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Individualism-collectivism, values, and help seeking attitudes among Indian and American college students

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Abstract

The present study examined cross-cultural differences in individualistic and collectivistic values and behaviors, the cultural value dimensions of conservatism, openness to change, self-enhancement, self-transcendence, and attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help among American and Indian college students. Data were collected from 111 students at Eastern Illinois University in the U.S. and from 78 students of Mumbai University in India. Participants completed a demographic questionnaire, the Individualism-Collectivism Interpersonal Assessment Inventory, the Schwartz Value Survey and the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale. Statistical analyses were computed using t tests for independent means, 2 Way ANOVAs, multiple regression analyses and descriptive statistics. Results indicated that American college students had more collectivistic values than Indian college students, particularly in reference to friends. Further, college students who were more collectivistic in their values and behaviors endorsed more conservative values as compared to college students who were individualistic. However, there were no other differences regarding the other value dimensions between American and Indian college students, regardless of whether they were individualistic or collectivistic. Additionally, there were no differences in help-seeking attitudes among American and Indian college students and among those who were individualists and those who were collectivists. Further, although none of the four value dimensions predicted positive help-seeking attitudes among American college students, the values of conservatism, openness to change and self-enhancement predicted negative help-seeking attitudes for Indian college students. Lastly, the demographic variables of age, gender and prior counseling

experience were analyzed. Females were found to have a more positive help-seeking attitude as compared to males. Although an equal percentage of Indian and American college students indicated a history of counseling, it was only the American college students whose help-seeking attitudes were influenced by their prior counseling experience. Implications of these findings are reviewed along with recommendations for future research in this important area of cross-cultural research.

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Culture is defined as a socially transmitted or a socially constructed constellation consisting of such things as practices, competencies, ideas, schemas, symbols, values, norms, institutions, goals, constitutive rules, artifacts and modifications of the physical environment" (Fiske, 2002, p. 88). Cultural differences have been an important area for research with the focus being on testing the generality of existing psychological theories in different cultural contexts (Fiske, 2002). The importance of studying cultures is well explained by Kitayama and Markus (1995) who stated that a certain process that is adaptive in one culture may not be so in another culture.

Cross-cultural research has been done on an individual level and a cultural level, i.e., using scores of individual persons and analyzing their attitudes and behaviors versus using nation means (Schwartz, 1994b). Both are equally important. The individual level approach dominates the field of cross-cultural psychology but the cultural level approach is important to generate psychologically meaningful theories (Leung, 1989). Even though individual level analysis is different from cultural level analysis, they are related because the socialization process leads people to internalize values that are consistent with societal and cultural practices (Schwartz, 1994b). Earlier cross-cultural studies have focused on issues such as value priorities (Ryckman & Houston, 2003), moral judgments (Miller & Luthar, 1989), and coping styles (Sahoo, Sia & Panda, 1987), to name a few.

Thus, a cultural level process like individualism and collectivism can influence an individual level phenomenon like development of a value system for an individual and their attitude towards help seeking behavior. The current study could be said to be in the realm of cross-cultural research, will be on a cultural level and would consider cross-cultural differences in the constructs of individualism-collectivism and value distribution

and link them to attitudes towards help seeking behavior among Indian and American college students. Moreover, previous studies have not studied the relationship between individualism-collectivism, values and attitude towards help seeking behavior together. Finally, each of these variables has their own controversies which will be highlighted in the next section.

Individualism and Collectivism.

Individualism and collectivism are not only considered to be cultural variables but also personality variables (Hui & Triandis, 1986). Triandis (1995) defined individualism "as a social pattern that consists of loosely linked individuals who view themselves as independent of collectives; are primarily motivated by their own preferences, needs, rights and contracts they have established with others; give priority to their personal goals over the goals of others and emphasize rational analyses of the advantages and disadvantages to associating with others" (p. 2). The qualities that provide the basis of individualism are a sense of personal identity, self-actualization, an internal locus of control and principled (post-conventional) moral reasoning (Waterman, 1984).

Triandis (1995) defined collectivism as a "social pattern consisting of closely linked individuals who see themselves as parts of one or more collectives (family, coworkers, nation, tribe), are primarily motivated by the norms of and duties imposed by, those collectives; are willing to give priority to the goals of these collectives over their personal goals and emphasize their connectedness to members of these collectives" (p. 2).

Dimensions of Individualism-Collectivism

Dimensions of individualism-collectivism include self-concept, personality traits and attitudes, family life and socialization, marriage, ingroup versus outgroup and

communication styles. Research findings in these areas will be briefly discussed.

Self-concept. In individualistic cultures, the self is distinct from the ingroup, there is centrality of the autonomous individual and identity is defined by what one owns, what experiences one has and individual accomplishments (Triandis, 1993; Triandis, Leung, Villareal, & Clack, 1985; Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990). In collectivistic cultures, on the other hand, the ingroup is considered an extension of the self, there is centrality of the collective and identity is defined by the relationships to groups (Triandis, 1993; Triandis et al., 1990; Triandis et al., 1985).

Kitayama and Markus (1995) have made an important contribution by commenting on the self-construals of the Western and Eastern cultures. Euro-American cultures seem to have an independent self-construal since there is an emphasis on autonomy, uniqueness and expression of one's preferences and traits. In contrast, non-Western cultures (particularly the Asian cultures) tend to have an interdependent self-construal since there is a focus on fulfilling duties, obligations and social responsibilities and there tends to be connectedness with others. Considering the above, a surprising result was reported by Kapoor, Hughes, Baldwin, and Blue (2003) from a study conducted on 184 college students at a large Mid-western university in the United States and on 251 college students from a large university in New Delhi, India. It was found that the Indian sample reported less independent self-construal than the American sample but did not differ on the interdependent self-construal. This could be attributed to the fact that a student population tends to be more self-sufficient and autonomous. Further, cultural changes that have taken place over the decades could explain the obtained results.

Personality traits and attitudes. In individualistic cultures, traits of being logical, balanced, rational or fair, self-reliant, hedonistic, competitive and emotionally detached are given importance (Triandis, 1990; Triandis, 1995; Triandis et al., 1990). In collectivistic cultures, sociability, interdependence, family integrity and emotional expression tend to be given more importance (Triandis, 1990; Triandis, 1995; Triandis et al., 1990). Thus, the salience of values seems to differ across different cultures. This value distribution in individualistic and collectivistic cultures will be elaborated on in later sections.

Family life and socialization. In collectivistic cultures, the "authoritarian" child rearing style and physical punishment are more prevalent. There is an emphasis on knowing who one is (e.g., ancestors, family, etc.) as opposed to knowing about what one can do, which is more common in individualistic cultures (Triandis, 1990). Further, in cultures lower on individualism, family ties tend to be stronger, there seems to be more frequent contacts with family members and divorce rate tends to be lower. Additionally, in Asian cultures, one commits to bringing honor and fame to the family, respecting elders since they are expected to have more wisdom, and making sacrifices for the family (Hofstede, 2001; Kim, Atkinson, & Umemoto, 2001).

Indians are collectivistic where family is concerned because they give much importance to the extended family and to the role played by family and kin. But recent research has revealed that there tends to be a mix of both individualistic and collectivist orientations in family life among Indians. In recent decades, Indians have tended to define the family as restricted to nuclear family members, indicating an individualistic orientation. Yet, they may associate themselves with the extended family and enjoy the

emotional and financial support indicating a collectivistic orientation (Sinha & Tripathi, 1994).

Marriage. Individualists tend to fall in love first and then get married, handle marital conflicts more actively and have less stable marriages. Further, parents want their children to be independent and hence parents and children may not live together (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1995). In some traditional and collectivistic cultures, on the other hand, people tend to get married first and then fall in love, and are generally more accepting of the 'ups and downs' of the relationship (Triandis, 1995). Obligations to the family are both financial and ritual (e.g., family celebrations and occasions cannot be missed). Selection of marriage partners is important for the whole family, because marriage is considered as a contract between the families. In cultures with lower individualism scores, the criteria for marriage partner are right age, wealth, industriousness and chastity; living with in-laws is normal, and marriage partners are more interdependent in religious and income matters (Hofstede, 2001).

Recent studies have shown that the concept of marriage may be changing in cultures like the Indian setting. Traditionally, marriages were arranged by the parents. However more recently in India, if there are conflicting choices, the children will try to convince their parents of their choice and thus combine individualism and collectivism (Sinha, Vohra, Singhal, Sinha, & Ushashree, 2002). What may have not changed is the belief that marriages cannot be broken, that the Indian woman has to give first priority to her home and the Indian man should give priority to financially supporting his family. This could even parallel the changes taking place in the family systems.

Ingroup versus outgroup. Among individualists, personal goals tend to be more important than ingroup goals and these tend to be unrelated (Triandis, 1990; Triandis et al., 1990; Triandis et al., 1985). Further, people tend to see personal gain in transactions. Additionally, they value self-sufficiency and an internal control over events, behavior is more motivated by guilt rather than shame and one is accountable to the self or some superordinate authority (Hui and Triandis, 1986; Triandis, 1990; Triandis et al., 1990).

In a collectivistic culture, the ingroup is of primary importance and usually consists of the family. When there is a conflict between the ingroup and individual interests, the former have importance over the latter. Further, conflicts are normally intergroup and on the basis of race, religion or language rather than on the basis of alienation, as happens in individualistic cultures (Triandis, 1995; Triandis et al., 1985). Other important ingroup factors are that hierarchy is important and men are supposed to be superior to women. Furthermore, the values of harmony, saving face and gaining approval also hold importance. Another contrasting factor is that ingroup relations are of a long-term nature and there is an exchange of resources of equal value to sustain a social network (Hui and Triandis, 1986; Triandis, 1990; Triandis et al., 1990).

Communication Styles. Differences in communication styles may be based in differences in self-construals, i.e., independent or interdependent (Kitayama & Markus, 1995). Individualists use sentences that include "I", "me" and "mine" and focus on content whereas collectivists use sentences that include "us", "we" and "ours" and focus on context (Triandis, 1993; Triandis, 1995).

Education. In cultures characterized by lower individualism, the purpose of education is learning how to do things to be a part of the society, and students are

discouraged from speaking up in class. In cultures characterized by higher individualism, the purpose of education is leaning how to learn to cope with new situations and students are expected to speak up in class or in large groups (Hofstede, 2001).

In the author's own experiences, the educational system in India is characterized by more of a traditional teaching style where students are not really encouraged and reinforced to ask questions. Further, exams are dependent on rote learning to a great extent. In contrast, in the U.S., students are encouraged to ask questions and open-book exams and critical analysis form a major part of the examination system. Thus, there could be differences in the attitudes and values right from an early age reinforced by the education system and they need to be considered when one focuses on the student population in the Indian and American cultures.

Cross-Cultural Research

Cross-cultural comparisons of individualism and collectivism have been the focus of much research since Hofstede's study in 1980. A lot of changes have taken place not only with regard to results, but also in methodology. Many studies have been conducted with the view of Triandis (1993) who stated that individualistic tendencies are more likely to be found in Western cultures and more collectivistic themes are found in Eastern and traditional cultures. Hofstede (2001) analyzed data collected on a sample of employees in a large multinational business organization (IBM) in 71 countries between November 1967 and 1973 and found that the US ranked first on individualism index values and India was ranked 21, indicating lower levels of individualism. In another study, data were collected from business professionals and advanced business students in nine countries (U.S., Germany, Japan, former Yugoslavia, People's Republic of China, Russia,

Venezuela, Mexico and Chile) during the year 1989-1990 (Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina, & Nicholson, 1997). The multinational research team sought to reexamine the rankings of the countries in terms of Hofstede's original dimensions of uncertainty avoidance, power distance, individualism/collectivism and masculinity. It was found that the US still scored the highest on the individualism category and retained the status of being the most individualistic country in the world. Further, China and Japan were characterized as collectivistic in orientation and Russia scored lowest on the individualism category.

When looking at the findings from Hofstede (2001) and Fernandez et al. (1997), it should be kept in mind that the results were restricted to the work force and work values and other dimensions may need to be considered in the area of individualism and collectivism. This is well demonstrated in a large scale meta-analysis conducted by Oyserman, Coon, and Kemmelmeier (2002) wherein 83 studies comparing the American culture to other cultures were analyzed. A content analysis was conducted for the individualism and collectivism measures. The construct of individualism covered the concepts of independence, competitive spirit, striving for one's goals, privacy, self-knowledge and direct communication whereas the construct of collectivism covered the concepts of belongingness, duty, harmony, seeking advice, focus on hierarchy, importance to the context of a situation and importance given to the group. Since the content of the individualism and collectivism measures seemed to differ across studies, results of studies referring to the same countries could not be compared (except for Hong Kong and Japan for individualism and Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and Poland for collectivism) and generalizability was restricted. Further, these results indicated that the constructs of individualism and collectivism are defined in different ways by different

researchers. For example, when concepts like "sense of belonging to in-groups" and "seeking advice" were used to assess collectivism, Americans rated themselves as more collective. When the term "duty to in-group" was used, Americans rated themselves as low on collectivism. However it was found that valuing personal independence and personal uniqueness were seen as core elements of individualism whereas sense of duty and obligation to the ingroup were seen as core elements of collectivism across all the studies.

In the study described above, when concerning individualism, it was found that there was no difference between America and other English-speaking countries and there was only a small difference between America and Europe. European Americans were significantly more individualistic than those in Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Poland, Singapore and Taiwan but the effect sizes for India, Japan and China were small. With respect to collectivism, it was found that Americans were lower than other non English-speaking countries. But the effect sizes for India, Mexico and PR China were moderate. Within the US, African Americans were significantly higher in individualism than European Americans, but they did not differ in collectivism. Latino Americans did not differ significantly from European Americans significantly on the constructs of individualism but were significantly higher in collectivism. Finally, Asian Americans were lower in individualism and higher on collectivism as compared to European Americans. Thus, the results may have not been as expected

There are some other concerns in the area of cross-cultural research of individualism and collectivism which indicate that individualism and collectivism are not simple and bipolar constructs. First of all, countries are heterogeneous in terms of cultures, people

identify with more than one culture, and cultures may overlap (Fiske, 2002). Further, the concepts of individualism and collectivism may vary within cultures because of demographic, ethnic, regional and other differences (Kapoor et al., 2003). Further, people in individualistic cultures may embrace collectivistic and mixed values to a certain extent (Kapoor, Wolfe, & Blue, 1995). Some of the issues are well reflected in the study by Sinha and Tripathi (1994) who started off by saying that one cannot label India to be a collectivistic country. In the study, 22 items dealing with individualism and collectivism were administered to 82 undergraduate students in North India and the three categories of responses were the manner in which an individualist would respond, the manner in which a collectivist would respond and a mix of the two. Results indicated that on 17 items, the most common response was of the mixed type and only one items had a primarily collectivistic response. When there were individualistic choices, they were mainly in situations concerning personal problems, achievement and choice of voting. This indicated that values, reactions and ethical meanings attached in India tend to be contextual rather than textual.

To make the issue more controversial, most of the previous studies have focused on comparisons between America and East Asia (Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and China) (Oyserman et al, 2002). The psychometric method of the studies has also been questioned. There are cultural differences concerning the meaning attached to filling forms or using another method and there could be translation issues. Thus, the cross-cultural methods may not have convergent validity (Fiske, 2002). Supporting this train of thought is a research study conducted by Schimmack, Oishi, & Diener (2005) in which Hofstede's I-C scale was compared to more recent measures of individualism and

collectivism that were used in a meta-analysis done by Oyserman et al. (2002). Correlations were computed between Hofstede's individualism dimension and the individualism and collectivism scores obtained in the meta-analysis. The results revealed a discrepancy in the rank orders ascribed to nations on the individualism-collectivism dimension, indicating a lack of convergent validity. Empirically, it was seen that the difference in the statistical analysis of cross-cultural data was the cause of lack of convergent validity.

Thus, one could see that labeling a country as individualistic or collectivistic is not a simple and definite process. This was well demonstrated in a study done on 292 respondents living in three locations in Eastern India: a college in a small town, Samastipur; a postgraduate department in a university; and a business school in the large city of Patna. It was proposed that Indians are likely to respond to a situation in different combinations of individualistic and collectivistic orientations: collectivistic behavior and collectivistic intention (CC), individualistic behavior and individualistic intention (II), collectivistic behavior with individualistic intention or followed by individualistic behavior (CI), individualistic behavior with collectivistic intention or followed by collectivistic behavior (IC) and a mix of collectivistic and individualistic intention and behavior (C&I). A questionnaire consisting of 18 situations was given and the responses were placed in the five categories. Results showed that the CC modal responses were primarily related to family setting and family members which showed that the more proximate the ingroup, the stronger the collectivistic orientation. In situations where one's family or friends' interests were pitched against the opportunity to get a good job, the person was most likely to accommodate both interests by opting for C&I showing that

urgent personal needs did not completely preclude collectivistic considerations. The most likely responses across the 18 situations and three locations were either C&I or CC and the two were inversely related. Further, the behaviors and intentions differed across the locations. Specifically, participants in Samastipur had the lowest mean score on C&I and the highest mean score on purely collectivist responses. The reverse was true for the large city. In the former, the fact that the participants came from a rural background, were younger, belonged to larger families and the fathers were likely to be agriculturists or service holders may have contributed to the results (Sinha, Sinha, Verma, & Sinha, 2001).

This being said, it seems that the study has contributed in two major ways. First of all, it shows that individuals from even strongly collectivistic societies can have a mixture of individualistic and collectivistic orientations to situations. Similar results were found by Sinha and his colleagues (2002) in a study conducted on 534 social science students of Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, Gujarat University in Ahmedabad, Utkal University in Bhubaneswar, S.V. University in Tirupati, and R.N.A.R. College in Samastipur in India. Indians tend to be collectivistic in some situations and mix collectivism and individualism in others but are not purely individualistic in their intentions and behaviors. Individualistic values like personal happiness, economic gain and personal benefits could coexist with collectivist values such as salvation, enduring relationships and altruism among people (Mishra, 1994). These could contribute to the surprising results of an earlier reported study in which the Indian sample scored higher than the American sample on individualistic and collectivistic values. There could be an

element of individualism in the Indian collectivism due to modernization (Kapoor et al., 2003).

Secondly, the study by Sinha et al. (2001) has pointed out some important factors that could influence the distribution of individualism and collectivism. The first factor that emerged was gender as females had a higher mean score on collectivism and individualism as compared to males. An explanation could be that there is an emphasis on the homemaking and child rearing role within the family and they are assumed to be caring and nurturing: traits that are more collectivistic (Ryckman & Houston, 2003). Further, Sinha and his colleagues (2001) found that the respondents whose fathers were agriculturalists opted for purely collectivistic responses compared to those whose fathers were businessmen. The former may not have undergone formal education which is partly responsible for inducing an individualistic attitude since college education in India entails an exposure to Western values. This also explains why a lower level of education was associated with higher mean scores on purely collectivistic responses. These results were also replicated by Mishra (1994). Respondents' younger age was associated with higher mean scores on purely collectivistic responses among the Indian sample. Further, rural background was associated with higher mean scores on purely collectivistic responses among the Indian sample (Sinha et al., 2001). In large cities, there are better opportunities, more income and better infrastructure, more exposure to mass media orienting them to Western lifestyles and attitudes and greater chances of being raised in a liberal family which could contribute to individualism (Mishra, 1994; Sinha et al., 2002).

Other factors that have been studied are affluence and financial independence that lead to a tendency to combine individualism and collectivism or are associated with

collectivistic beliefs (Sinha et al., 2002; Triandis et al., 1990). Finally, the dimension of tightness and looseness of a culture also seems to make a difference. Tightness of a culture refers to the emphasis on following certain societal norms and looseness is the opposite. The US is a relatively loose culture in that there are multiple and contrasting norms and people who deviate are not necessarily punished (e.g., one could have a steady marriage partner or go to the bar to obtain a sexual relationship). Members of collectivistic cultures such as Japan tend to be very tight where members would need to follow certain societal norms. A slower rate of change, presence of few ingroups and dense societies (a large number of people per unit of area) give rise to collectivism (Triandis, 1995).

Though the concepts of individualism and collectivism have been well established, Triandis and his colleagues (1985) have said that these constructs only apply at the cultural level. But there are individual differences within a culture regarding adherence to individualistic or collectivistic values. This individual and psychological level was labeled allocentrism and idiocentrism (Triandis et al., 1985; Triandis, 1990).

Value Theory

To begin with, Schwartz (1994a) has defined values in the following way:

"Values are desirable trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity. Implicit in this definition of values as goals is that (1) they serve the interests of some social entity, (2) they can motivate action by giving it direction and emotional intensity, (3) they function as standards for judging and justifying action, and (4) they are acquired both

through socialization to dominant group values and through the unique learning

experiences of individuals" (p. 21).

Individuals and groups transform their necessities needed for their survival into

values. These values, in the form of conscious goals, are responses to the three universal

requirements of needs of individuals: biological needs, need for coordinated social

interaction and need for the smooth functioning and survival of groups (Schwartz,

1994a). Analysis of the models of value systems showed that the items that have been

discriminated into 10 distinct values (each defined by its motivational content) are

separate and the values do indeed form a motivational continuum (Schwartz & Boehnke,

2004).

Value Typology

Schwartz and Boehnke (2004) have described and defined the 10 basic value

domains as follows: Power is defined as a need for social status, control or dominance

over people and resources, and a need to preserve one's public image. Achievement is

defined as attaining personal success through demonstrating competence according to

social standards and being ambitious and influential. Hedonism is characterized by

pleasure or sensuous gratification for oneself. Stimulation is characterized by novelty,

challenge and excitement in life. The value of self-direction is defined as being

independent in thought and action by choosing, creating, and exploring choices.

Universalism is defined by an understanding and protection of the welfare of all people

and for nature in which one values equality and social justice. Preservation and

enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact

defines the value of benevolence. The value of tradition entails having respect for

traditional customs and religious beliefs and accepting them. The value of conformity is defined as commitment to social expectations or norms and self-discipline. Finally, the value of security is defined as attaining family, social and national safety and harmony. The values were proposed to share certain similarities and differences with each other which were explained by the structure of value relations.

Structure of Value Relations

"The structure of human values refers to the conceptual organization of values on the basis of their similarities and differences" (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987; p. 550). Schwartz (1994a) hypothesized that there were core concepts shared by the 10 basic values. For example, power and achievement emphasize social superiority whereas achievement and hedonism focus on self-centered satisfaction. Schwartz and Boehnke (2004) proposed a spatial representation to help clarify the dynamic relationship between values.
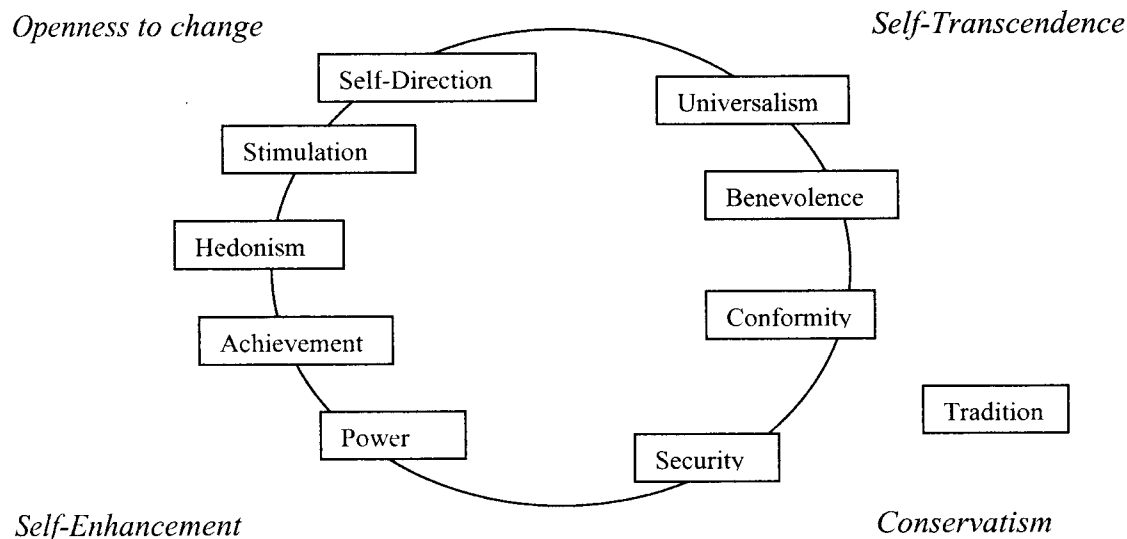
Fig. 1. Theoretical model of relations among 10 motivational types of values. (Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004, p. 233).

The circular arrangement of the figure reflects a motivational continuum indicating that the closer the two values are anywhere on the circle, the more similar will be the

underlying motivations. The placement of the value of tradition reflects that this value is both similar and different in relation to the other Conservatism values (Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004). Thus, it is possible that a certain set of values would go together in individualistic societies and another set of possibly contrasting values could go together in collectivistic societies.

Two-dimensional structure. Inter-relationships among the 10 Schwartz values can be summarized in terms of a two dimensional structure composed of four higher order value types. The first higher order type is 'openness to change' which combines self-direction and stimulation values. The second is 'conservatism' which combines security, conformity and tradition values. The first dimension refers to following one's own emotional and intellectual interests versus preserving the status quo. The third higher order type is termed 'self-enhancement' and combines power and achievement values and forms a bipolar dimension with 'self–transcendence', which combines universalism and benevolence values. The final dimension reflects the motivation to pursue one's own interests at the cost of others versus the motivation to promote the welfare of others at the cost of one's own interests. The value of hedonism is linked to both openness to change and self-enhancement dimensions (Schwartz, 1992).

Interests served. Since values are seen as goals, they must represent certain interests of an individual or group (Schwartz, 1994a). The 10 values have been classified by researchers into the four interest areas of individualistic values (power, achievement, hedonism and stimulation), collectivistic values (benevolence, tradition and conformity), mixed values [universality, security I (comprising of the three variables of 'health', 'clean' and 'family security') and security II (comprising of the variables of 'sense of

belonging' and 'social order')] and spiritual values. But one needs to understand that serving individual or collective interests is not always equivalent to what is valued in individualistic or collectivistic cultures. For example, values of wealth, social power and authority primarily serve individual interests but may be of importance in collectivistic cultures at a cultural level analysis (Schwartz, 1992). Whether the a priori designation of values as serving individualistic, collective and mixed interests is universally meaningful (Schwartz, & Bilsky, 1990) or not can be reviewed in cross-cultural research.

Cross-cultural research

The distribution of values is hypothesized to be different across different nations and also within a nation. Rokeach (1973) analyzed data collected from 665 men and 744 women in the U.S. and found that they gave more importance to the terminal values of world peace, family security and freedom and the instrumental values of being honest, ambitious, and responsible. They gave less importance to the terminal values of an exciting life, pleasure, social recognition and a world of beauty and the instrumental values of being imaginative, obedient, intellectual and logical. This pattern may not hold true in today's world and was well demonstrated in a study done by Grimm et al. (1999). They examined the cross-cultural distribution of individualistic and collectivistic values on a sample of 630 U.S. college students from Washington State University (i.e., from an individualistic culture) and 619 Philippine students (i.e., from a collectivistic culture). The participants were administered a Student Attitude Questionnaire, Personality Self-Rating form, Desirability Rating Form and Mood Rating Form. Results indicated that, compared to the Philippine college students, the U.S. college students gave more importance to four of the five hypothesized individualistic values of independence,

choice of one's goals, an exciting life and a varied life. The last two values were given less importance in the study by Rokeach (1973). Further, the Filipino college students gave more importance to four of the five hypothesized collectivistic values of honoring parents/elders, self-discipline, national security and obedience as compared to American college students. In the within-culture analyses, U.S. individualists valued all hypothesized individualistic values more and all hypothesized collectivistic values less than did U.S collectivists. Thus though U.S. is said to be individualists, there are people that have idiocentric and allocentric traits.

In another study on the value system of the American college students, Schwartz and Bardi (2001) examined value priorities in student samples from 13 nations. It was found that an average student from the U.S. emphasized the welfare of significant others (benevolence) but not of those outside the in-group (universalism). Further, the average student would not pursue selfish interests at the expense of others (power was ranked 10th) and showed little interest in maintaining tradition (tradition was ranked 9th). There was emphasis on succeeding according to social standards (achievement was ranked 2nd), being independent in thought and action (self-direction was ranked 4th) and gratifying sensual desires (hedonism was ranked 3rd). Moderate importance was given to conforming to social norms to maintain interpersonal harmony and to achieving a safe environment (conformity was ranked 5th and security was ranked 6th).

Similar results were found in a study conducted on 207 British and American undergraduate students by Ryckman & Houston (2003). It was found that the American students rated the individualistic values of achievement, self-direction, hedonism and stimulation as more important guiding principles and also gave more importance to

certain collectivistic values like subordination of self to the group, benevolence, universalism and security than the British sample. Further, the American students were more individualistic than the British students. In sum, it seems that many individualistic values (e.g., hedonism, achievement) as compared to collectivistic values (e.g., tradition) are given more importance among college students in the U.S.

As compared to the U.S., Asian cultures seem to have different value priorities. In Asian cultures, self-restraint and control in the expression of emotions are considered signs of strength and minimizing one's own achievements and being humble are valued (Kim et al., 2001). This was supported in a study in which the Asian Values Scale (AVS) was developed. Six primary factors were identified which reflected adherence to the Asian value system, including conformity to norms, family recognition through achievement, emotional self-control, collectivism, humility, and filial piety (Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999).

There have been studies that have linked individualism and collectivism to the distribution of values. Schwartz (1990) mentioned that for contractual (individualistic) societies, the values of self-direction and stimulation were important and Triandis et al. (1990) mentioned that the values of achievement, pleasure and competition were important in individualistic societies. Further, individualism is positively correlated with preferences for affiliation, succorance and nurturance (Hui & Villareal, 1989).

In contrast, in communal societies, values of tradition, restrictive conformity, the interpersonal subset of prosocial values needed to promote smooth ingroup relations, family integrity, security, and obedience are important (Schwartz, 1990; Triandis et al., 1990) General collectivism has been found to be negatively correlated with preference for

autonomy and there is an association between collectivism and needs for nurturance, succorance and abasement (Hui & Villareal, 1989).

Like the concepts of individualism and collectivism, there are factors that influence the distribution of values. Schwartz et al. (2001) conducted three studies; two were conducted on a sample from Italy, South Africa and Uganda to study the structure of relations among values using the Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ) and the third study was conducted on a sample from Israel to examine the properties of values comparing two value measures. It was found that age correlated positively with self transcendence (benevolence and universalism) and negatively with self-enhancement (power, achievement) values in the South African and Italian sample. This possibly indicated that with increase in age, one could give more importance to values dealing with others' interests (e.g., benevolence) and less importance to self related interests (e.g., achievement). In the South African sample, education correlated positively with self-direction and stimulation and negatively with conformity and tradition values. A possible reason is that education emphasizes decision making and making choices independently. Further, gender was also found to be a significant variable. It was found that women in Israel gave higher priority than men to benevolence values and in South Africa to tradition values. Men in Italy gave more importance to stimulation values. This is consistent with findings from Linderman and Verkasalo (2005) who also added that men tend to give more importance to power. These results indicate that not only are there gender differences within a country but also gender differences across countries. Women seem to have more welfare related values and men seem to have more achievement and power related values attributed to the role expectations and socialization process.

When college students are studied, their major subject of study is correlated with values as well. Schwartz et al. (2001) found that economics majors attached more importance to power and achievement values and humanistic majors attached more importance to tradition values. The latter results were unexpected and were attributed to the fact that the sample for the Humanistic majors had many orthodox religious students who majored in Jewish studies. Further, in the study by Linderman and Verkasalo (2005), differences in higher order dimensions were studied. It was found that students from the humanities and social sciences attached less importance to conservatism and more importance to self-transcendence as compared to business and technology students. Hence, when considering the sample, it is essential to consider the major subject of study because their professional life may necessitate developing certain values. Further, it must be noted that since the above stated findings are restricted to the Israeli and Finnish population, one may not be able to generalize them to other cultures.

The above studies suggest that values that seem to be important in individualistic cultures also seem to be important in Western cultures, specifically the U.S., and values that seem to be important in collectivistic cultures seem to be particularly important in Eastern and Asian cultures. However, what held true some years ago may not hold true now due to cultural, social, political and economic changes. Further, values could influence an individual in many areas of social behavior, including seeking psychological help, since they are said to be "guiding principles of one's life" (Schwartz, 1994a). This has implications for mental health counseling and forms an important area of research.

Attitudes Toward Help-Seeking

Studying attitude towards help seeking behavior is of importance since the act of seeking help from appropriate sources is crucial for the well-being of young people (Rickwood, Deane, Wilson, & Ciarrochi, 2005). Rickwood and colleagues (2005) have defined help-seeking as "the behavior of actively seeking help from other people and as communicating with other people to obtain help in terms of understanding, advice, information, treatment and general support in response to a problem or distressing experience" (p. 4). The process begins with the awareness of symptoms and the problem, which then needs to be expressed to accessible sources of help. Help seeking can be informal, when an individual approaches those with whom one has informal social relationships such as family, or it can be formal when one turns to professional sources for help.

There seem to be some individual differences regarding help seeking behaviors. Rickwood and Braithwaite (1994) compared people who sought help versus those who did not seek help and general help seeking versus seeking professional help in a sample of 715 final year secondary school students in Australia. Multiple regression analyses indicated that the factors predicting help-seeking for psychological problems (versus not seeking help for psychological problems) were more symptoms, social network variables (i.e., a frank and confiding relationship and knowing someone who had sought help form a mental health professional), gender (females were more likely to seek help than boys) and personality variables, such as a high degree of private self-consciousness (giving importance to one's own feelings and engaging in high self-monitoring) and willingness to disclose. But, certain specific factors such as having more symptoms and having less

confidence regarding the diagnosis given and the reassurance provided influenced professional help seeking (but did not influence seeking help from informal sources).

Barriers to help-seeking

There could be various barriers to help seeking and they differ across cultures and within a particular culture as well. One of the barriers is low emotional competence and it is associated with less willingness to seek help because people who lack emotional competence seem to be embarrassed by their perceived inability to seek help effectively. Further, negative attitudes and beliefs related to seeking professional help derive from negative past experiences of help seeking (i.e., feeling that the individual was not helped or feeling that their problems were not taken seriously or a belief that the information shared will not be confidential) and this, in turn, may influence one to believe that seeking professional help doesn't work or will make problems worse (Rickwood et al., 2005). It may be possible that cultures that emphasize high emotional competence instill openness to seeking mental health counseling.

Social support and the social network are very important factors as well. A study was conducted by Miville and Constantine (2006) on 162 Mexican American undergraduate students in the U.S. to explore the socio-cultural predictors of psychological help-seeking attitudes and behaviors. It was found that those who received less social support from their family and friends were more likely to have positive attitudes towards help seeking and were more likely to seek professional psychological help than those who received more social support. A study conducted by Tata and Leong (1994) on 219 Chinese-American students to explore the effects of acculturation, social-network orientation and individualistic and collectivistic values on attitude towards help seeking behavior added

more evidence. Results indicated that Chinese-American students who had a more positive social-network orientation (i.e., positive attitude towards advisability and usefulness about seeking help, having a past history of seeking help and feeling that others can be trusted) expressed a more positive attitude toward being open with a psychologist. Thus having a weak social support system but a positive social network orientation can lead to positive attitudes towards help seeking behavior. The latter is all the more important since it helps people deal appropriately with strangers and open up to them (in this case, mental health professionals). This is more difficult as compared to approaching informal sources that are familiar and more easily accessible (Rickwood et al., 2005).

Shame and stigma also seem to be barriers contributing to negative attitudes towards help seeking behavior. This was confirmed by a study done by Wrigley, Jackson, Judd, and Komiti, (2005) on a 142 individuals in a rural setting in Australia. In a study conducted by Zhang and Dixon (2003), it was found that Asian international students who were more acculturated to the American society had greater stigma tolerance and more positive attitudes towards help seeking behavior. Thus, if one agrees that the U.S. is an individualistic culture, one could say that adherence to an individualistic culture may lead to favorable help seeking attitudes.

Another study that indicates that stigma could be a barrier to help seeking in the Asian community was a qualitative study done by Wynaden et al. (2005) on members of the Asian community who lived in Australia. The participants reported that their communities stigmatized people with a mental illness. The ill people experienced feelings of shame since the family was disgraced and this prevented them from seeking help from

professional mental health practitioners. The Asian families tend to isolate themselves from the community to hide the person with a mental illness, hoping that society would not learn about the mental illness. The family members would engage in religious activities to deal with mental illness and would only seek help when all other options had been tried (Cheng, Bernard, Leong & Geist, 1993; Wynaden et al., 2005). According to Asian cultural values, the individual is expected to deal with the problematic issue by using his inner resources and asking for psychological help is considered a weakness. Therefore, conformity to family and traditional social norms could be related to negative attitudes towards psychological help among Asian Americans who conform to traditional Asian values (Kim et al., 2001; Kim & Omizo, 2003).

Other factors specific to the Asian community were illuminated by Kim and Omizo (2003) in a study on a sample of 242 Asian American college students using the Asian Value Scale and the ATSPPH –SH. Results showed that adherence to Asian cultural values (e.g., emotional self-control and conformity to norms) had an inverse relationship with attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help and an inverse relationship with willingness to see a counselor.

The belief in the etiology of mental illness seems to be an influential factor as well. Studies were conducted by Sheikh and Furnham (2000) on a sample consisting of British Asians, white Westerners and Pakistanis, and by Wynaden and his colleagues (2005) on members of the Asian community in Australia. Results have shown that Asians tend to believe in non-Western physiological and non-Western supernatural causes of mental illness (e.g., being possessed by evil spirits, negative actions in one birth being punished with a mental illness in a later reincarnation, certain sociological factors like familial

influences, imbalance of humors in the body). These beliefs of mental illness were found to be predictors for a negative attitude towards seeking professional help in the Pakistani sample. Further, beliefs about Western physiological causes (e.g., chemical imbalance in the body) were significant predictors for a positive attitude to seeking professional help in the Pakistani sample. Thus, beliefs in causes of mental illness are different in Eastern and Western societies and influence help-seeking behavior. A few other barriers to help seeking for the Asian community would be feelings of discomfort while expressing emotions, the belief that the therapist and the client are not equal in a relationship and the belief that the client should not take lead in the therapy session (Kim et al., 2001).

Factors influencing help-seeking

In most studies on attitudes towards help seeking behavior, there are other variables taken into account. Gender has been found to be one of the most important factors. In a study done by Sheikh and Furnham (2000) discussed earlier, it was found that men had a less positive attitude toward seeking professional help than women. In a study conducted by Rabinowitz, Gross, and Feldman (1999) to study the relationship of perceived need and help seeking using national data from Israel, results found that a higher proportion of the females than the males perceived a need for help. Thus, it could be said that men may not perceive a need for help and may have a negative attitude towards seeking help. Additionally, the individual's educational level also seemed to play a role. Having less education was associated with greater need for help among participants. The study done by Sheikh and Furnham (2000) found that individuals with no education or only primary education had a less positive attitude towards seeking professional help than those with secondary education. Thus though individuals with lower levels of education may have a

greater need for help, they may not seek it because of their negative attitude towards help seeking behavior. Interestingly, in a study conducted by Zhang and Dixon (2003) on 400 Asian international students using the modified form of the Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale and the Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale, there was no significant relationship found between help-seeking attitudes and educational levels. But there was a difference in the educational levels of the samples studied as the study by Zhang and Dixon had a sample consisting of doctoral students, masters level students, sophomores, juniors, freshmen and non-degree students while the study by Sheikh and Furnham had a sample who was highly educated (majority had completed university education) on one hand and some with no or primary education on the other hand. Further, the sample included by Sheikh and Furnham had Westerners and Asians as compared to having international students from Asian studying in the U.S.

Individualism and collectivism also seem to be related to attitudes towards psychological help seeking. In a meta-analytical study done by Waterman (1984), one of the hypotheses studied was that those persons most characterized by individualistic qualities of sense of personal identity (i.e., knowledge of one's identity and goals), internal locus of control, principled moral reasoning and self-actualization would be less likely than others to experience anxiety, depression and alienation. The rationale was that such people tend to have a sense of purpose in life and hence are less likely to go adrift, they tend to have developed good coping skills since they are on the path to self-actualization and they tend to be cognitively capable of handling moral dilemmas. Hence they are more likely to find adaptive solutions if they encounter difficult emotional

situations. Results indicated that out of the 116 samples studied, 83 generated positive significant results (the individualistic qualities were linked to lower levels of debilitating affective states), 32 samples found no relationship between the two variables and one found that greater individualistic qualities were related to more debilitating affective states. Study results also found persons most characterized by individualistic qualities (particularly a sense of personal identity and internal locus of control) were more likely to experience high levels of self-acceptance and self-esteem, raising the question about the advantages of developing individualistic traits.

Additionally, in cultures characterized by lower individualism, the ways of coping with stress tend to be emotion-based as compared to being problem-focused in cultures characterized by higher individualism (Hofstede, 2001). Coping patterns were studied in relation to individualism and collectivism in a sample of 80 adults from the age group of 16-20 years in India which is characterized by lower individualism (Sahoo et al., 1987). Results indicated that people with a collectivistic orientation adopted denial, repression and turning against self across both genders while those people with an individualistic orientation adopted the mechanism of isolation (Sahoo et al., 1987). All the coping patterns seem to be unhealthy ways of dealing with stress, irrespective of whether they are characteristic of individualistic or collectivistic people. Hence, it raises a question of whether coping patterns make a difference to attitude towards help seeking behavior.

Finally, when thinking about whom to consult for advice concerning relational crisis, collectivists tend to consult with informal third-party mediators (e.g., family, friends) which is consistent with an attitude that helping others is a moral obligation (Triandis,

1995), particularly among in-group members. In contrast, individualists would seek the advice of professional therapists and counselors (Triandis, 1995).

One statement that summarizes the complexity of help seeking behaviors and attitudes related to individualistic and collectivistic cultures is that "the application of psychology to people who hold collectivistic values can be questioned because how psychology is applied is largely a product of individualistic cultures" (Kim et al., 2001, p. 570). A study that linked the constructs of individualism and collectivism to attitude towards help seeking was conducted by Tata and Leong, (1994). It was found that Chinese-American students who had a higher total score on the Individualism-Collectivism scale by Triandis obtained lower scores on the Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Help Scale (ATSPPH). This indicated an inverse relationship between values considered to be characteristic of individualistic cultures and attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help. These results are very surprising but demonstrate the multifaceted nature of the individualism-collectivism construct. The subscale of Self-Reliance with Competition served as a significant predictor and accounted for the inverse relationship since people who are self-reliant tend to be hesitant to seek out help for their personal problems

There could be various implications of analyzing attitude towards help seeking behavior comparing individuals from Asian and Western countries. First of all, it could be said that health professionals may have to reach into the Asian community to access people if they wanted to demystify mental illness. Further, people from Asian communities who have a mental illness may present with physical complaints or academic and career problems since they are not stigmatized. One needs to keep this fact

in mind (Cheng et al., 1993; Wynaden et al. 2005). Last of all, clinician needs to understand that talking about taboo issues such as family and marital conflicts may be difficult for the clients due to the learned cultural scripts (Akutsu & Chu, 2006).

Present Study

The present study examined the relationship of the variables of individualism-collectivism and the Schwartz higher order value dimensions of openness to change, conservatism, self-transcendence and self-enhancement to attitudes toward help-seeking among Indian and American college students. Additionally, information about some demographic variables such as age, gender, ethnic/cultural background, religious background and history of prior counseling was obtained from a demographic survey.

The dimension of individualism-collectivism seems to be well-researched. Over a period of time, certain countries and cultures have come to acquire the designation of being either individualistic or collectivistic. Earlier studies have found that individuals from Eastern cultures, including the Indian culture, tend to have more collectivistic traits (Hofstede, 2001, Kim et al., 2001; Sinha et al., 2002; Triandis, 1993). Further, those from Western cultures, including the American culture, seem to have more individualistic traits (Fernandez et al., 1997; Hofstede, 2001; Oyserman et al., 2002; Triandis, 1993). Surprisingly, some studies have found Indians to have a mix of individualism and collectivism and have not labeled the culture as being highly collectivistic (Kapoor et al., 2003; Sinha et al., 2002). Thus, the present study focused on individualism and collectivism cross-culturally to investigate the earlier stated inconsistencies in findings.

The present study also investigated the distribution of the higher-order value dimensions given by Schwartz cross-culturally considering the dearth of research on the

value distribution in the Indian setting in comparison to other countries. It is interesting to note that adherence to Asian cultural values tends to have an inverse relationship with attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help (Kim and Omizo, 2003). Further, factors like shame and stigma (Wynaden et al. 2005), social support (Miville & Constantine, 2006) and perception of the cause of mental illness (Sheikh & Furnham, 2000; Wynaden et al. 2005) have been shown to influence the attitudes towards help-seeking behavior and these factors would differ across the American and Indian student population.

Lastly, the study also examined certain demographic variables. The factors of gender (Grimm et al., 1999; Sinha et al., 2001; Sinha et al., 2002) and age (Sinha et al., 2001) seem to influence individualism and collectivism, and also have been found to be related to the importance given to certain values (Linderman & Verkasalo, 2005; Schwartz et al., 2001). Factors that seem to influence attitude towards seeking professional help are the gender of the client (Rabinowitz et al., 1999; Rickwood & Braithwaite, 1994; Sheikh & Furnham, 2000; Surgenor, 1985; Tata and Leong, 1994), age (Surgenor, 1985) and prior counseling experience (Solberg et al., 1994; Zhang and Dixon, 2003).

Based on the research summarized above, the primary research questions and associated hypotheses are as follows:

1. *Individualism and Collectivism (I-C)*

   a. *I-C values.* Are there differences in individualistic and collectivistic values between American and Indian college students?

   _It was hypothesized that Indian college students would score higher on collectivistic values and lower on individualistic values than the American college students.

b. I-C behaviors. Are there differences in individualistic and collectivistic behaviors between American and Indian college students?

It was hypothesized that Indian college students would score higher on collectivistic behaviors and lower on individualistic behaviors than the American college students.

2. Schwartz Value Dimensions

a. Nationality. Are there differences in the importance given to the value dimensions of conservatism, openness to change, self-transcendence and self-enhancement between the American and Indian college students?

It was hypothesized that the Indian college students would score lower on the value dimensions of openness to change and self-enhancement and higher on the value dimensions of conservatism and self-transcendence than the American college students.

b. I-C values. Are there differences in the importance given to the four value dimensions between those who score higher on individualistic values and those who score higher on collectivistic values?

It was hypothesized that those who scored higher on individualistic values would score higher on the value dimensions of self-enhancement and openness to change and lower on the value dimensions of self-transcendence and conservatism than those who scored higher on collectivistic values. Further, it was hypothesized that Indian college students who scored higher on individualistic values would score lower on the value dimensions of self-enhancement and openness to change as compared to American college students who scored higher on individualistic values. Also, Indian college students who scored higher on collectivistic values would score higher on self-

transcendence and conservatism as compared to American college students who scored higher on collectivistic values.

c. I-C behaviors. Are there differences in the importance given to the four value dimensions between those who score higher on individualistic behaviors and those who score higher on collectivistic behaviors?

It was hypothesized that those who scored higher on individualistic behaviors would score higher on the value dimensions of self-enhancement and openness to change and lower on the value dimensions of self-transcendence and conservatism than those who scored higher on collectivistic behaviors. Additionally, it was hypothesized that Indian college students who scored higher on individualistic behaviors would score lower on the value dimensions of self-enhancement and openness to change as compared to American college students who scored higher on individualistic behaviors. Also, Indian college students who scored higher on collectivistic behaviors would score higher on self-transcendence and conservatism as compared to American college students who scored higher on collectivistic behaviors.

3. Attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help

a. Nationality. Is there a difference in attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help between American and Indian college students?

It was hypothesized that Indian college students would score lower on the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale than the American college students, indicating a more negative help-seeking attitude.

b. I-C values. Is there a difference in attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help between those who score higher on individualistic values and those

who score higher on collectivistic values?

It was hypothesized that those who scored higher on individualistic values and lower on collectivistic values would score higher on the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale, indicating a more positive attitude towards help seeking than those who scored lower on individualistic values and higher on collectivistic values. Additionally, it was hypothesized that Indian college students who scored higher on individualistic values would score lower on the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale as compared to American college students who scored higher on individualistic values. Further, Indian college students who scored higher on collectivistic values would score higher on the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale as compared to American college students who scored higher on collectivistic values.

c. *I-C behaviors.* Is there a difference in attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help between those who score higher on individualistic behaviors and those who score higher on collectivistic behaviors?

It was hypothesized that those who scored higher on individualistic behaviors and lower on collectivistic behaviors would score higher on the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale, indicating a more positive attitude towards help seeking than those who scored lower on individualistic behaviors and higher on collectivistic behaviors. It was also hypothesized that Indian college students who scored higher on individualistic behaviors would score lower on the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale as compared to American college students who scored higher on individualistic behaviors. Further, Indian college students who scored

higher on collectivistic behaviors would score higher on the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale as compared to American college students who scored higher on collectivistic behaviors.

d. Schwartz's value dimensions. Which of the four higher order dimensions (self-transcendence, self-enhancement, openness to change and conservatism) are more predictive of a positive help-seeking attitude among the Indian and American college students?

It was hypothesized that higher scores on the value dimensions of openness to change and self-enhancement and lower scores on the value dimensions of conservatism and self-transcendence would best predict a positive attitude towards seeking professional psychological help among Indian college students. Further, none of the four higher order dimensions would best predict a positive attitude towards seeking professional psychological help among the American college students.

4. Demographic Variables

Is there a relationship between the demographic variables of age, gender, and history of prior counseling and the variables of individualism-collectivism, the Schwartz higher order values, and attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help?

a. *Gender.* It was hypothesized that female college students would score higher on collectivism, would give more importance to the value dimensions of conservatism and self-transcendence and less importance to the value dimensions of openness to change and self-enhancement and would have a more positive attitude towards seeking professional psychological help as compared to male college students.

b. *Age.* It was hypothesized that age of college students would be positively correlated with higher scores on the values of conservatism and self-transcendence, higher scores on individualistic values and behaviors and a more positive attitude towards seeking professional psychological help.

c. *Prior counseling experience.* It was hypothesized that American college students would have more prior counseling experience as compared to Indian college students. Further, it was hypothesized that the students who had received prior counseling would have a more positive attitude towards seeking psychological help as compared to the students who had not received prior counseling. Other related hypotheses are that regardless of whether they had received prior counseling, American students would have a more positive attitude towards seeking psychological help as compared to Indian students.

Method

Participants

The participants were 111 college students at Eastern Illinois University in the U.S. and 78 college students at Mumbai University in India. The overall sample consisted of 189 students (see Table 1).

The American college student sample included 111 college students from Eastern Illinois University. In the American sample, 33 were male (29.7 %) and 77 were female (69.4 %), ranging in age from 18 to 25 years ($M = 19.11$). Regarding ethnic background, a majority of the students reported being Caucasian ($n = 89$, 80.2 %), followed by 16 who indicated they were African American (14.4 %) (see Table 1).

With respect to religious affiliation, the majority of the population were Christian (n = 100, 90.09 %) with the greatest number being Catholic (n = 49, 44.1 %). Further, a majority of the students considered their religious beliefs to be very important (n = 40, 36 %) or fairly important (n = 31, 27.90 %) (M = 2.86, SD = 1.35).

Additionally, the majority of the American sample stated that they lived in a suburban area (n = 49, 44.1 %) and were from the middle class (n = 66, 59.5 %). Further, a large proportion of the sample stated that they interacted with people from different cultures on a weekly basis (n = 84, 75.7 %) and agreed that culture was an important part of their identity (n = 49, 44.10 %) (M = 5.01, SD = 1.31). Also, 24 indicated that they had received prior counseling (21.6 %) whereas 87 (78.40 %) had not received prior counseling (see Table 1).

The Indian sample consisted of 78 college students of which 50 were male (64.1 %) and 28 female (35.9 %), ranging in age from 18 to 29 years (M = 22.06). Regarding cultural background, the majority were Marathi (n = 25, 32.1 %) and Gujarati (n = 19, 24.4 %). With respect to religious affiliation, a large proportion of the sample were Hindus (n = 42, 53.8 %) followed by Catholic (n = 15, 19.2 %) and Muslim (n = 7, 9 %). Additionally, a large proportion of the sample considered their religious beliefs to be either very important (n = 25, 32.10%) or fairly important (n = 26, 33.30 %) (M = 2.85, SD = 1.35).

The majority of the Indian college students lived in an urban area (n = 61, 78.2 %) and belonged to the middle class (n = 42, 53.8 %). Further, most of the participants mentioned that they engaged in interaction with people from different cultures on a weekly basis (n = 69, 88.5 %) and many agreed that culture was an important part of their

identity (n = 34, 43.60 %) (M = 4.97, SD = 1.59). Additionally, 16 students mentioned that they had received prior counseling (20.5 %) and 62 mentioned that they had not received prior counseling (79.5 %) (see Table 1).

The American and the Indian college student samples were further compared on the demographic variables of age and gender. A t-test for independent means was conducted using nationality as the IV and age as the DV. Results showed that the American college students, on average, were younger (M = 19.11, SD = 1.29) than the Indian college students (M = 22.06, SD = 2.15), t(187) = 11.80, p < .01. Further, a chi square test was conducted on the proportion of American and Indian college student samples who were males and females. Results indicated that 70 % of the American student sample were female as compared to 35.9 % of the Indian student sample. This difference between the American and Indian college student sample was found to be statistically significant, χ^2 (1) = 20.17, p < .01.

Measures

Demographic Questionnaire. Information regarding age, gender, ethnic background, religious background, importance of religion, residence (rural, suburban or urban area), socio-economic status, importance of cultural identity, interaction with people from different cultures and history of prior counseling was collected (see Appendix A).

Individualism Collectivism Interpersonal Assessment Inventory (ICIAI). The ICIAI is a 25-item individual level measure of individualism and collectivism (Matsumoto, Weissman, Preston, Brown & Kupperbusch, 1997) (See Appendix B). In the first section, participants rate the importance of the 25 value items in relation to the four social groups of family, close friends, colleagues and strangers. The items are rated on a 6 point scale

ranging from 0 (not at all important) to 6 (very important). In the second section, participants rate how often they actually engage in those types of behaviors in relation to the four social groups, again using a six point scale ranging from 0 (never do it) to 6 (do it all the time) (see Appendix B). Matsumoto et al. (1997) advocated obtaining 8 subscale scores per participant (i.e., domain scores for values and behaviors for each of the four social groups). However, in their validity studies (Matsumoto et al., 1997), the values and behavior scores averaged across the four groups were used. Since, this approach was shown to have adequate reliability and validity, only these two scores will be computed for analysis in this study. A higher score indicates values and behaviors that are collectivistic and a lower score indicates individualistic values and behaviors (Matsumoto et al., 1997).

The Cronbach alpha ranged from .86 to .90 and from .87 to .90 for values and behaviors, respectively, across the four social groups, indicating good internal reliability. Item analysis and split half reliabilities were computed across the three ethnic groups of Asian, European and Hispanic/Latino groups. The alphas ranged from .54 to .95, thus indicating that the internal reliability was consistent across the three groups. Test – retest reliabilities ranged from .77 to .88 and from .62 to .86 for values and behaviors, respectively, across the four social groups. Pearson product moment correlations computed between each of the Rokeach Value Survey items and the ICIAI values and behaviors total scores indicated good convergent validity. When it was compared to INDCOL and Triandis's multimethod technique (T-IC), there was more convergence of the ICIAI with the INDCOL than with the T-IC.

Schwartz Value Survey (SVS). The value survey given by Schwartz has 57 values (the original had 56 values) (see Appendix C). There is also a short explanation given with each value. For the 56-57 values, one has to rate each value on a 9 point importance scale to indicate the extent to which the values are used "as a guiding principle" in life. The 9 point scale ranges from 7 (of supreme importance) to -1 (opposed to my values). Other labeled scale points are 6 (very important), 3 (important), and 0 (not important) (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz, 1994a).

Schwartz (1992) conducted empirical studies on samples drawn from 20 countries using the smallest space analysis (SSA) for the original 56 values. Results indicated that the number of samples out of 40 in which a distinct region was identified for each value type was as follows: Universalism (34), Benevolence (28), Tradition (36), Conformity (29), Security (32), Power (37), Achievement (40), Hedonism (32), Stimulation (31), and Self-Direction (36). Further the strength of the four higher order value dimensions was analyzed by considering the frequency with which values representing one higher order value type appeared in the region representing the opposing type.

In a study by Schwartz (1994a), of the 56 values, 44 were located in their regions in 75 % of the 97 samples from 44 countries, showing consistency in motivational meaning cross-culturally. In a study by Oishi, Schimmack, Diener and Suh, (1998) which used the 44 values of the SVS, the Cronbach's alpha for each subscale for a sample of 150 undergraduate students was as follows: Power .80, achievement .81, hedonism .62, stimulation .85, self-direction .70, universalism .86, benevolence .70, tradition .70, conformity .77 and security .70.

The present study focused primarily on the four higher order value dimensions of self-transcendence, self-enhancement, openness to change and conservatism. The scores on the four value dimension types are summations of the scores obtained on the values in the respective value dimension. For the present study, 45 value items were used to obtain the summed scores.

Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale (ATSPPH). The ATSPPH Scale given by Fischer and Turner (1970) consists of 29 Likert scale items that are scored on a 4 point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The four factors that comprise this scale are: (1) recognition of personal need for professional psychological help (2) tolerance of the stigma associated with psychological help (3) interpersonal openness regarding one's problems, and (4) confidence in the mental health professional (see Appendix D). In a study conducted by Zhang and Dixon (2003) it was found that the Cronbach's alpha reliability with a sample of Asian international students was .83. Fischer and Turner (1970) mention that the subscale correlations lack the stability of whole-scale scores and the four factors should be interpreted with reference to the overall scale and not be used as separate measures. A higher score indicates a more positive attitude toward seeking professional psychological help.

Procedure

In the American setting, data were collected from 111 undergraduate students enrolled in introductory psychology classes at Eastern Illinois University. They were given course credit for their participation. During each data collection session, the participants were first asked to read and sign an informed consent form (see Appendix E). The packet of three questionnaires, along with the demographic form was then

administered, which took approximately 45 minutes to complete. After completion of the

questionnaires, the participants were given the debriefing form (see Appendix F).

In the Indian setting, data were collected from students of Mumbai University by a

Master's level psychologist who was authorized by the author to collect data. The

participants were given the informed consent form (see Appendix E) and then the packet

of three questionnaires and the demographic form. After completion of the

questionnaires, the debriefing form was given (see Appendix F).

Results

Data Transformation

For the Individualism-Collectivism Interpersonal Assessment Inventory (ICIAI),

items were reverse coded as needed and subscale scores were calculated for the Values

and Behavior domains and the subgroups of Family, Friends, Colleagues and Strangers.

For the Schwartz Value Survey, centered scores were computed by calculating the

MRAT (the total score on all value items divided by 57) and subtracting it from the

individual item scores. Additionally, scores for the 10 values were computed by taking

the means of the centered items. The scores for the 4 higher order dimensions of self-

transcendence (universalism and benevolence), self-enhancement (achievement,

hedonism and power), conservatism (tradition, conformity and security) and openness to

change (self-direction and stimulation) were computed by averaging the scores of the

values that constitute the higher order dimensions (Schwartz, personal communication,

March 29, 2007). For the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help

Scale, items were reverse coded as necessary and a total score was computed for the

scale.

Individualism-Collectivism

The first set of analyses examined differences in individualistic and collectivistic

values and behaviors between the American and Indian students.

I-C values. A *t*-test for independent means was conducted with the IV being

nationality and the DV being the ICIAI value subscale scores. Results showed that

American college students (M = 15.02, SD = 2.56) were more collectivistic in their values

than the Indian college students (M = 14.19, SD = 2.53), $t(187)$ = 2.69, p < .01.

Additional analyses were computed to analyze results specific to the four social

groups comprising the ICIAI scale (i.e., friends, family, colleagues and strangers). Four *t*-

tests for independent means were conducted using nationality as the IV and ICIAI value

scores for the four different social groups as the DVs. As noted in Table 2, American

college students (M = 4.52, SD = .66) were more collectivistic in their values regarding

the social group of friends as compared to the Indian college students (M = 3.95, SD =

.71), $t(187)$ = 5.66, p < .01. There were no significant differences between American and

Indian college students regarding individualistic and collectivistic values for the social

groups of family, colleagues and strangers.

I-C behaviors. A *t*-test for independent means was conducted using nationality as the

IV and the ICIAI behavior subscale scores as the DV. Results showed that American

college students (M = 14.51, SD = 2.69) did not differ in individualistic and collectivistic

behaviors as compared to Indian college students (M = 14.20, SD = 2.64), $t(187)$ = .79, p

= .43.

Additional analyses were computed to analyze results specific to the four social

groups comprising the ICIAI scale (friends, family, colleagues and strangers). Four *t*-tests

for independent means were conducted using nationality as the IV and ICIAI behavior scores for the four different social groups as the DVs. Results showed that American college students ($M = 4.34$, $SD = .70$) engaged in more collectivistic behaviors regarding the social group of friends as compared to the Indian college students ($M = 3.98$, $SD = .75$), $t(187) = 3.48$, $p < .01$ (see Table 2). There were no other significant differences between American and Indian college students regarding individualistic and collectivistic behaviors for the social groups of family, colleagues and strangers.

Schwartz's Value Dimensions

The second research question examined differences in the importance given to the value dimensions of conservatism, openness to change, self-transcendence and self-enhancement between American and Indian college students and those who scored higher on individualism and higher on collectivism.

Nationality and I-C values. The participants were separated via median splits into two groups based on their ICIAI value scores (Median = 14.89): the high individualistic values group (< 14.89) and the low individualistic values group (≥ 14.89). Four two-way analyses of variance were conducted with the IVs being nationality and the I-C values group and the DVs being the subscale scores for conservatism, openness to change, self-transcendence and self-enhancement. For the DV of conservatism, results showed there was no significant main effect of nationality, $F(1, 185) = .49$, $p = .48$. However, there was a significant main effect of whether the participants scored high on ICIAI values, $F(1, 185) = 7.90$, $p < .01$. Specifically, results showed that students who were more collectivistic in values were also more conservative ($M = -.03$, $SD = .38$) than students who were more individualistic in their values ($M = -.22$, $SD = .47$) (see Table 3).

Additionally, there was no significant interaction between nationality and I-C value group, $F(1, 185) = 2.01$, $p = .16$. Further, results showed that there were no differences in the importance given to the values of openness to change, self-enhancement and self-transcendence among the American and Indian college students and among those who scored higher on individualistic values and those who scored higher on collectivistic values.

Nationality and I-C behaviors. The participants were separated into two groups via median splits based on their ICIAI scores for behaviors (Median = 14.16): the high individualistic behaviors group (≤ 14.16) and the low individualistic behaviors group (> 14.16). Four two-way analyses of variance were conducted with the IVs being nationality and the I-C behavior group and the DVs being the subscale scores for conservatism, openness to change, self-transcendence and self-enhancement. For the DV of conservatism, results showed that there was no significant main effect of nationality, $F(1, 185) = .07$, $p = .79$. However, there was a significant main effect of whether the participants scored high on ICIAI behaviors, $F(1, 185) = 5.76$, $p < .05$. Specifically, results showed that students who were collectivistic in behaviors were also more conservative ($M = -.04$, $SD = .41$) than students who were more individualistic in their behaviors ($M = -.20$, $SD = .45$) (see Table 4). Further, there was no significant interaction between nationality and I-C behavior group, $F(1, 185) = .02$, $p = .90$. Additionally, results showed that there were no differences in the importance given to the values of openness to change, self-enhancement and self-transcendence among the American and Indian college students and among those who scored higher on individualistic behaviors and those who scored higher on collectivistic behaviors.

Attitudes toward seeking psychological help

The third aim of the study was to examine the differences in attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help among the American and Indian college students and those students who were individualistic or collectivistic.

Nationality and I-C values. A two-way analysis of variance was conducted with the IVs being nationality and the I-C value group and the DV being scores on the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help (ATSPPH) Scale. With respect to help seeking, results indicated that there was no significant main effect of nationality, $F(1, 185) = 2.54, p = .11$, or I-C value group, $F(1, 185) = .001, p = .97$. Further, there was also no significant interaction between nationality and I-C value group, $F(1, 185) = .58, p = .45$.

Nationality and I-C behaviors. A two-way analysis of variance was conducted with the IVs being nationality and I-C behavior group and the DV being scores on ATSPPH Scale. Results showed that there was no significant main effect of nationality, $F(1, 185) = 2.72, p = .10$, or I-C behavior group, $F(1, 185) = .08, p = .78$. There was also no significant interaction between nationality and I-C behavior group, $F(1, 185) = .72, p = .40$.

It is important to note that the range of scores for all participants was between 46 and 51, regardless of nationality or scores on the ICIAI. Considering the fact that the highest score possible on the ATSPPH Scale was 116, it could be said that the restricted range in the present study indicated more negative attitudes towards seeking professional help in the sample and could have also affected the results of the multiple regression analyses.

Schwartz's Value Dimensions. The third research question addressed how predictive the four higher order dimensions were of positive attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine how the factors of conservatism, openness to change, self-enhancement and self-transcendence predicted help-seeking attitudes in the American college student sample. Results showed that this set of predictors accounted for just 4% of the variance in attitude towards seeking professional psychological help, $F(4,106) = 2.14, p = .08$. Hence, the hypothesis was not supported.

Additionally, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine how the four higher order values predicted help-seeking among the Indian college students. Results showed that this set of predictors accounted for 9% of the variance in attitude towards seeking professional psychological help, $F(4,73) = 2.89, p < .05$. Higher scores on the values of conservatism (23%) and self-enhancement (19%) explained most of the variance in negative help-seeking attitudes whereas higher scores on the value of openness to change accounted for the remaining variance (10%) (see Table 5).
Demographic Variables.

The fourth research question addressed the relationship between the demographic variables of age, gender, and history of prior counseling and the variables of individualism-collectivism, the Schwartz higher order values, and help seeking attitudes.

Gender. T-tests for independent means were conducted with the IV being gender and the DVs being the ICIAI value and behavior scores, the four value dimension subscale scores or the ATSPPH Scale scores (see Table 6). Results indicated that men and women did not differ on the ICIAI value and behavior scores and on the four value

dimension subscale scores. Further, as found in previous research, female students had a more positive attitude towards seeking professional psychological help ($M = 52.29$, $SD = 12.01$) as compared to male students ($M = 44.06$, $SD = 9.30$), $t(186) = -5.29$, $p < .01$.

Age. Pearson's bivariate correlational analyses were conducted comparing age with the I-C value and behavior scores, the four higher order value dimension scores and the ATSPPH Scale scores. Results indicated that the variable of age did not correlate significantly with the other variables.

Prior counseling experience. Lastly, differences in the experience of prior counseling among American and Indian college students were examined. A chi square test was conducted on the proportion of American and Indian college student samples who received prior counseling and who had no prior counseling experience. Results indicated that the majority of both the American college students (78.40%) and the Indian college students (79.50%) did not receive prior counseling. This difference was not found to be statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = .00$, $p = .10$.

Further, differences in help-seeking attitudes were examined between those who had received prior counseling and those students who had not. A two-way analysis of variance was conducted using the IVs of nationality and the presence or absence of prior counseling experience and the DV of help-seeking attitudes. Results showed that there was a significant interaction between nationality and whether the students had received prior counseling, $F(1, 188) = 4.69$, $p < .05$. Hence, two *t* tests for independent means were conducted with the IV being the presence or absence of prior counseling experience and the DV being help-seeking attitudes (for the American and Indian College students separately). As can be seen in Figure 1, American college students who had received

prior counseling ($M = 58.08$, $SD = 12.73$) had more positive help-seeking attitudes as compared to American college students with no prior counseling experience ($M = 47.53$, $SD = 11.60$), $t(109) = 3.86$, $p < .01$, but there were no significant differences among Indian college students with a prior counseling experience ($M = 48.50$, $SD = 12.01$) and Indian college students without a prior counseling experience ($M = 46.66$, $SD = 9.28$), $t(76) = .66$, $p = .51$.

Discussion

Individualism and Collectivism

The first hypothesis regarding the Indian and American college students with respect to individualism and collectivism was not supported as collectivistic values were more prominent among the American students. Although a considerable amount of previous research has indicated more individualism among Americans and more collectivism among Indians (Fernandez et al., 1997; Hofstede, 2001), the inconsistency in findings could have possible explanations. For one, the earlier research by Fernandez et al. (1997) and by Hofstede (2001) utilized a sample of business professionals and business students and studied primarily work related values. Further, data from these studies were collected between 1967 and 1973 and in 1989 and 1990 and may not reflect possible cultural changes due to globalization and industrial developments. Additionally, the educational level and area of residence of the present study participants could have influenced the results. It needs to be noted that the present study had an Indian sample of college students, who tend to be more exposed to Western literature and mass media that "glorifies" a Western lifestyle. Further, college students would be concerned about succeeding in their careers, which would influence an individualistic response such as

enrolling in educational institutions, leaving home for higher education or pursuing a professional life (Sinha and Verma, 1994). Another factor in the present study was that the Indian sample reflected the urban, cosmopolitan setting of Mumbai, India, possibly contributing to the more individualistic attitudes expressed (Sinha et al., 2001). Living in a city entails easy migration to another place for employment (Sinha et al., 2001), a tendency to live independently and affluently, and exposure to mass media promoting a Western lifestyle (Sinha et al., 2002; Triandis, 1993), contributing to both individualistic and collectivistic intentions and behaviors (Sinha et al., 2002). It should be noted that these trends may not be typical of what is seen in most parts of India.

Explanation for the present results can also be obtained from earlier researchers who found "very limited support for labeling any country as individualistic or collectivistic, based primarily on the people's value preference" (Kapoor et al., 1995; p.122). Applying the statement to the present study, it can be said that the Indian culture may not be completely collectivistic, a finding which is supported by previous research (Kapoor et al., 2003; Sinha et al., 2001; Sinha & Tripathi, 1994). In fact, Kapoor et al. (2003) found that Indians were both more collectivistic and more individualistic than the American sample in their study. These results could be attributed to the diversity that exists within a culture, the co-existence of individualism and collectivism in the Indian culture (Sinha et al., 2001; Sinha & Tripathi, 1994) and the contextual influences on values and behaviors in the Indian setting (Sinha & Tripathi, 1994; Triandis, 1993). Sinha and Tripathi (1994) further added that the collectivism reflected in the strong family ties present in India is balanced by the more modern individualistic trend towards nuclear families. Additionally, there is a strong emphasis on the realization of self, but there is an equal

amount of emphasis on transcendence of the self. Substantiating the above stated beliefs was the result that 86% of the Indian participants opted for responses that showed a mix of individualistic and collectivistic orientation. For example, if there was a conflict between personal needs and family interests, Indians tended to balance both interests, again supporting the "co-existence" model (Sinha et al., 2002; Sinha et al., 2001).

Further, the present study result that American college students were not completely individualistic could be explained by the findings of the study done by Kapoor et al. (1995) and Oyserman et al. (2002). The meta-analysis conducted by Oyserman et al. (2002) showed that Americans were more individualistic than East Asians but effect sizes were small for the Indian comparison group. Similarly, although Americans were less collectivistic than Indians, effect sizes were moderate indicating that differences in individualism and collectivism between the American and Indian culture may not be too wide. Results from another study (Kapoor et al., 1995) indicated that though the Americans preferred individualistic values, they also preferred collectivistic and mixed values to a certain extent. Additionally, the results of the present study showed the American students to be more collectivistic than Indian students with regards to their friends which could explain the collectivistic trend among them. In the author's own experience, it is seen that many students in the U.S. leave home at an early age and, hence, friends are a significant component of their social support system. This is contradictory to what occurs in India, as most Indian students reside with their parents and families comprise the primary social support system. Hence, the American and the Indian sample do value their ingroups (Triandis et al., 1990) but the composition of these ingroups seems to differ in the cultures.

Lastly, although Americans were more collectivistic in values, Indian and American college students did not differ in their individualistic and collectivistic *behaviors*. On similar lines, Sinha et al. (2001) have rightly pointed out that although certain individualistic and collectivistic values may be evoked in a situation, their behavioral manifestations are not necessarily similar to their intentions.

Schwartz's Value Dimensions

The second research question examined differences in the importance given to Schwartz's value dimensions between American and Indian college students and among those who were individualistic and those who were collectivistic. Results indicated that students who were more collectivistic were also more conservative as compared to those who were individualistic. Further, there were no differences for the other value dimensions among the groups considered. Thus, the hypothesis was partly supported.

The results of the present study linking collectivism to conservatism were consistent with the view of Schwartz (1990). Conservatism entails involvement in one's ingroup, being a part of a well-knit society, maintenance of the status quo and conformity to societal norms (Schwartz, 1994b), all which are components of collectivistic cultures (Hui & Triandis, 1986). Further, Schwartz (1994b) found that Hofstede's individualism dimension had an inverse relationship with conservatism. The results of the present study also seem to support the view of Schwartz and Bilsky (1990) that conformity and security values (which are a part of the conservatism dimension) serve collectivistic interests.

Although, the present findings with respect to I-C and the other values were not supported by previous research (Hui & Triandis, 1986), there are possible explanations for the inconsistency. The study by Hui and Triandis was conducted in 1986 and thus,

may not reflect cultural changes that have occurred since then. Further, this earlier study surveyed social scientists to assess how individualists and collectivists would be likely to respond in different situations whereas the present study relied on individual self-reports. Hence, there are differences in methodology and measures.

Additionally, the results of the present study could be supported by the universal nature of some of the values examined that serve to meet universal needs (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). That is, that there are values serving both individualistic and collectivistic cultures (Schwartz, 1990). For example, the value of security entails both national security and family security which could be important, regardless of an individual being individualistic or collectivistic (Schwartz, 1990; Schwartz, 1992) and the value of universalism would be important to all since it is associated with the welfare of the human race (Schwartz, 1992). On similar lines, power can be construed as a universal value, in that social power is valued in communal societies and individual striving for power for oneself is important in contractual societies (Schwartz, 1990).

Attitudes Toward Help-Seeking

The third research question examined the differences in help-seeking attitudes among the American and Indian college students and among those who were individualists and collectivists. Results indicated a lack of difference between the groups considered, hence not supporting the hypothesis. The results seem contradictory to previous research that adherence to Asian cultural values was inversely related to a positive attitude and willingness to seek help (Kim & Omizo, 2003), and that more assimilated Asian international students had more positive attitudes towards help-seeking (Zhang & Dixon, 2003). Although level of acculturation was not a variable in the present study, the fact

that the Indian students in general held negative help-seeking attitudes would be consistent with the findings regarding adherence to Asian values and help-seeking. The results were also contradictory to the findings by Tata and Leong (1994) that having an individualistic attitude (e.g., self-reliance and reluctance in reaching out to professionals) was related to a more negative help-seeking attitude among Chinese-Americans (Tata & Leong, 1994).

However, an earlier research study (Sheikh & Furnham, 2000) found gender, level of education and religion to be significant predictors of positive help-seeking attitudes for a sample of British Asians, White Westerners and Pakistanis. It is possible that the significant differences in these demographic variables between the Indian and American college students could have influenced results in the present study. Further, Tedeschi and Willis (1993) found no differences between Caucasian and Asian international students in their attitude towards seeking professional psychological help. Other factors like preferences for a counselor of the same ethnicity and the preference for an older counselor were found to be more important for the Asian international students.

It is clear from the present study that American and Indian students hold generally negative help-seeking attitudes, regardless of whether they are individualists or collectivists. As far as the I-C dimension is concerned, there could be elements of both individualism and collectivism that promote a negative help-seeking attitude. Individualists tend to be self-sufficient, may fear dependence on others (Triandis, 1995) and asking for help means asking for assistance which is equivalent to being obligated to the other person (Waterman, 1984). These negative attitudes could carry on even towards mental health professionals, leading to possible stigmatization of people with mental

illnesses (Hofstede, 2001). Collectivists, on the other hand, are more likely to seek informal help from family and friends, rather than going to mental health professionals (Triandis, 1995). Regarding culture, among Asians, there seems to be a general concern about the therapeutic process (Kim et al., 2001), a tendency to be comfortable discussing academic and career problems rather than personal and emotional ones (Cheng et al., 1993), and societal stigmatization and isolation by family members for people with a mental illness to escape embarrassment and shame (Wynaden et al., 2005). Additionally, in the American setting, though there is more exposure to mental health issues through university counseling centers (So, Gilbert, & Romero, 2005), it does not necessarily motivate individuals to seek help due to certain factors already explained earlier (e.g., stigma). Thus, elements of individualistic or collectivistic traits as well as cultures could be associated with negative help-seeking attitudes.

The third research question also addressed how predictive the four higher order dimensions were of positive help-seeking attitudes among the Indian and American college students. Results indicated that higher scores on the values of conservatism, openness to change and self-enhancement predicted a negative help-seeking attitude among the Indian college students, partially supporting the hypothesis. Additionally, the hypothesis was also supported since there were no predictive factors found for the American college student sample. It needs to be kept in mind that the range of scores on the ATSPPH Scale for the present study was restricted (46 to 51), hence affecting the results.

The present study findings regarding the predictive power of conservatism in the Indian sample could be understood in light of previous research. Earlier research by

Sinha et al. (2001) and Sinha and Tripathi (1994) have shown the possible presence of individualistic and collectivistic values in the Indian culture. The value dimension of conservatism may be a collectivistic value (Kapoor and Wolfe, 1995) in the Indian culture, comprising of stigmatization of people with mental illnesses (Akutsu & Chu. 2006; Wynaden et al., 2005; Zhang & Dixon, 2003), feelings of shame and embarrassment for people with mental illnesses (Wynaden et al., 2005), the idea that mental illnesses are a punishment for wrong acts or are due to possession by evil spirits or due to supernatural causes (Sheikh & Furnham, 2000; Wynaden et al., 2005) and conformity to norms (Kim & Omizo, 2003). Thus, conservatism and stigmatization may contribute to a negative help-seeking attitude among the Indian college students (Wrigley et al., 2005).

It was also seen that the values of self-enhancement and that of openness to change accounted for a negative help-seeking attitude. A person high on these values tends to be independent in thought and action, tends to value self-esteem and will strive for personal success (Schwartz, 1992) and these may lead to an attitude that asking for help entails being obligated to the other person (Waterman, 1984). Hence these values could contribute to a negative help-seeking attitude (Tata & Leong, 1994).

For the American college students, there could have been other factors influencing a positive help-seeking attitude: high emotional competence and lack of negative beliefs of stigmatization (Rickwood et al., 2005), experience of positive outcomes of a counseling session (Surgenor, 1985), being female (Rabinowitz et al., 1999; Rickwood and Braithwaite, 1994), increase in the number of symptoms (Rickwood and Braithwaite, 1994), knowing people with prior contact with mental health professionals (Rickwood &

Braithwaite, 1994; Tijhuis, Peters, & Foets, 1990), being younger and being educated (Tijhuis et al., 1990).

Demographic Variables

The fourth set of analyses examined the relationship between the demographic variables of age, gender, and history of prior counseling and the variables of individualism-collectivism, the Schwartz higher order values, and help-seeking attitudes.

Gender. The present study finding that female students had more positive help-seeking attitudes as compared to male students was as expected. These results are also consistent with the findings of Sheikh and Furnham (2000) who studied Asians and Westerners, Rabinowitz et al. (1999), who studied an Israeli population, Surgenor (1885), who studied New Zealanders, Rickwood and Braithwaite (1994) who studied Australian adolescents and Tata and Leong (1994) who studied Chinese-Americans. Women tend to be socialized to express emotions openly and to approach others for help (Surgenor, 1985), contributing to a positive help-seeing attitude.

The present study findings regarding the variables of gender and individualism-collectivism seem to be different from results of earlier research (Grimm et al., 1999), that found females to be more collectivistic and males were more individualistic. However, it should be noted that the effect sizes were small, indicating that gender differences may not be very strong. Further, the present sample consisted of college students who tend to be more individualistic in nature (Sinha & Verma, 1994). The present study results partly supported the findings of Sinha et al. (2001) that females are more likely to combine individualistic and collectivistic behavior and intention as compared to males. They elaborated on the fact that there are other background variables

(e.g., area of residence, level of education) that could reduce the influence gender has on individualism and collectivism.

The results indicating no differences for the four value dimensions among male and female participants are partially consistent with the research by Schwartz et al. (2001). They found that Israeli women gave more importance to benevolence values, South African women to tradition values and Italian men to stimulation values but the overall correlations between gender and values were weak. Additionally, the present results did not support the findings of Linderman and Verkasalo (2005) that women scored higher than men on benevolence and universalism and lower on power. Explanations for these inconsistent findings could be drawn from the fact that the study had a Finnish sample and used the Short Schwartz Value Survey, which is different from the participants and measures used in the current study.

Age. Regarding age, the hypothesis that age would be positively correlated with more conservatism, self-transcendence, individualistic values and behaviors and a more positive attitude towards seeking professional psychological help was not supported.

Although the non-significant findings regarding the variables of age and individualism and collectivism are inconsistent with previous research (Sinha et al., 2001), a possible explanation seems to be the restriction in the age range in the present study. Regarding age and help-seeking attitudes, although Surgenor (1985) found that younger people (i.e., < 25 years) had a more positive attitude towards seeking professional psychological help, it should be noted that his study had three age groups ranging from adolescence to late adulthood (< 25 years, 25-50 years and > 50 years)

whereas the present study had a more restricted range (18-20 years of age and 20-29 years of age). This could probably explain the inconsistencies in findings.

Additionally, the results relating age and the value dimensions are inconsistent with the findings of Schwartz et al. (2001). But the study by Schwartz et al. (2001) used the Portrait Value Questionnaire (includes verbal descriptions of 29 different people and participants have to indicate their preference) which is very different from the measure used in the present study. Further, the sample in the study by Schwartz et al. (2001) included Italians, South Africans and Ugandan girls which again is different from the sample of Americans and Indians used in the current study.

Prior Counseling. Lastly, results indicated no difference in prior counseling experiences between American and Indian college students, probably indicating reluctance in both cultures to seek professional psychological help. This also possibly reflects an emerging openness to seek help for mental help issues among the urban educated youth of India due to Westernization and globalization. Further, results also showed that having a prior counseling experience influenced help-seeking attitudes among the American college students but not among the Indian college students, probably indicating the strong presence of stigmatization of mental illnesses in Asian cultures (Wynaden et al., 2005). The results for the American college students do seem to be consistent with the findings of Solberg et al. (1994), who found that among Asian-American participants, previous counseling experience was associated with a willingness to seek help for academic, interpersonal and substance abuse concerns. The results were also consistent with the findings of Zhang and Dixon (2003) that a prior counseling

experience increased the confidence that Asian international students had in mental health professionals.

Theoretical, Applied and Research implications of Findings

There are various implications of the present study findings in this area of cross-cultural research. One of the most striking findings was that the Indian sample was not more collectivistic nor was the American sample more individualistic which supports the idea that nations probably cannot be categorized into the individualism-collectivism dichotomy (Schwartz, 1990) and that there is diversity within cultures (Kapoor et al., 2003). It also reflects the effect of globalization and modernization in the Indian culture. This finding is of importance for sociologists, psychologists and research practitioners. For mental health practitioners, it would be advisable not to stereotype and assume that a person from a certain nationality is necessarily either individualistic or collectivistic, thus maintaining flexibility in the treatment plan and theoretical orientation. Further, the heterogeneity of meanings imbued in the concepts of individualism and collectivism and the value systems need to be considered for future research endeavors.

Further, American college students were also more collectivistic regarding their group of friends, as compared to Indian students. This provides very relevant information regarding the primary social support group for both cultures and would be relevant information for mental health practitioners during their assessment. It further confirms the thought that collectivism is not restricted to just "family focus" (Oyserman et al., 2002), which is a very widespread view.

Another interesting finding was that the American and Indian college students did not differ in the importance given to different values. Does this reflect a certain

methodological issue used in the present study or a possible cultural change towards Westernization among Indian college students? Is it possible that values are determined by other factors such as biological predispositions, race, educational level, socio-economic status, family characteristics (e.g., child-rearing) and religion (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004), rather than reflecting cultural differences? It should also be noted that though there were no differences among the Indian and American college students regarding values, values seem to influence help-seeking attitude among Indian college students but not American college students. Psychologists working with an Asian population in the U.S. may benefit from this information, considering the increasing immigration of Asians in the US (US Census, 2004).

Further, there was a negative help-seeking attitude among American and Indian college students. Barriers to help-seeking behavior should be identified to decrease stigmatization, create more positive help-seeking attitudes, and create more awareness of mental health issues.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The present study is not without limitations. First, the focus on a student sample in both cultures limits generalizability to other age groups (Oyserman et al., 2002). Future studies could compare different age groups to understand the influence life experiences and developmental events would have on values and help-seeking attitudes. Additionally, generalizability is also restricted by the fact that the distribution of religions in the Indian sample was inconsistent with the demographic distribution of religions in India. For example, the current sample had just 9% Muslims whereas the Indian population is approximately 13% Muslims (Census of India, 2001). Moreover, there was a significant

difference with respect to age and gender among the two samples since the American sample was younger and had more female participants as compared to the Indian sample. Since the composition difference in the two samples could have influenced results when cultures were compared, the samples could be equated for gender and age in future research.

Second, the nature of the questionnaires may not truly reflect the attitudes and values of the participants. There could be a possibility of underreporting or over-reporting since self-reported questionnaires are used (So et al., 2005), indicating the possibility of a social desirability factor. Additionally, as Tedeschi and Willis (1993) have pointed out, Asian students may lack familiarity with questionnaires and may be opposed to engaging in self-disclosure required by the questionnaires, affecting their responses and hence the results of the present study (especially for the sample of Indian college students). Hence, different methods of data collection (e.g., self-report questionnaires, giving scenarios and asking for judgments, observation) could be used for future research to get more accurate, reliable and valid results.

Third, one needs to be careful when comparing the current results with previous research findings since there are differences in measures of data collection and in methodology (procedure for data collection, statistical analyses etc.). Oishi, et al. (1998) found that when using an individual rating scale (the ICS scale), Japanese and Americans did not differ on individualism but the Japanese scored lower on collectivism. In contrast, use of the Pairwise Comparison Approach revealed that the Americans scored higher on power, achievement and self-direction (indicators of individualism), whereas the Japanese scored higher on universalism and benevolence (indicators of collectivism),

indicating differences in results. For future research, studies similar in methodology and measurement measures should be considered for reliable comparisons. Additionally, the entire spectrum of the 10 values given by Schwartz was not used, thus possibly limiting the findings. Future research could replicate the present study, with the difference being that the 10 values would be used instead of the four value dimensions.

Fourth, the scales have not been standardized and assessed for validity in both the cultures; hence there is an assumption about cross-cultural equivalence in items contained in the measures used (Oyserman et al., 2002). This is a major limitation considering the possible heterogeneity in the meanings attributed to the concepts of "individualism and collectivism" (Fiske, 2002; Oyserman et al., 2002; Triandis, 1990) and the value dimensions (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990) at an individual and cultural level. Substantiating this point was the findings of Oyserman et al. (2002) that if collectivism was defined by a sense of belonging to in-groups, relational interdependence and seeking other's advice, Americans rated themselves as highly collectivistic. They also stated that "family focus" is not necessarily equivalent to collectivism. Further it is imperative to keep in mind that people may value relationships in all cultures but may just treat them with varying importance (e.g., friends are not treated the same way as romantic partners) (Fiske, 2002). Additionally, heterogeneity of meaning was well demonstrated by the findings of Schwartz (1994) that the two American samples in his study did not portray the view of the United States as an individualistic nation, if individualism was mainly defined by "autonomy" and not "mastery". Similarly, Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) found out that the value of security seemed to serve individualistic and collectivistic interests in the Israeli sample but security seemed to serve collectivistic interests in the German sample,

indicating probable differences in meaning assigned to the values. For future research, it would be important to use multi-method probes and direct cultural assessments (e.g., tapping into self-concept, analyzing how one reacts to members of ingroups and outgroups, using observation and collateral reports etc.) to tap into the various aspects of the constructs of individualism-collectivism and understand better cross-cultural differences (Fiske, 2002; Triandis, 1990).

Considering the results and implications of the present study and building on the limitations, certain future research propositions could be suggested. For one, it would be interesting to consider the ingroup-outgroup dimension to understand with what groups the American and Indian college students identify and if that has an influence on their individualistic and collectivistic values and behaviors. Qualitative research tapping into questions of dependent and independent self-construals (Kitayama & Markus, 1995) and the personality traits of rationality, self-reliance, emotional attachments, etc. (Triandis, 1990; Triandis, 1995; Triandis et al., 1990), could lead to a better understanding of what constitutes individualism and collectivism and will throw light on specific cross-cultural differences. Further, since the present study tapped into an urban culture in India and a semi-urban culture in the US, possibly confounding results, both urban and rural areas in both cultures could be compared to obtain more accurate results and assess the influence of one's lifestyle on values and attitudes. As noted earlier, there could have been several factors influencing the results of the present study (e.g., gender, educational level, age, outcome of the therapy sessions, personality traits) and these could be the focus of future research.

Additionally, it is seen that nationality, individualism-collectivism and most of the values have no influence on attitude towards help-seeking behavior and prior counseling experience does seem to influence help-seeking attitudes only among the American college students. The question about what influences help-seeking attitude across cultures would be an interesting one to consider and differences between seeking help from formal and informal sources could be studied as well. Further, in future research, the four subscales of the ATSPPH Scale (i.e., Need, Stigma, Openness and Confidence) (Fischer & Turner, 1970) could be analyzed to assess more specific attitudes among different cultures. Future studies could also use the further categorization of individualism-collectivism into horizontal and vertical dimensions (Oishi et al., 1998) since they also seem to affect results. For example, Oishi et al. (1998) found that vertical individualism (individualists who use hierarchy) was positively correlated with achievement and power whereas horizontal individualism (individualists who may not compare themselves with others) was positively correlated with self-direction.

Lastly, it needs to be noted that although individualism-collectivism and allocentrism-idiocentrism are parallel dimensions at the cultural and individual levels, they may not be identical. For example, idiocentrics in individualistic cultures tend to have traits of self-sufficiency whereas those in collectivistic cultures tend to rebel against the social norms (Triandis, 1990; Triandis, 1995). Thus, behavior differences between allocentrics and idiocentrics in individualistic and collectivistic cultures could be a focus of future research.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, it can seen that the American and Indian college students surprisingly did not differ greatly in their individualistic and collectivistic values as well as values of conservatism, self-enhancement, self-transcendence and openness to change. This does not mean to say that cross-cultural differences do not exist. In fact, there is a possible indication that qualitative assessment may be a superior cross-cultural tool to use rather than just a quantitative assessment. The values could be universally present and may differ in their behavioral manifestations which probably need to be assessed cross-culturally. Further, the present study also reflects a possible cultural change in the cosmopolitan areas in India, mainly seen in the fact that there was no difference in the percentage of people who received prior counseling in the US as well as in India. This raises important questions. Are individuals residing in Indian cosmopolitan areas moving towards greater Westernization? Will there be no difference between the Western world and the Indian culture in a few decades or will the Indian culture be split into the two extremes of being extremely conservative versus being extremely liberal? And are there gradual cultural changes in the American culture towards greater conservatism?

Lastly, the most surprising and crucial finding was that both the samples still held a stigma towards seeking professional psychological help. If the mental health field is perceived negatively, are there other alternatives to address mental health issues (e.g., informal sources, online counseling rather than face-to-face counseling) that seem more feasible as compared to face-to-face counseling? Further research needs to probe into mental health issues cross-culturally.

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Table 1

Demographic Variables for American and Indian College Students

Variables	Overall Sample (n = 189)	American College Students (n = 111)	Indian College Students (n = 78)
Gender			
Male	83 (43.90%)	33 (29.70%)	50 (64.10%)
Female	105 (55.60%)	77 (69.40%)	28 (35.90%)
Ethnic Background (American Students)			
Caucasian	89 (47.10%)	89 (80.20%)	
African American	16 (08.50%)	16 (14.40%)	
Asian / Pacific Islander	2 (01.10%)	2 (01.80%)	
Hispanic	2 (01.10%)	2 (01.80%)	
Native American	1 (00.50%)	1 (00.90%)	
Other (American students)	1 (00.50%)	1 (00.90%)	
Cultural Background (Indian Students)			
Punjabi	4 (02.10%)		4 (05.01%)
Gujarati	19 (10.10%)		19 (24.40%)
Marathi	25 (13.20%)		25 (32.10%)
Other (Indian Students)	30 (19.00%)		30 (38.50%)

Variables	Overall Sample (n = 189)	American College Students (n = 111)	Indian College Students (n = 78)
Religious Affiliation			
Catholic	64 (33.90%)	49 (44.10%)	15 (19.20%)
Lutheran	10 (05.30%)	10 (09.00%)	
Baptist	11 (05.80%)	11 (09.90%)	
Presbyterian	1 (00.50%)	1 (00.90%)	
Other Christian	29 (15.30%)	29 (26.10%)	
Islamic/Muslim	8 (04.20%)	1 (00.90%)	7 (09.00%)
Hindu	42 (22.20%)		42 (53.80%)
Buddhist	4 (02.10%)		4 (05.10%)
Jain	3 (01.60%)		3 (03.80%)
Sikh	1 (00.50%)		1 (01.30%)
Other (Indian Students)	6 (03.20%)		6 (07.70%)
Other Non-Christian (American Students)	10 (05.30%)	10 (09.00 %)	
Received Prior Counseling			
Yes	40 (21.20%)	24 (21.60%)	16 (20.50%)
No	149 (78.80%)	87 (78.40%)	62 (79.50%)

Table 2

ICIAI[a] Subscale Mean Scores for American and Indian College Students

Variables	American College Students		Indian College Students		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*
I-C Values					
Total	15.20	2.56	14.19	2.53	2.69**
Family	4.74	0.71	4.54	0.67	1.88
Friends	4.52	0.66	3.95	0.71	5.66**
Colleagues	3.56	0.82	3.42	0.83	1.12
Strangers	2.38	0.96	2.27	0.99	0.78
I-C Behaviors					
Total	14.51	2.69	14.20	2.64	0.79
Family	4.51	0.81	4.55	0.75	-0.29
Friends	4.35	0.70	3.98	0.75	3.48**
Colleagues	3.39	0.89	3.38	0.82	0.06
Strangers	2.25	0.92	2.29	1.06	-0.25

[a] ICIAI = Individualism Collectivism Interpersonal Assessment Inventory. Higher scores indicate more collectivistic values and behaviors.

p < .05. **p* < .01

Table 3

Nationality and I-C ^{a} Value Group Analysis of Variance for Conservatism

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Nationality	1	00.09	00.09	00.49
I-C Value Groups	1	01.46	01.46	07.90**
Nationality x I-C Value Groups	1	00.37	00.37	02.01
Residual (or Within Groups)	185	34.11	00.18	

^{a} I-C = Individualism-Collectivism

**$p < .01$

Table 4

Nationality and I-C ^{a} Behavior Group Analysis of Variance for Conservatism

Sources of Variance	df	SS	MS	F
Nationality	1	0.010	0.010	0.07
I-C Behavior Groups	1	1.100	1.100	5.76*
Nationality x I-C Behavior Groups	1	0.003	0.003	0.02
Residual (or Within Groups)	185	35.190	0.190	

^{a} I-C = Individualism-Collectivism

*$p < .05$

Table 5

Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Attitude Towards Seeking Psychological Help Among the Indian Student Sample (n = 78).

Variable	B	SE B	β
Conservatism	-10.43	3.71	-0.48**
Openness to Change	-04.38	2.13	-0.32*
Self-transcendence	-03.04	3.51	-0.12
Self-enhancement	-07.13	2.55	-0.44**

*$p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Table 6

Mean Scores of ICIAI [a], Schwartz's Value Dimensions and ATSPPH [b] by Gender

Variables	Male College Students		Female College Students		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*
ICIAI [a]					
Values	14.81	2.77	14.79	2.45	0.04
Behaviors	14.54	2.84	14.27	2.54	0.66
Schwartz's Values					
Conservatism	-00.08	0.42	-00.15	0.46	1.18
Openness to Change	-00.12	0.62	-00.13	0.67	0.08
Self-Transcendence	00.11	0.41	00.18	0.39	-1.11
Self-Enhancement	-00.33	0.62	-00.45	0.61	1.32
ATSPPH [b]	44.06	9.30	52.29	12.01	-5.29**

[a] ICIAI = Individualism Collectivism Interpersonal Assessment Inventory. Higher scores indicate more collectivistic values and behaviors

[b] ATSPPH = Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale. Higher scores indicate a positive help-seeking attitude

** $p < .01$

Table 7

Nationality and Prior Counseling Analysis of Variance for ATSPPH [a]

Sources of Variance	df	SS	MS	F
Nationality	1	1165.45	1165.45	9.49**
Prior Counseling	1	828.73	828.73	6.75**
Nationality x Prior Counseling	1	576.42	576.42	4.69*
Residual (or Within Groups)	185	22727.40	122.85	

[a] ATSPPH = Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale. Higher scores indicate a more positive help-seeking attitude

*$p < .05$. **$p \leq .01$
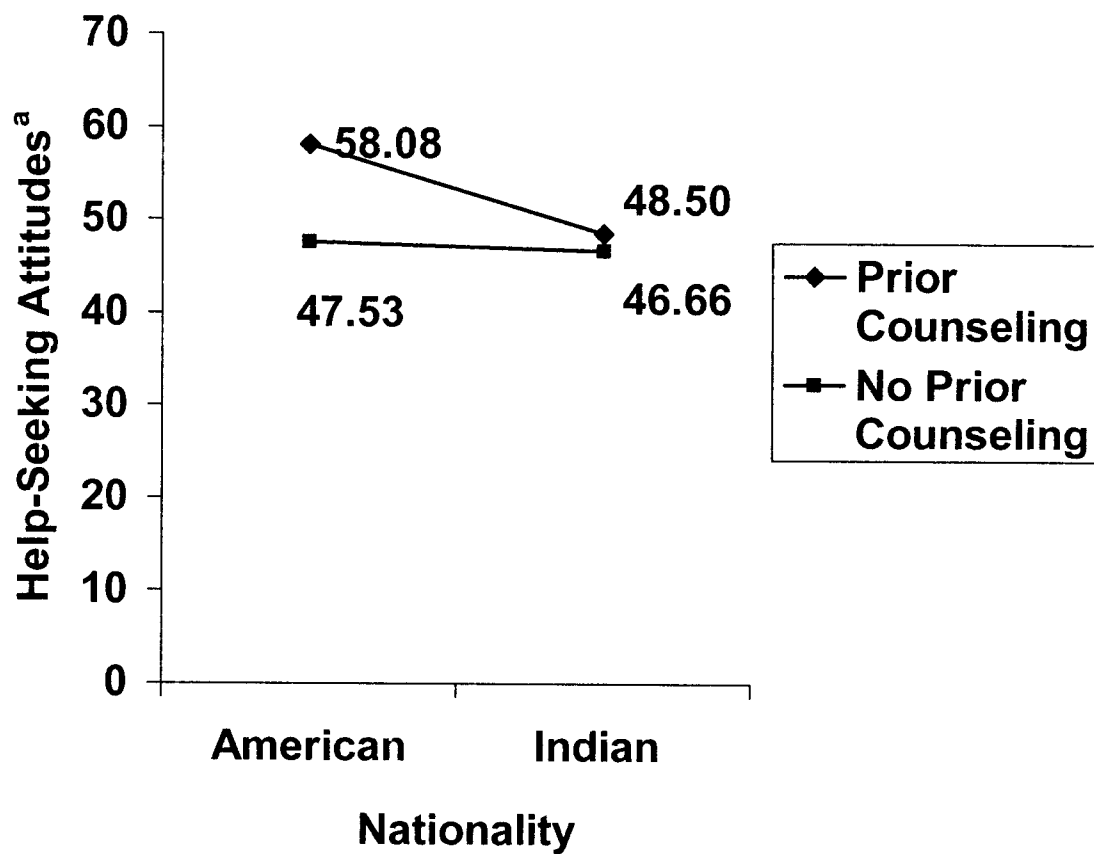
Fig 1: Interaction of Nationality by History of Prior Counseling for Help Seeking

[a] Help-Seeking Attitudes = Higher scores indicate a more positive help-seeking attitude

Appendix A
Demographic Questionnaire - A

Please provide the following background information by filling in the blanks or providing a response that best fits the question asked. As this survey is completely anonymous; please do not write your name on the forms.

1. Age: _____

2. Gender: Male _____ (1) Female_____ (2)

3. Ethnic Background:

_____ Caucasian (1)

_____ African American (2)

_____ Asian or Pacific Islander (3)

_____ Hispanic (4)

_____ Native American (5)

_____ Other (6): Specify _____

4. Religious Affiliation:

_____ Catholic (1)

_____ Lutheran (2)

_____ Baptist (3)

_____ Presbyterian (4)

_____ Other Christian (5): Specify_____

_____ Jewish (6)

_____ Islamic / Muslim (7)

_____ Hindu (8)

_____ Other: Specify (9)_____

5. How important to you are your religious beliefs?

_____ Extremely important (1)

_____ Very important (2)

_____ Fairly important (3)

_____ Somewhat unimportant (4)

_____ Fairly unimportant (5)

_____ Not at all important (6)

6.   Which of the following best describes the area in which you live?

_____ Urban/City (1)

_____ Rural (2)

_____ Suburban (3)

_____ Other (please specify): _____ (4)

7.   How would you describe your socio-economic status?

_____ Upper Class (1)

_____ Upper Middle Class (2)

_____ Middle Class (3)

_____ Lower Middle Class (4)

_____ Lower Class (5)

8.   Do you interact with people from cultures other than your own on a weekly basis?

_____ Yes (1)

_____ No (2)

9.   Indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:

My culture is an important part of my identity.

Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

10.   Have you ever received prior counseling? Yes _____ (1) No _____ (2)

Demographic Questionnaire - I

Please provide the following background information by filling in the blanks or providing a response that best fits the question asked. As this survey is completely anonymous; please do not write your name on the forms.

1. Age: _____

2. Gender: Male _____ (1) Female _____ (2)

3. Ethnic Background:

_____ Bengali (7)

_____ Punjabi (8)

_____ Gujarati (9)

_____ Marathi (10)

_____ Tamil (11)

_____ Other (12): Specify _____

4. Religious Affiliation:

_____ Catholic (1)

_____ Jewish (6)

_____ Buddhist (10)

_____ Islamic / Muslim (7)

_____ Hindu (8)

_____ Jain (11)

_____ Sikh (12)

_____ Other: Specify (13)_____

5. How important to you are your religious beliefs?

_____ Extremely important (1)

_____ Very important (2)

_____ Fairly important (3)

_____ Somewhat unimportant (4)

_____ Fairly unimportant (5)

_____ Not at all important (6)

6.   Which of the following best describes the area in which you live?

_____ Urban/City (1)

_____ Rural (2)

_____ Suburban (3)

_____ Other (please specify): _____ (4)

7.   How would you describe your socio-economic status?

_____ Upper Class (1)

_____ Upper Middle Class (2)

_____ Middle Class (3)

_____ Lower Middle Class (4)

_____ Lower Class (5)

8.   Do you interact with people from cultures other than your own on a weekly basis?

_____ Yes (1)

_____ No (2)

9.   Indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:

My culture is an important part of my identity.

Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

10.   Have you ever received prior counseling? Yes _____ (1) No _____ (2)

Appendix B
Individualism-Collectivism Interpersonal Assessment Inventory.

This is a questionnaire about your values and behaviors when interacting with others. We would like to ask you about your values and behaviors when interacting with people in four different types of relationships: (1) Your Family; (2) Close Friends; (3) Colleagues; and (4) Strangers. For the purposes of this questionnaire, we define each of these relationships as follows:

YOUR FAMILY: By "family," we mean only the core, nuclear family that was present during your growing years, such as your mother, father, and any brothers or sisters. Do not consider other relatives such as aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins, etc., as your "family" here unless they actually lived with you while you were growing up.

CLOSE FRIENDS: By "close friends," we mean those individuals whom you consider "close;" i.e., with whom you spend a lot of time and/or have known for a long time. Do not consider people who are "just" acquaintances, colleagues, or others whom you would not consider as your close friends. Also, do not consider intimate partners (e.g., boyfriend, girlfriend) here, either.

COLLEAGUES: By "colleagues," we mean those people with whom you interact on a regular basis, but with whom you may not be particularly close (for example, people at work, school, or a social group). Do not consider close friends on the one hand, or total strangers on the other.

STRANGERS: By "strangers," we mean those people with whom you do not interact on a regular basis, and whom you do not know (i.e., total strangers such as people in the subway, on the street, at public events, etc.). Do not consider friends, acquaintances, or family.

You can refer to this list as many times as you want when completing your ratings.

We know that your values and behaviors may differ *within* each of these groups, depending on with whom you are interacting. Try not to be too concerned with specific individuals, but rather, try to respond to what you believe about each of these groups as general categories of social relationships.

Also, don't be concerned at all about how your responses compare to each other. There is no right or wrong, good or bad. Don't worry about whether your responses are consistent. Just tell us how you truly feel about each group on its own merits.

PART I: VALUES

In this section, tell us about the *values* you have when interacting with people in the four relationship groups. Values are ***concepts or beliefs about desirable end states or behaviors that guide our selection of behaviors and evaluation of events***. Use the following rating scale to tell us how important each of the following is as a value to you. Write the appropriate number in the space provided for each of the four social groups:

Not at All Important						Very Important
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Family	Close Friends	Colleagues	Strangers

1   Maintain self-control toward them.

2   Share credit for their accomplishments.

3   Share blame for their failures.

4   Respect and honor their traditions and customs.

5   Be loyal to them.

6   Sacrifice your goals for them.

7   Sacrifice your possessions for them.

8   Respect them.

9   Compromise your wishes to act in unison with them.

10   Maintain harmonious relationships with them.

11   Nurture or help them.

12   Maintain a stable environment (e.g., maintain the status quo) with them.

13   Exhibit "proper" manners and etiquette regardless of how you really feel, toward them.

14   Be like or similar to them.

15   Accept awards, benefits, or recognition based only on age or position rather than merit from them.

16   Cooperate with them.

17   Communicate verbally with them.

18   "Save face" for them.

19   Follow norms established by them.

PART II: BEHAVIORS

In this section, tell us about your actual behaviors when interacting with people in the four relationship groups. That is, we want to know *how often you actually engage in each of the following when interacting with people in these relationship groups*. Use the following rating scale to tell us how often you engage in each type of behavior. Write the appropriate number in the space provided for each of the four social groups:

Never						All the Time
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

				Family	Close Friends	Colleagues	Strangers

1   Maintain self-control toward them.

2   Share credit for their accomplishments.

3   Share blame for their failures.

4   Respect and honor their traditions and customs.

5   Be loyal to them.

6   Sacrifice your goals for them.

7   Sacrifice your possessions for them.

8   Respect them.

9   Compromise your wishes to act in unison with them.

10   Maintain harmonious relationships with them.

11   Nurture or help them.

12   Maintain a stable environment (e.g., maintain the status quo) with them.

13   Exhibit "proper" manners and etiquette regardless of how you really feel, toward them.

14   Be like or similar to them.

15   Accept awards, benefits, or recognition based only on age or position rather than merit from them.

16   Cooperate with them.

17   Communicate verbally with them.

18   "Save face" for them.

19   Follow norms established by them.

Appendix C

Schwartz Value Survey

In this questionnaire you are to ask yourself: "What values are important to ME as guiding principles in MY life, and what values are less important to me?" There are two lists of values on the following pages. These values come from different cultures. In the parentheses following each value is an explanation that may help you to understand its meaning. Your task is to rate how important each value is for you <u>as a guiding principle in your life</u>. Use the rating scale below:

0 - means the value is not at all important, it is not relevant as a guiding principle for you.

3 - means the value is important.

6 - means the value is very important.

The higher the number (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), the more important the value is as a guiding principle in YOUR life. -1 is for rating any values opposed to the principles that guide you. 7 is for rating a value of supreme importance as a guiding principle in your life. ***Ordinarily there are no more than two such values.***

In the space before each value, <u>write the number (-1,0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7)</u> that indicates the importance of that value for you, personally. Try to distinguish as much as possible between the values by using all the numbers. You will, of course, need to use numbers more than once.

AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE IN MY LIFE, this value is:

Opposed to my Values	Not Important	Important		Very Important	Of Supreme Importance
-1	0	1 2 3 4	5	6	7

Before you begin, read the values in List 1, choose the one that is most important to you and rate its importance. Next, choose the value that is most opposed to your values and rate it -1. If there is no such value, choose the value least important to you and rate it 0 or 1, according to its importance. Then rate the rest of the values in List 1.

Values List 1

1 ____EQUALITY (equal opportunity for all)

2 ____INNER HARMONY (at peace with myself)

3 ____SOCIAL POWER (control over others, dominance)

4 ____PLEASURE (gratification of desires)

5 ____FREEDOM (freedom of action and thought)

6 ____A SPIRITUAL LIFE (emphasis on spiritual not material matters)

7 ____SENSE OF BELONGING (feeling that others care about me)

8 ____SOCIAL ORDER (stability of society)

9 ____AN EXCITING LIFE (stimulating experiences)

10 ____MEANING IN LIFE (a purpose in life)

11 ____POLITENESS (courtesy, good manners)

12 ____WEALTH (material possessions, money)

13 ____ NATIONAL SECURITY (protection of my nation from enemies)

14 ____ SELF RESPECT (belief in one's own worth)

15 ____RECIPROCATION OF FAVORS (avoidance of indebtedness)

16 ____CREATIVITY (uniqueness, imagination)

17 ____A WORLD AT PEACE (free of war and conflict)

18 ____RESPECT FOR TRADITION (preservation of time-honored customs)

19 ____MATURE LOVE (deep emotional & spiritual intimacy)

20 ____SELF-DISCIPLINE (self-restraint, resistance to temptation)

21 ____PRIVACY (the right to have a private sphere)

22 ____FAMILY SECURITY (safety for loved ones)

23 ____SOCIAL RECOGNITION (respect, approval by others)

24 ____UNITY WITH NATURE (fitting into nature)

25 ____A VARIED LIFE (filled with challenge, novelty and change)

26 ____WISDOM (a mature understanding of life)

27 ____AUTHORITY (the right to lead or command)

28 ____TRUE FRIENDSHIP (close, supportive friends)

29 ____A WORLD OF BEAUTY (beauty of nature and the arts)

30 ____SOCIAL JUSTICE (correcting injustice, care for the weak)

Values List II.

Now rate how important each of the following values is for you <u>as a guiding principle in YOUR life</u>. These values are phrased as ways of acting that may be more or less important for you. Once again, try to distinguish as much as possible between the values by using all the numbers.

Before you begin, read the values in List II, choose the one that is most important to you and rate its importance. Next, choose the value that is most opposed to your values, or if there is no such value choose the value least important to you, and rate it -1, 0, or 1, according to its importance. Then rate the rest of the values.

<u>AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE IN MY LIFE</u>, this value is:

Opposed to my Values	Not Important			Important			Very Important	Of Supreme Importance
-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

31____INDEPENDENT (self-reliant, self-sufficient)

32____MODERATE (avoiding extremes of feeling & action)

33____LOYAL (faithful to my friends, group)

34____AMBITIOUS (hard-working, aspiring)

35____BROADMINDED (tolerant of different ideas and beliefs)

36____HUMBLE (modest, self-effacing)

37____DARING (seeking adventure, risk)

38____PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT (preserving nature)

39____INFLUENTIAL (having an impact on people and events)

40____HONORING OF PARENTS AND ELDERS (showing respect)

41____CHOOSING OWN GOALS (selecting own purposes)

42____HEALTHY (not being sick physically or mentally)

43____CAPABLE (competent, effective, efficient)

44____ACCEPTING MY PORTION IN LIFE (submitting to life's circumstances)

45____HONEST (genuine, sincere)

46____PRESERVING MY PUBLIC IMAGE (protecting my "face")

47____OBEDIENT (dutiful, meeting obligations)

48____INTELLIGENT (logical, thinking)

49____HELPFUL (working for the welfare of others)

50____ENJOYING LIFE (enjoying food, sex, leisure, etc.)

51____DEVOUT (holding to religious faith & belief)

52____RESPONSIBLE (dependable, reliable)

53____CURIOUS (interested in everything, exploring)

54____FORGIVING (willing to pardon others)

55____SUCCESSFUL (achieving goals)

56____CLEAN (neat, tidy)

57____SELF-INDULGENT (doing pleasant things)

Appendix D

Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale
Below are a number of statements pertaining to psychology and mental health issues. Read each statement carefully and indicate your agreement (3), probable agreement (2), probable disagreement (1) or disagreement (0). Please express your frank opinion in rating the statements. There are no "wrong" answers, and the only right ones are whatever you honestly feel or believe. It is important that you answer every item.

1. Although there are clinics for people with mental troubles, I would not have much faith in them.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

2. If a good friend asked my advice about a mental problem, I might recommend that he see a psychiatrist.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

3. I would feel uneasy going to a psychiatrist because of what some people would think.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

4. A person with a strong character can get over mental conflicts by himself, and would have little need of a psychiatrist.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

5. There are times when I have felt completely lost and would have welcomed professional advice for a personal or emotional problem.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

6. Considering the time and expense involved in psychotherapy, it would have doubtful value for a person like me.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

7. I would willingly confide intimate matters to an appropriate person if I thought it might help me or a member of my family.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

8. I would rather live with certain mental conflicts than go through the ordeal of getting psychiatric treatment.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

9. Emotional difficulties, like many things, tend to work out by themselves.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

10. There are certain problems which should not be discussed outside of one's immediate family.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

11. A person with a serious emotional disturbance would probably feel most secure in a good mental hospital.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

12. If I believed I was having a mental breakdown, my first inclination would be to get professional attention.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

13. Keeping one's mind on a job is a good solution for avoiding personal worries and concerns.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

14. Having been a psychiatric patient is a blot on a person's life.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

15. I would rather be advised by a close friend than by a psychologist, even for an emotional problem.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

16. A person with an emotional problem is not likely to solve it alone; he is likely to solve it with professional help.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

17. I resent a person-professionally trained or not-who wants to know about my personal difficulties.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

18. I would want to get psychiatric attention if I was worried or upset for a long period of time.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

19. The idea of talking about problems with a psychologist strikes me as a poor way to get rid of emotional conflicts.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

20. Having been mentally ill carries with it a burden of shame.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

21. There are experiences in my life I would not discuss with anyone.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

22. It is probably best not to know everything about oneself.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

23. If I were experiencing a serious emotional crisis at this point in my life, I would be confident that I could find relief in psychotherapy.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

24. There is something admirable in the attitude of a person who is willing to cope with his conflicts and fears without resorting to professional help.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

25. At some future time I might want to have psychological counseling.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

26. A person should work out his own problems; getting psychological counseling would be a last resort.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

27. Had I received treatment in a mental hospital, I would not feel that it ought to be "covered up".

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

28. If I thought I needed psychiatric help, I would get it no matter who knew about it.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

29. It is difficult to talk about personal affairs with highly educated people such as doctors, teachers and clergymen.

Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

Appendix E
[American College Students]
INFORMED CONSENT
The following is a consent form for participation in a research project from

the psychology department at Eastern Illinois University. The research study is being

conducted by Ateka Contractor, a Master's level student of Clinical Psychology at

Eastern Illinois University, under the supervision of Dr. Anu Sharma. The purpose of

the study is to investigate differences in values, behaviors and attitudes between

college students in India and the United States. The current study entails no risk but

the benefits will be that you will receive course credit for participation.

I, _____(PRINT NAME), agree

to participate in this research study. I understand that I will be asked to complete four

questionnaires, which will take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete.

I understand that my participation in this study and all information I provide

will remain anonymous and confidential, and will only be used for research purposes.

I also understand that any information that might serve to identify me will be deleted

from all files upon completion of this research project. I have been informed that my

participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw my participation from this research

project at any time without penalty.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and agreed to the above

stated terms, are 18 years or older and are willingly participating in the study.

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix E

[Indian College Students]
INFORMED CONSENT

The following is a consent form for participation in a research project from

the psychology department at Eastern Illinois University. The research study is being

conducted by Ateka Contractor, a Master's level student of Clinical Psychology at

Eastern Illinois University, under the supervision of Dr. Anu Sharma. The purpose of

the study is to investigate differences in values, behaviors and attitudes between

college students in India and the United States. The current study entails no risk.

I, _____(PRINT NAME), agree

to participate in this research study. I understand that I will be asked to complete four

questionnaires, which will take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete.

I understand that my participation in this study and all information I provide

will remain anonymous and confidential, and will only be used for research purposes.

I also understand that any information that might serve to identify me will be deleted

from all files upon completion of this research project. I have been informed that my

participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw my participation from this research

project at any time without penalty.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and agreed to the above

stated terms, are 18 years or older and are willingly participating in the study.

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix F
Feedback Statement

The present study examined the relationship of the variables of individualism-collectivism and the cultural value dimensions of openness to change, conservatism, self-transcendence and self-enhancement (Schwartz, 1992) to attitudes towards help-seeking among Indian and American college students. Earlier studies have found that Eastern cultures, including the Indian culture, tend to have more collectivistic traits (e.g., Triandis, 1993). Collectivism incorporates traits of bringing honor to the family, having strong attachments to the ingroup, and respecting tradition, security, conformity and family integrity. On the other hand, Western cultures, including the American culture seem to have more individualistic traits. Individualism incorporates values of benevolence, achievement, pleasure, competition, hedonism, self-direction and power. Though the constructs of individualism and collectivism have been widely studied, few researchers have examined their relation to mental health treatment. The results of this study will benefit mental health professionals to analyze contributing factors and barriers to a positive attitude towards seeking professional help across the Indian and American cultures, which in turn would help them deal more effectively with clients.

Thank you very much for your participation in this research study. If you have any further questions regarding this study, please contact Ateka Contractor at acontractor@eiu.edu or Dr. Anu Sharma at 217-581-6089/asharma@eiu.edu.

References

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