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Untying the gordian knot of guilt and shame: The structure of guilt and shame reactions based on situation and person variation in Belgium, Hungary, and Peru (Article)

Fontaine, J.R.J.^{a,b,e} , Luyten, P.^a, De Boeck, P.^a, Corveleyn, J.^a, Fernandez, M.^c, Herrera, D.^c, Ittzés, A.^d, Tomcsányi, T.^d

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Abstract

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In this study, the structure of guilt and shame reactions are investigated in three cultural groups (Peru, Hungary, and Belgium) using two newly constructed scenario-based inventories. Results show that it is possible to distinguish between a structure of guilt and shame reactions based on person variation and a structure based on situation variation. Moreover, both the person-based and the situation-based structures of shame and guilt are very similar across the three cultural groups, whereas within cultural groups, the two structures are quite different. The dimensions guilt versus shame and interpersonal versus intrapersonal orientation spanned the situation-based structure, whereas the dimensions control versus lack of control and appraisals versus subjective experiences and action tendencies spanned the person-based structure. © 2006 Sage Publication.

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