreeableness).

General Discussion

A theoretical model of self-construal was presented in this paper: the metapersonal self-construal. This construct was developed from the current, well-established theory and research on self-construal. It has been shown both theoretically and empirically that self-construal is a culture-dependent construct and that two very different construals of the self exist: the independent and interdependent self-construals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The present research has expanded this theory and research to show that a third self-construal does in fact also exist. After five initial pilot studies, a series of four studies were then conducted in order to develop and validate the new model and measure.

The five pilot studies combined with Study 1 yielded a 10-item self-report measure of the metapersonal self-construal, which is a valid measure with high internal reliability. The scale is consistent with the current measures of independent and interdependent self-construal (Singelis, 1994). Factor-analysis of the self-construal items yielded a three-factor model indicating that three distinct constructs of self-construal were present. Study 2 found the metapersonal self (MPS) scale to have low social desirability. These findings suggest that the MPS scale is an appropriate and psychometrically sound measure of the third self-construal.

Study 3 investigated the discriminant validity of the metapersonal self scale and provides evidence in terms of intolerance of ambiguity, racism, and mood. A unique profile for each self-construal was found such that the independent self-construal was associated with low depression, low anxiety, high vigor, high independent self-rating, and low interdependent self-rating.

The interdependent self-construal was associated with high intolerance of ambiguity, high interdependent self-rating, and low independent self-rating. The metapersonal self-construal was associated with low intolerance of ambiguity, low racism, low anxiety, high vigor, low interdependent-self rating, and high metapersonal self-rating. These unique profiles are linked to the underlying principles of each self-construal construct.

Further investigations with Study 4 revealed the metapersonal self-construal to be associated with forgiveness, but not with religious beliefs, religious importance, or religious practices. As was expected, the indepen-

dent self was not correlated with forgiveness, religious beliefs, religious importance, or religious practices. These findings imply that the metapersonal and independent self-construal individuals differ with respect to their ability to move from negative affect, cognitions, and behaviors to neutral or positive ones, through forgiveness. We would expect the metapersonal individuals to be forgiving because their belief is that they are connected to all others. The independent self that is not connected to others would not necessarily be high in forgiveness.

The interdependent self-construal was correlated with religious beliefs, religious importance, and religious practices, which was expected. The interdependent individual would view God as outside of the self and therefore would participate in religious practices. This behavior would not be associated with the metapersonal self since if these individuals hold a notion of God, this God would be encompassed within them and not outside of the self. The findings of Study 4 were consistent with this theory. Future research is certainly warranted in this line of inquiry.

One limitation of this research is that only university undergraduates were tested. Since this is the first research to investigate the present theory, model, and construct, university students were an appropriate exploratory sample. However, the results cannot be generalized to adult populations until further testing is conducted. Given the findings of the current research, studies have been undertaken to begin the investigation with adult samples (see Stroink & DeCicco, 2002, 2003, 2008). Another limitation with a university student sample is that the self may change with life experience, and therefore age may be a factor. Given this, the importance of replicating these studies with adult samples must be emphasized. In fact, all the past findings with the independent and interdependent self-construals should be replicated with adult samples using all three measures of self-construal. Furthermore, since self-construal has been found to be culture-dependent (e.g., Ho, 2002; Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000; Markus & Kityama, 1991; Marsella et al., 1985) more extensive studies across cultures is needed. Studies based on the findings of this research have begun the process (Stroink & DeCicco, 2002, 2003, 2008), but comprehensive investigations remain to be undertaken.

Future research should provide clearer evidence of the relationship between the metapersonal self and specific cultural groups. Research by Stroink and DeCicco (2007), for example, investigated self-construal with aboriginal samples, which are theoretically relevant to the metapersonal self. Other cultural groups certainly need to be investigated. Also, studies that focus on cultural accommodation-hybridization of all three construals need to be conducted. It is reasonable to assume that individuals may be high in two or more of the construals. The means to measure this cultural accommodation-hybridization has yet to be explored.

Another necessary line of investigation is to expand the examination of the relationship between self-construal and cognition. Following the extensive research on the independent and interdependent self-construals and cognition (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), such research is now being extended to the third measure of self-construal: the metapersonal self (see Stroink & DeCicco, 2007).

The current research has begun the process of adding the third model and measure of self-construal to the psychological literature. Extensive research is now needed to expand the area of study by thoroughly including this model and measure into all past research designs on self-construal and to expand the research into many new areas not yet examined.

Endnotes

Appendix—The Metapersonal Self (MPS) Scale

INSTRUCTIONS

This is a questionnaire that measures a variety of feelings and behaviors in various situations. Listed below are a number of statements. Read each one as if it referred to you. Beside each statement write the number that best matches your agreement or disagreement, using the scale below. Please respond to every statement.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Don't Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. _____ My personal existence is very purposeful and meaningful.

2. _____ I believe that no matter where I am or what I'm doing, I am never separate from others.

3. _____ I feel a real sense of kinship with all living things.

4. _____ My sense of inner peace is one of the most important things to me.

5. _____ I take the time each day to be peaceful and quiet, to empty my mind of everyday thoughts.

6. _____ I believe that intuition comes from a higher part of myself and I never ignore it.

7. _____ I feel a sense of responsibility and belonging to the universe.

8. _____ My sense of identity is based on something that unites me with all other people.

9. _____ I am aware of a connection between myself and all living things.

10. _____ I see myself as being extended into everything else.

Tables

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. The Independent Self	...	...	...	…
2. The Interdependent Self	-.064	...	...	...
3. The Metapersonal Self (a)	.567**	.120	...	…
4. The Metapersonal Self (b)	.551**	.212*	...	…
Mean	73.16	69.46	47.28	47.19
SD	11.60	10.25	8.20	9.08
"	.79	.75	.77	.80

Note: The Metapersonal Self (a) = 12 item scale; The Metapersonal Self (b)= 10 item scale

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, Alpha Reliabilities, and Intercorrelations for the Independent, Interdependent and Metapersonal Measures

(Item) Scale Item Number	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
(Meta) 24	.76*	-.12	
(Meta) 38	.74*		
(Meta) 13	.71*		
(Meta) 20	.69*		
(Meta) 41	.69*	.17	-.26
(Meta) 9	.38*	.29	.26
(Meta) 31	.36*		.34
(Indep) 1	.49*	-.40	.21
(Indep) 25	.40*	-.14	.12
(Indep) 2	.27		.26
(Inter) 16	.39*	.35*	.11
(Inter) 36		.72*	
(Inter) 5	-.13	.67*	.12
(Inter) 39	.14	.62*	
(Inter) 32	.13	.58*	-.14
(Inter) 42	-.20	.50*	-.35
(Inter) 15		.47*	-.13
(Inter) 4	-.27	.45*	
(Inter) 29		.45*	
(Inter) 11	-.10	.43*	
(Inter) 26		.37*	
(Inter) 8	.19	.35*	.26
(Inter) 23	.29	.34	-.36
(Inter) 22	.13	.32	-.35
(Meta) 17	.34	.37*	-.14
(Indep) 7	.11		.68*
(Indep) 12	-.13		.59*
(Indep) 33	-.28		.59*
(Indep) 37	.27		.58*
(Indep) 28		.10	.57*
(Indep) 18	.18	-.16	.51*
(Indep) 10	.34	.12	.47*
(Indep) 30	.14	.24	.32
(Indep) 35	.15		.28
(Indep) 40			.27
(Indep) 21			.23
(Inter) 19	-.19	.46*	.47*
(Meta) 34	.29		.37*
(Meta) 6		.26	.31

*Substantial loading (fixed at .35)

Table 2. Factor Loadings for the Three Self Scales

	Metapersonal Self	Independent Self	Interdependent Self
Independent Self	.49**	--	--
Interdependent Self	.03	-.23*	--
Intolerance of Ambiguity	-.26**	-.11	.26**
Modern Racism	-.32**	-.07	.11
Anger/Hostility	-.12	-.04	.02
Confusion/Bewilderment	-.15	-.21*	.10
Depression/Dejection	-.17	-.32**	.14
Fatigue/Inertia	.02	-.18	.10
Tension/Anxiety	-.26**	-.28*	.06
Vigor/Activity	.28**	.38**	-.17

Note: p< .05, ** p<.01

Table 3. Correlations for Self-Construal Scales With Intolerance of Ambiguity, Racism and Emotions

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Independent Self-Rating Measure		-.21*	.27*	.35**	-.28**	.15
2. Interdependent Self-Rating Measure			-.29**	-.33**	.21*	-.39**
3. The Metapersonal Self-Rating Measure				.40**	-.04	.72**
4. The Independent Self Scale					-.18	.42**
5. The Interdependent Self Scale						.03
6. The Metapersonal Self Scale						---

Note: * p < .05, ** p< .01

Table 4. Correlations for the Self-Construal Scales and The Self-Rating Scales

Variable	Beta	t	Sig.
Independent Self	.096	1.21	.23
Metapersonal Self	.672 *	8.52	.00

Table 5. Regression Analysis Predicting The Metapersonal Self Rating

Scale	$\underline{M}$	$\underline{SD}$	alpha
Metapersonal Self	81.39	4.47	.82
Independent Self-Construal	74.11	0.56	.78
Interdependent Self-Construal	73.41	9.56	.77
Forgiveness-Revenge	49.92	10.30	.90
Forgiveness-Benevolence	23.23	5.70	.73

Table 6. Means, Standard Deviations, and Alpha Reliability of the Measures

Measure	Independent Self	Interdependent Self	Metapersonal Self
Forgiveness-Revenge	.05	.08	.26
Forgiveness-Benevolence	.04	.02	.27*
Religious Beliefs	.00	-.25*	.00
Religious Importance	-.02	.19*	.04
Religious Practices	-.06	.21*	-.06

Table 7. Correlations Between the Self-Construal Scales and Forgiveness,Religious Beliefs, Importance and Practices

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