Personality and culture in the Arab-Levant

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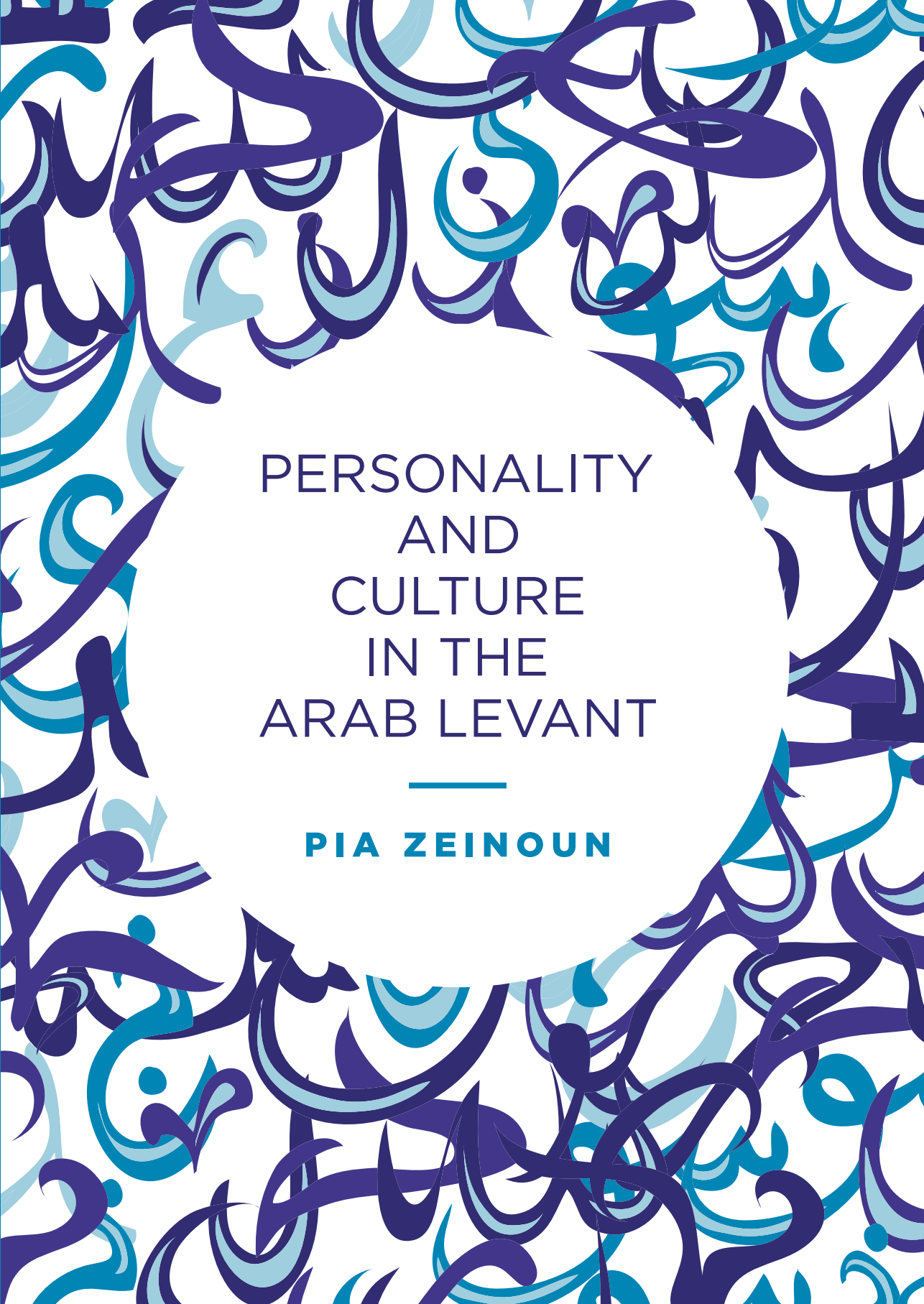

PERSONALITY AND CULTURE IN THE ARAB LEVANT

PIA ZEINOUN

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&
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in the Arab-Levant

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Pia Zeinoun

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Doctoral Committee:

Prof. Dr. Fons J.R. van de Vijver

Dr. Lina Daouk-Oÿry

Prof. Dr. Ype H. Poortinga

Prof. Dr. Jan Blommaert

Prof . Dr. Boele De Raad

Dr. Dick Barelds

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Introduction

Chapter 1

Chapter 1

This book investigates personality concepts as they are construed in the Arab-speaking culture of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine. As I illustrate in this introductory chapter, this region and culture has been under-studied in cross-cultural psychology, despite its importance geopolitically (it is at the center of world politics), culturally (it is considered the cradle of civilization), and linguistically (it is the fifth most spoken language in the world). The scarcity in research has led to several assumptions about how Arab-Levantines think and behave, why they do so, and how their culture is manifested, which are not always rooted in empirical literature. One of the crucial contributions of our studies is that they are the first to provide empirical data on how Arabs in the Levant define and organize human characteristics, how this is similar and different to personality construal in other cultures, and to make solid interpretations about the relationship between Arab culture (subsuming values, customs and social systems) and personality. Arguably, these studies are a reference point for future hypotheses about personality in the Arab world. In addition, the methodology of combining quantitative and qualitative methods join a handful of existing studies which use similar approaches in cross-cultural personality research. They further stand out methodologically because it is the first time that mixed methods are simultaneously applied on two varieties of the same diglossic language.

Language and Personality

Human personality subsumes thoughts, behaviors, and feelings in a general coherent structure that shows relative consistency across situations and is more or less stable across the lifespan (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). People have a need for describing personality in ways relevant to daily life, and these descriptions have become encoded in natural language.

This assertion, referred to as the psycholexical hypothesis, means that by uncovering personality terms contained in the lexicon of a language, we can understand the essential components of human personality. Furthermore, when people are asked to organize terms according to how they occur in their self or others, and their ratings are factor analyzed, the result is a structure of personality terms that reflect people's meaningful and spontaneous organization of personality.

Cross-Cultural Comparisons in Personality

English and German were the first languages from which a personality structure was derived (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). These studies set the stage of what came to be known as the English psycholexical approach, which delineated that terms must fit into an a-priori explicit definition of personality, they should be culled from a dictionary, and ought to be categorized in certain exclusion and inclusion categories. These conventions were used in other (mostly Western) countries and languages, particularly by later German (Angleitner, 1990), and Dutch (Brokken, 1978, as cited in De Raad, 1992) researchers who adapted the methodology to fit slightly different definitions of personality and exclusion. Most of these studies found that five broad factors could parsimoniously describe personality in these languages and cultures. The Big Five, as they came to be known, were Emotional Stability (Neuroticism), Extraversion, (Surgency), Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness or Intellect (Goldberg, 1990). More recently, another model called the HEXACO (Honesty-Humility, Emotional Stability, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness) has also gained psychometric and popular support (Lee & Ashton, 2008). The personality constructs from such models are measured through inventories like the NEO-PI (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and IPIP (Goldberg et al., 2006), and HEXACO-PI (Lee & Ashton, 2008). These tools have been translated to tens of languages, and both have noted cross-

cultural support in terms of validity and reliability of their factor structure (McCrae & Allik, 2002).

With the advent of psychology in non-Western and developing countries, these tools were translated into a new language, administered to a sample in the target culture, and results were analyzed vis-à-vis the original (Western) factor structure obtained. Similarity, or congruence, in structures is interpreted to mean that the Big Five or HEXACO can be retrieved in the new culture and language. These studies, using this imposed-etic approach (Berry, 1989), have had tremendous advantages. They allowed for the development of a common framework of personality structure that is sufficiently ubiquitous across cultures and has the right amount of parsimony and abstraction (not too many and not too few factors) to make them usable as predictors of important life outcomes (Roberts, Kuncel, Shiner, Caspi, & Goldberg, 2007).

Despite all its advantages, the etic approach also presents caveats when used alone. Notably, the procedure of testing whether established factors and their structures can be retrieved in new cultures yields results that are difficult to interpret. If the etic models are replicated in traditional psycholexical studies or inventory administrations, there is little room for validating that all culture-relevant constructs have been covered. Conversely, if the model is not replicated, it is difficult to tease out whether this is due to genuine cultural differences or methodological and linguistic issues. Additionally, the conventional psycholexical methods described earlier may not be suitable for languages and cultures, especially if distant from those in which it was originally developed. In sum, the main critique of the etic approach is that it attempts to impose a procrustean personality model and methodology on new cultures and does not sufficiently take into account culture-specific aspects of personality and language.

Another route taken to understand personality has been to repeat the psycholexical process "from scratch", instead of imposing another culture's structure. By following the frameworks of Anglo-Germanic methodologies, albeit with variations along the way, different cultures and languages produced structures that were relevant to them. This approach is a bottoms-up approach within a culture, and hence, some refer to it as an emic, or indigenous, approach (De Raad et al., 2014). However, it is notable that these studies are backed by Western-centered methods that were originally fit for Anglo-Germanic languages and cultures, and often a main research question is whether Big Five or other popular structures will be replicated (Saucier, Hampson, & Goldberg, 2000). Therefore, some may be referred to as rather quasi-emic in their approach.

Conversely, other studies push the limits of the emic approach to personality and cross-cultural psychology. Such studies are set up to maximize the cultural specificity of findings, hence focusing on non-shared, rather than shared, aspects of personality. Studies with an emic component have shown that there may be more than five or six broad personality dimensions in some societies (Cheung et al., 1996), that abstract trait terms may not be the best words to capture personality attributes (del Prado et al., 2007; Valchev, van de Vijver, Nel, & Meiring, 2013), and that some culture's definition of personality is much broader than what psychologists usually construe as personality (Church, 2009). Ultimately, emic approaches have provided valuable information about cultures, but when emic methodologies are used alone, they are difficult to falsify or validate within the same culture, or cross-culturally.

An integrated approach has been proposed to bridge the frameworks and methodological designs of both styles (Cheung, van de Vijver, & Leong, 2011). In the so-called combined emic-etic approach, studies are designed in a way to allow the culture to unravel without imposing many a-priori restrictions, but also take steps to ensure that culture-

specific findings can be falsified, replicated, and validated quantitatively. It is this integrated perspective that I adopt in our investigation of personality in the Arab language culture. I look at personality and language through multiple lenses – a conventional psycholexical study that uses globally established, quasi-emic, quantitative methods (Chapter 2), an emic approach that uses qualitative methods on spoken descriptors (Chapter 3), and an imposed-etic approach that tests the fit of a Big Five personality instrument (Chapter 3), while making note of the methodological implications for future studies that combine both approaches (Chapter 4). I do this in a region, language, and culture that presents with its own diversity and complexity.

Historical Context

The four countries of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinian territories are Arab-speaking countries on the eastern Mediterranean border. They are considered part of the "Arab World", which has historically been divided into the Mashreq (East) and Maghreb (West) region. The Mashreq is further divided into four subgroups of countries: 1) Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinian territories (together considered as part of the The Levant), 2) Iraq and Saudi Arabia, 3) Bahrain, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, and Yemen (The Gulf), and 4) Egypt and Sudan (located in North Africa and inconsistently considered as part of the Mashreq). This book deals with the four countries of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Palestine (or Palestinian territories). Because the Levant is a loose term that sometimes includes non-Arab countries like Cyprus and Turkey, I use the term *Arab*-Levant throughout the book.

Historically, the Arab-Levant has been part of Fertile Crescent and the Cradle of Civilization, an area that witnessed the birth of three monotheistic religions and spawned early advancements in language, mathematics, astronomy, and trade. After World War I, and

after centuries of Ottoman rule, the region was variably under British and French mandates. National independence was relatively recent, obtained in the 1960's for Syria, and the 1940's for Lebanon and Jordan, while the State of Palestine remains contested within the equally contested State of Israel. Currently, Palestinian Territories include the partially autonomous regions of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, all of which are under different, and often conflicting, authorities.

In more recent years, the Levant region has been once again on the radar of the international community. During the period in which this study was conducted, (2012-2015), the region has seen a brutal Syrian war, bomb attacks and mass kidnappings within Beirut and the Lebanese borders, deadly conflict between Israel and the Gaza Strip in 2012 and 2014, and Jordanian engagement in an international coalition against extremist groups.

Modern Levant Society – Language and Culture

In this tumultuous modern history, change and uncertainty have been a constant. The demographics of the region constantly change as millions of people become displaced by war and occupation, others migrate in search of opportunities (Hourani, 2010), and ingroup bias in the form of religious "racism", called sectarianism (Harb, 2010), is on the rise. Often these shifts are not documented, and pan-Levant data are difficult to come by. For instance, Lebanon has not had an official census of religious denominations for decades (International Religious Freedom Report 2013), and public schools do not have an official history textbook to document its 20-year civil war.

One observation that is repeated across the literature is the diversity of the modern Levant society. The countries are populated by people who identify as Arabs, Christian-Arabs, Armenians (of various denominations), Bedouins, Kurds, Chechens-Circassians, Arab-Palestinians, Arab-Jews, and others. Although Arabic is the predominant language,

Hebrew, English, French, Armenian, and other languages are also spoken by groups. There are also more than 20 religious or sectarian denominations, each with their own traditions and customs.

People in the Arab-Levant have been described to be on the collectivist end of the individualistic-collectivist continuum. However, diversity in subcultures, and rapid socio-political and technological changes means that there may be significant individual variation from the cultural norm (Joseph, 1996; Tamari, LeVine, Stein, & Swedenburg, 2005; Ayyash-Abdo, 2001). What seems to be consistently echoed in the literature, particularly in ethnographic studies, is the importance of group belonging in family and kinship, honor, shame, respect, hierarchy, patriarchy, hospitality, and reciprocity (Gregg, 2005; Joseph, 1996; Said, 1995 Shryock, 2004; Barakat, 1993). The countries are also united by the use one language.

Arabic, spoken in about 26 countries and the 5th most spoken language in the world, has also not been spared the impact of change. A Semitic language like Hebrew and Aramaic, Arabic exists in more than one variety that include, but are not limited to, Classical Arabic (CA), Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and the spoken variety or Vernacular Arabic (VA). This phenomenon is referred to as diglossia (originally Greek, meaning "two languages"). CA is the Arabic used in the Quran, while MSA is the language used in all written expression, literature, formal oral expression (e.g., read political speeches), formal media broadcasts (e.g., newscasts), and is the language taught in all Arabic schools and contained in the dictionary. MSA is supposed to be a "unifying" language for the Arab world, but in reality there are regional variations in MSA (Ibrahim, 2008). For instance, a text written in an Egyptian newspaper can be identified as being different than a text written in a Lebanese newspaper. This linguistic variation has been attributed to many factors, including the influence of vernacular Arabic. Another Arabic variety, vernaculars, refers to the Arabic

spoken in everyday life, in informal media programs (e.g., TV series or entertainment radio). Vernaculars are not formalized, nor given legitimacy, and rarely written down[1]. Unlike the vernaculars of distant Arab-countries, those of the Arab Levant are mutually legible. However, this doesn't mean that they completely share the vernacular lexicon. In fact, there is little data on the overlap between vernaculars in different countries, and between vernaculars and MSA, other than they exist on a continuum from "high" formal language to "low" in formal language.

In this diverse linguistic and cultural context, the intermittent conflict, lack of documentation, limited educational and job opportunities, among other reasons, have made it difficult for Levant psychologists to engage in funded academic research.

Cross-Cultural Personality Research in the Levant

Although it is difficult to validly assess the type of research emerging from the Levant[2], it appears that English published studies are mostly etic in nature. Researchers in the Levant and other Arab countries have an interest in topics with cross-cultural implications, among which are culturally-specific models of psychopathology (Dwairy, 2006) and developing Arabic adaptations of standardized tools (Ibrahim, 2013).

Personality instruments in Arabic include clinical (MMPI-2), occupational (e.g., 15FQ Plus; Arabian Assessment, *personal communication, 2015*), and research tools (IPIP; Qutayba, *personal communication, 2013*), as well as mostly other unpublished tests (Egyptian Bookstore, *personal communication, 2011).* These tests are usually translated into

[1] In the past decade, an ad-hoc writing system has been used to write Arabic in text messages and other text-based informal communications.

[2] The majority of research in the Arab World is published in Arabic journals which are not available on academic search engines and must be obtained directly from publishers in different countries. It may be that more indigenous research could be found in Arabic journals. Research published in English emerges mostly from Jordan, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia (Stevens & Gielen, 2007).

Arabic, and then administered to specific samples, and psychometric properties are reported. Eventually, the tests are used in different Arab countries to make a number of important clinical and occupational decisions, as well as research conclusions. Unfortunately, this process involves a number of assumptions that are not necessarily met.

One, the translation of tools into a diglossic language like Arabic is a major challenge that may be inadequately addressed by the conventional methods used such as translation and back-translation. Even if translation is adequate, the Arabic intended for one country may not be readily understood in another country, due to major regional variations in language, that are not fully erased by using "unified Arabic" called Modern Standard Arabic (Ibrahim, 2008). This becomes problematic when an "Arabic" tool is assumed to be understood in all Arab-speaking countries, and even by Arab immigrants in other continents. Another problematic assumption is that if a personality inventory has adequate psychometric properties in one Arab-speaking sample, it will also be valid in all other Arab samples. Such cross-Arab comparisons are unfounded in the absence of evidence for invariance of language and culture across countries.

Finally, a critical issue arises when the scores from Arabic inventories of personality (or otherwise), are used to make cross-country comparisons with scores obtained in other versions of the instrument. For instance, McCrae and Terraciano (2004) compared scores of NEO-PI in 50 countries including the English versions of the inventory in Lebanon and Morocco, and its Arabic translations in Kuwait. This was the first time that an Arabic sample participated in a cross-cultural personality study. Authors found the data had poor quality, meaning that there was a poor fit "between the assessment instrument and the cultural background and experience of the sample" (p.559). Internal reliability was very low for Morocco, but good for Lebanon and Kuwait, and there was only moderate congruence with the factorial structure obtained in the American sample (McCrae & Terraciano, 2004). These

findings could have resulted from a number of issues such as poor linguistic equivalence (within Arab-speaking samples, and between Arab-speaking and other samples), or poor overlap between the constructs measured by the inventory and the constructs relevant in these Arab countries (Van de Vijver & Tanzer, 1998). We simply do not know enough about invariance of language and personality constructs in Arab countries to make conclusions.

The Current Research

Although this research is helpful, it has not led to new knowledge about local personality concepts. What do people define as being the gist of personality? Which personality dimensions are associated with each other, and which are different? How does this mental organization diverge and converge with that of other cultures? When a Western personality instrument is adapted and used in the Arab Levant, are we really covering all relevant dimensions of personality, or are we missing something important? How do we assess self-reports of personality in a culturally and linguistically complex region? These exploratory questions motivated this present research.

The Current Studies

I started our project of understanding "Arab Personality" by laying a foundation for future studies. Geographically, I focused on four countries that are supposedly more similar to each other than they are to other Arab countries. Future studies will expand to other Arab countries. Then, I sequentially unpackaged the effect of methods, language, and culture through a series of studies.

As illustrated in the second chapter, I applied an emic or quasi-emic psycholexical approach to the dictionary-bound MSA variety of Arabic. I first established a list of Arabic personality terms that can be equally used across the Arab Levant. This meant that they had

to be familiar to people, despite being in the formal and written variety of Arabic, and understood in the same way, despite regional variations in meaning. In the same chapter, I asked people to rate themselves and others on these terms, and analyzed how people mentally organize the terms together to produce broader personality factors. The end result was a factorial structure of MSA personality terms, developed in a similar quantitative manner as that of other languages and countries. Notably, I attempted to stay as close as possible to other psycholexical studies, in order to allow for comparability of results. At the same time, I was forced to make methodological detours that were driven by the particularities of an Arab-speaking sample and idiosyncrasies of the Arabic language. This conscious attempt of following global methods, and simultaneously remaining cognizant of local particularities, partially motivated the second and third chapters.

In the third chapter, I investigated personality in the same countries through another methodology and language variety. Here, I looked at the vernacular spoken language of everyday life by obtaining free descriptors of personality. I used rigorous qualitative analysis to obtain indigenous dimensions of personality, and I compared them to the structure obtained from an adapted Big Five instrument. Not only was I able to understand what the shared and non-shared aspects between emic and etic models are, but also *how* people describe other's personality in free descriptions, and what they regard as being most salient in the definition of personality.

In the fourth chapter, I took stock of the results and methodologies of our studies, and those used in various lexical studies since 1975, and proposed that discrepancies in results may be due to methodological issues, particularly the source of personality terms. I proposed that differences can be reconciled by adopting a conceptual and methodological model that balances global methods aimed at comparability with local methods aimed at cultural-specificity. I capitalized on the challenges and opportunities faced in this project to exemplify

how the combination of emic and etic approaches can yield richer and more robust findings. In the fifth and final chapter, I summarized the main conclusions of each study and provided an executive summary of how this thesis contributed incrementally to the methodology and theory of personality across cultures.

2

A Psycholexical Study in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the West Bank

Chapter 2

A Psycholexical Study in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the West Bank

Cultures, as defined by a shared way of life, language, values, and beliefs, are different across groups of people (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1992). But to what extent do cultures differ in their conceptions of personality? That is, do people share a cross-cultural understanding of what personality and its basic ingredients are (absolutism), or is there a fundamental cultural specificity to this conception (relativism)? This question has been central to cross-cultural and personality researchers, and psycholexical and language studies attempt to answer it by investigating the words that people use to describe individuals' personalities in different languages. Thus far, this debate has not included the Arab language, the fifth most spoken language in the world, and has not considered the geopolitically important countries of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the West Bank. In this book, I set on forth on an ambitious project to explore personality descriptors in Arabic and inform the theoretical debate on the (dis)similarity of personality across cultures. This chapter shows how personality factors emerging from the written Arabic language are similar to factors found in other languages, but that their manifestations are shaped by the Levantine cultural values. Also, this chapter, which is based on the study by Zeinoun, Daouk-Oyry, Choueiri, and Van de Vijver (2015), is the first to develop a personality factor structure based on Arabic.[3]

[3] It is worth noting that Abdelkhalek (1998) identified personality descriptors in Arabic in an attempt to create a topic-specific dictionary of personality.

Personality, Culture, and Language

A common definition of personality is that it is comprised of dispositions or traits that are fairly constant into adulthood and across situations (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). Some psychologists assert that personality dispositions are genetically-rooted and are more or less invariant across cultures (see Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1992). This has become known as the absolutist perspective. Conversely, others hold a relativistic perspective and have critiqued such attempts for a "one personality model-fits-all" approach. Particularly, they are skeptical of the usefulness of Western methods and conceptions in understanding personality across cultures (Kim, Yang, & Hwang, 2006). The two positions of absolutism and relativism have led to a meta-theoretical and even meta-methodological debate about the study of personality across cultures, and cross-cultural psychologists have become invested in understanding whether personality constructs and their organization are universal or culturally-specific, and whether the methods used to answer this question are appropriate (Cheung, van de Vijver, & Leong, 2011; Fontaine, 2011). Using the linguistic and cultural context of the Arab-Levant, I aim to weigh in on the relativist-absolutist debate.

Psycholexical Studies

The understanding of personality across cultures has used language as a proxy, under the assumption of the psycholexical hypothesis. This states that language must have developed single-word descriptors to encompass people's need for describing others in ways relevant to their life (Goldberg, 1990; John, et al., 2008) Under this assumption, researchers extract personality descriptors from dictionaries and systematically reduce the terms through factor analysis into a parsimonious number of factors that cover the breadth of human personality as found in that language and culture. The degree of similarity (or difference)

found across cultures is used to support arguments for the universality or specificity of personality constructs and their organization.

Thus far, psycholexical studies that have followed the traditional method of finding personality descriptors in dictionaries, show that five very broad personality domains - Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Intellect or Openness - replicate across several European languages (De Raad, Perugini, Hrebícková, & Szarota, 1998). However, there is also strong evidence that supports a six-factor model (HEXACO; Lee & Ashton, 2008) that adds Honesty/Humility to the traditional Big Five. Also, a 2-factor model (Saucier, 2009), a 3-factor model (De Raad et al., 2010; De Raad & Peabody, 2005), and a 7-factor model (Almagor, Tellegen, & Waller, 1995) have been supported. Studies that have deviated from the mainstream dictionary-bound psycholexical method found partial support for the big five and have added culture-specific descriptors and factors, such as Ren Qin and Interpersonal Relatedness in China (Cheung, 2007) and aspects of Facilitating, Integrity, Relationship Harmony, and Soft-Heartedness in South Africa (Nel et al., 2012).

Arab-Levant: The Region, Language, and Culture

Language. There are at least 26[4] countries dispersed in Asia (Middle East) and Africa which list Arabic as an official or co-official language (Lewis, 2013; "Nations Online Project," 2015). Studies usually divided the region into subgroups of countries based on geographic, social, or language similarities. I center my studies on four independent, yet geographically linked territories that include Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the West Bank

[4] The number of countries differs slightly based the inclusion of Somalia, South Sudan, and Tanzania. Remaining countries are Algeria, Bahrain, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Western Sahara, and Yemen.

(Palestinian Territories). I refer to this geographical area, thought to be ethnically and linguistically similar, as the "The Arab-Levant".

Arabic is a Semitic language like Amharic, Aramaic, Ethiopic, Hebrew, and Syriac (Bateson, 2003), with 280 million native speakers around the world, making it the fifth largest language with native speakers (Weber, 1997; Nations Online Project (2015). However, the term "Arabic language" is not as unifying as it sounds. Arabic refers to a complex of language varieties that include *Classical Arabic* (CA), *Modern Standard Arabic* (MSA), and *Vernacular* Arabic or the spoken varieties of Arabic. These varieties co-exist in what is termed a state of diglossia or polyglossia (Kaye, 2001; Ryding, 2005). Classical Arabic is the language of early Islamic times and of the Qur'an; it was first described by grammarians in the 8th century. MSA, which can be traced back to CA, is the variety currently taught in schools, used in formal writing or official speaking (e.g., news broadcasts), and found in the dictionaries of Arabic. The third variety is Arabic vernacular. This is acquired in daily life, varies according to country, and it is rarely written, formalized, or given legitimacy. It is important to note that these varieties exist on a continuum, and a term can be used both as vernacular and MSA, or be regarded as MSA in one country but used in the vernaculars of another country (Ibrahim, 2008). From a psycholexical perspective both varieties have pros and cons. The advantages of using the MSA, is that it is supposedly common to all Arab-speakers and is contained in the dictionary. Therefore, it allows us to use similar dictionary-bound methodologies as other psycholexical studies and increase comparability of results. However, a disadvantage is that even MSA words can have different meanings across countries in a phenomenon called lexical variation[5] (Ibrahim, 2008). This

[5] Lexical variation is an area of sociolinguistics that investigates differences in lexical items across languages. Variations can result from many influences including the type of languages, the media, and the role of language academies and education. Diglossic languages such as Arabic may see more lexical variation than other languages.

allows for the same MSA word to have different meaning across countries, as well as "the existence of different words carrying exactly the same meaning" (Ibrahim, 2008, p. 10). Since a psycholexical study requires people to read a manageable set of personality descriptors and apply them to themselves and others, it is imperative that my set of MSA personality terms be understood in the same way across the sample (i.e. least lexical variation), and that the words be sufficiently different in meaning and not only different terms for the same concept (least redundancy in terms). Another main disadvantage of MSA is that the publication of dictionaries in MSA is not regulated by the various Arab Academies responsible for regulating grammar and language rules (Ibrahim, 2008). This results in the production of many Arabic dictionaries that vary in a number of significant ways. The lack of a uniform taxonomy of words leads to several possible problems such as omission of words, redundancy of terms, inclusion of dated words without indicating them as such, and inclusion of definitions based on the regional variation and convention. A final caveat of MSA is that it is ultimately related to one's formal education, it may sound artificial when read out loud because it is not used in everyday speech, and it may not include contemporary terms. Vernaculars on the other hand are spontaneously used and understood by native speakers and are permeable to new words and cultural influences (Ryding, 2005). However, there is no formal lexicon of vernacular terms; people from Arab countries may have different understanding of the same vernacular word, and particularly distant countries do not have mutually legible vernaculars (e.g., Morocco and Jordan).

In view of these advantages and disadvantages of using MSA, I found it sensible to conduct the first Arabic psycholexical study in MSA in order to maximize my chances of comparability with structures obtained in other dictionary-bound languages. At the same time, I took several methodological detours that lengthened the study but were necessary to circumvent the noted disadvantages. As I later illustrate, I had to ensure that terms were in

fact used in modern texts (not outdated) and that people were familiar with the terms and knew them in the intended dictionary meaning (as opposed to a possibly different meaning resulting from regionalization).

Culture. Arab culture is another complex term. Arab culture has been studied through anthropological, cultural, literary, and political lenses. Despite the immense varieties in cultures in the Arab world, what ethnographic studies have consistently noted is the importance of group belonging in family and kinship, honor, shame, respect, hierarchy, patriarchy, hospitality, and reciprocity (Barakat, 1993; Gregg, 2005; Joseph, 1996; Said, 1995; Shryock, 2004). More systematic investigations using aggregated data from several Arab countries have suggested that Arabs obtain high scores on power distance and uncertainty avoidance, moderate scores on masculinity, and high scores on collectivism scales (Hofstede, 2013; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 1997). However, those studies have also come under scrutiny because they bundled Arab participants into one sample spanning from Africa to Asia (Hofstede, 2013) and because subsequent studies have failed to replicate their findings in recent university samples across several Arab countries (O. Fischer & Al-Issa, 2012), and in single Arab countries, like Jordan (Alkailani, Azzam, & Athamneh, 2012) and Saudi Arabia (Oshlyansky, Cairns, & Thimbleby, 2006). At the country-level, studies have suggested that participants in Lebanon identify with a collectivist rather than individualist orientation (Ayyash-Abdo, 2001), and that indigenous values of honor and hospitality ranked as most important, followed by Schwartz's security, achievement, and self-direction values (Harb, 2010). The sparse empirical data on Levantine or Arab-wide cultural variables, which may be due to studies being made available only in Arabic or French rather than in English peer-reviewed journals, preclude generalized statements about an Arab culture. Also, the rapid socio-political and technological changes that have occurred in the

past decade and have introduced increased diversity and intracultural variation within the countries (Joseph, 1996; Tamari, LeVine, Stein, & Swedenburg, 2005) further complicate any definite statements about Levantine culture.

Personality Research. Research into Arab personality has also been limited. In the 1970s, political scientists and authors (e.g., Raphael Patai) attempted to describe an "Arab mentality", using nowadays obsolete frameworks of national character and psychodynamic interpretations of child-rearing practices (e.g., Patai & DeAtkine, 1973). Ultimately, this literature that used anecdotal evidence on circumscribed individuals to explain group behavior among Arabs remained in the realm of sociology and politics (see Barakat 1993; Moughrabi, 1978). The past two decades saw an increased interest in personality psychology from the perspective of measurement, with many English tests being translated into Arabic and validated on Arab samples. Apart from such studies, I am not aware of any English peer-reviewed studies that investigate Arabic personality traits psycholexically, or attempt to construct an indigenous personality instrument.

Within this context of language, culture, and personality research, I set forth to investigate MSA, while acknowledging its limitations and advantages outlined earlier. The first section of this chapter describes how I culled the dictionary and arrived at a manageable number of personality terms through a series of reduction procedures. The second section describes the main data collection and the analysis of familiarity and meaning of terms in the four countries. The third and final section describes the data analysis of participant ratings and the emergent personality structure.

Identification of Personality Descriptors

Dictionary Culling

The first phase of the project identified personality descriptors in an MSA dictionary. Given the language challenges discussed, an Arabic-Arabic dictionary was chosen carefully by consulting with Arabic language experts[6]. The experts provided their top three suggestions for dictionaries that were thorough and comprehensive, included contemporary words, and were organized by word spelling rather than by word roots, and could be applied to the Arab-Levant. Root-based dictionaries provide a list of the stems or roots of Arabic words in alphabetical order. Each root, usually a discontinuous string of three or four consonants, can be merged with patterns or templates of vowels and/or consonants in different arrangements to produce semantically related words. For example, from the root of "*k – t – b",* which has to do with "writing", I can derive several semantically related words, including verbs and nouns, such as *kitab* (book), *kataba* (he wrote)*, kutiba* (it was written), as well as *kaatib* (writer), and *maktaba* (library). A root-based dictionary does not necessarily provide all the words related to a given stem - a clear drawback for using them as sources for the identification of personality-related terms. In contrast, Arabic dictionaries organized alphabetically organize words in the conventional sense. The judges agreed on Jibran Massoud's (2005) dictionary, which was completed in 1963, and consisted of more than 60,000 entries. By randomly choosing one page in each of the 28 letters and tallying word classes of the terms (average of 60 words per page), nouns were found to slightly outnumber verbs, and adjectives were the least frequent word class.

[6] The experts were: Dr. Darwich Abou Zour, Primary Director of Arabic Language at the Ministry of Education in Kuwait; Dr. Ramzi Baalbaki, former chair of the Arab and Near East Language Department at the American University of Beirut in Lebanon; and Dr. Mohamad Takriti, Principal Examiner and Questions Paper Setter for the IGCSE First Language Arabic in Syria.

Once the source was identified, two undergraduate psychology students culled the dictionary over a period of six months. I divided the dictionary into 2 parts, and all pages were independently scanned. They were instructed to extract any word that can be used "to distinguish the behavior of one human being from that of another" (Allport & Odbert, 1936, p. 24), but omit non-distinctive behavior (e.g., human, walking), and to give preference to adjectives. If unsure whether a term was a personality descriptor, they were instructed to include it. Also, if a word had two definitions that were judged to be sufficiently different from each other, the word was counted twice based on its definition.

Based on these criteria, I extracted 2,659 Arabic person-related terms. The majority of these words was noted by the authors to be rather uncommon, literary, not familiar to the researchers, and were redundant amongst each other. This suggested that a more concise list would still be representative of the lexicon.

Reduction Based on Frequency and Redundancy

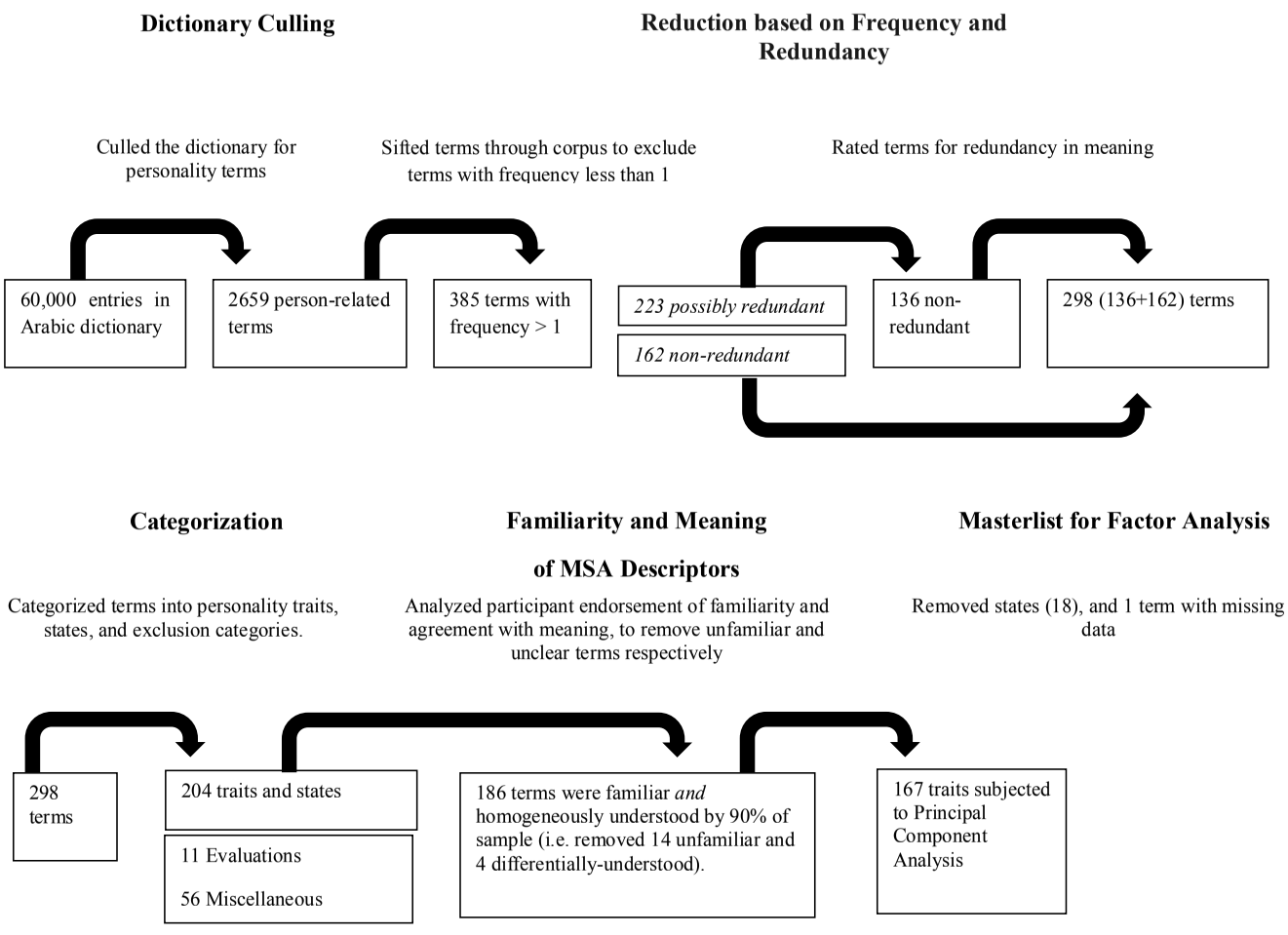
To identify words that are used infrequently, I searched for the 2,659 words in an online corpus. The Corpus[7] subsumes text from Arabic newspapers, modern and pre-modern literature, nonfiction novels, and Egyptian colloquial speech, totaling 173,600,000 words. I manually searched for feminine and masculine forms of the terms and noted the frequency of each. I then excluded from my list all the terms that were found to have a frequency of zero in the corpus. With this procedure, I excluded about 85% of the terms, and retained 384 descriptors. The number of words removed was consistent with my initial observation that various dictionary terms were not frequently encountered.

[7] Corpus offered by Professor Dilworth B. Parkinson from Brigham Young University.

Next, I removed terms that were redundant in meaning. These were groups of words that had almost identical definitions, making it difficult to identify any nuances in meaning between them. Other words were seemingly morphological variations of each other, with no discernible difference. To remove these words systematically, I grouped seemingly redundant words (223) in clusters, and excluded from this exercise words that seemed to be unique in meaning (162). The judging of redundancy was completed by a sample of volunteers (n = 18), including the second and third authors and a graduate student in psychology (all fluent speakers of Arabic), with a mean age of 26.53 years (SD = 10.50). They were instructed to examine the clusters and endorse which words to keep and which ones to remove, based on the dictionary-definition provided and their own understanding of the word. They were allowed to keep only one word in each cluster if its meaning represented that of all the other words in the same category, or they could choose to keep more than one word, or even all, if they found subtle differences in meaning between them.

On average, raters were consistent in their decision to remove or keep words from the list of 223 terms. The majority of the raters judged 71% of words in the same direction, and full agreement was reached on 18% of the words. By majority vote, the raters found that 39% of words could be adequately represented by an existing word, and therefore, these terms were removed. This resulted in 136 terms being retained. In total, I was left with 298 terms (136 + 162) Arabic descriptors. Figure 1 illustrates the sequential steps in the reduction of words.

Figure 1. Flowchart of Reduction of Terms



Categorization of Terms

Thus far, my list of terms represented characteristics that differentiated one person from another, were found at least once in the Arabic corpus, and were judged to be non-redundant in meaning. Next, I identified the terms that refer to traits and states, and designate other terms into exclusion categories (See Figure 1). Traits were defined as "generalized and personalized determining tendencies – consistent and stable modes of an individual's adjustment to his environment" (Allport & Odbert, 1936, p. 26), and states were defined as "descriptive of present activity, temporary states of mind and mood". A third category included extreme judgments and evaluations of character (e.g., adulterer), as well as social effect (e.g., irritating). A fourth category termed Miscellaneous referred to physical traits commonly associated with personality (e.g., بَلِيْدٌ, - physically slow), special talents, and metaphors. I also included adjectives that were opinions rather than dispositions (e.g., مَكْرُوْهٌ – hated) and those that were attributed to specific people or professions (e.g., مُلْهَمٌ – inspired poet), specific to one gender but not the other (e.g., فَحْلَةٌ – Emasculating woman), ideological (e.g., ماركْسِيٌّ - Marxist), and comparative (أَعْقَلُ – wiser). The fifth category subsumed phrasal adjectives, cannot be used alone without an accompanying noun, and attribute nouns that cannot be converted to an adjective in Arabic (e.g., هَيْبَةٌ – prestige). The terms were categorized by a psychologist and linguist and two graduate students in psychology (all fluent in MSA).

Results

The categorization resulted in 204 personality-relevant traits and states (68% of total terms categorized). Through the previous phases, I knew that these terms were not duplicates in meaning, and were not rare in usage. What remains to be tested at this stage is whether these MSA terms can be adequately used in the four different countries of the Arab-Levant.

The next section addresses the degree to which participants in the four countries are acquainted with these terms (*familiarity*), and the degree to which they agree with their formal definitions (*homogeneity of meaning*).

Familiarity and Meaning of MSA Descriptors

People in the four countries differ in the degree to which they are a) familiar with MSA terms, and b) understand the terms in the same way. Familiarity with MSA terms is largely influenced by formal education, and country differences in mastery of MSA are largely because of different educational systems. For example, in Lebanon, the education system relies primarily on private schooling (60%), which teaches two to three languages (Arabic, English, and French) beginning in primary school (Maalouf, Ghandour, Halabi, Zeinoun, Shehab, in progress). The teaching of Math is often in English or French, while Natural and Social Sciences may be taught using Arabic, English, or French textbooks depending on whether the school is preparing the students for an International Baccalaureate, a French Baccalaureate, or the US college admission tests (e.g., SAT). This leads to varying degrees of proficiency in MSA in Lebanese adults. In contrast, Syria has a strong public school system that uses Arabic to teach all subjects (including Math and Sciences), and the teaching of a foreign language is optional or very basic.

In addition, there is lexical variation in the meaning of MSA terms across countries. As aforementioned, the same MSA terms can have slightly or very different meanings across Arab countries and Arab dictionaries. The lexical variation result from use of the word in the media, the local dialect, the role of the language Academies, and the influence of translation from past colonists. Although the countries of the Arab-Levant are thought to be

linguistically similar, there is no evidence that the terms selected will not demonstrate lexical variation.

Given these differences, it is important to test whether the 204 MSA terms are familiar and understood in the same way in the four countries. This additional measure is not common practice in psycholexical studies, but in the case of Arabic, it is a necessary measure. Below, I report how the issue was addressed and describe the main data collection procedure.

Method

Participants. I recruited a sample of $N = 923$, and after removing missing values ($N = 806$), my demographics consisted of Lebanese ($n = 198$), Syrian ($n = 207$), Jordanian ($n = 183$), Palestinian ($n = 193$) participants, and other nationalities ($n = 25$). As shown in Table 1, participants were not "typical" college students, but varied in age from 18 to 79 years ($M = 27$, $SD = 10.71$). On a scale of 1 (*Poor*) to 4 (*Excellent*), self-ratings of language proficiency were excellent for Arabic ($M = 3.73$, $SD = .53$) and good for English ($M = 3.2$, $SD = 0.87$). Consistent with such verbal skills, the sample was fairly educated, whereby 46.5% had completed a Bachelor's degree (equivalent to about three years of university), and 14.8% had completed a Master's degree (equivalent to around five years of university education). In contrast, the sample endorsed a low income bracket with 28% reporting a monthly net income of less than 1000 USD. I was aware that participants would not want to disclose their income bracket because of the cultural sensitivity of this topic. For this reason, the question on income (and education for comparison) included an option "I do not want to answer this question". The majority of the sample chose not to disclose their income, as opposed to 1% who chose not to disclose their education.

Table 1
Sample Characteristics by Country

Variable	Lebanese *(n = 198)*	Syrian *(n = 207)*	Jordanian *(n = 183)*	Palestinian *(n = 193)*	Other[a] *(n = 25)*	Total Sample *(n = 806)*
Age Mean (*SD*)	26.4 *(9.2)*	29.23 *(13.2)*	29.4 *(11.76)*	23.45 *(6.4)*	25.89 *(5.9)*	27 (*10.71*)
Gender						
Women	136 (69%)	114 (55%)	128 (70%)	162 (84%)	13 (52%)	553 (69%)
Men	57 (29%)	90 (43%)	52 (28%)	29 (15%)	12 (48%)	240 (30%)
Residence						
Lebanon	141 (71%)	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.5%)	2 (1%)	1 (4%)	146 (18%
Syria	2 (1%)	181 (87%)	1 (0.5%)	2 (1%)	1 (4%)	187 (22.4)
Jordan	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	150 (82%)	7 (4%)	1 (4%)	158 (19.6)
West Bank	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	153 (79%)	0 (0%)	155 (19.2)
Other Country	9 (5%)	21 (10%)	12 (6.6%)	5 (2.6%)	8 (32%)	55 (6.8%)
Education						
> High School	2 (1%)	8 (3.9%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	0 (0%)	12 (1.4%)
High School	19 (9.6%)	66 (31.9%)	35 (19.1%)	78 (40.4%)	3 (12%)	201 (25%)
BA/DEA	92 (46.5)	83 (40%)	104 (56.8%)	89 (46.1%)	7 (28%)	375 (47%)
MA/DESS	62 (31.3%)	19 (9.2%)	22 (12%)	7(3.6%)	9 (36%)	119 (14.8%)
Doctorate	11 (5.6%)	0 (0%)	3 (1.6%)	1 (0.5%)	3 (12%)	18 (2.2%)
Technical	0 (0%)	4 (1.9%)	6 (3.3%)	3 (1.6%)	0 (0%)	13 (1.6%)
Some college	8 (4%)	19 (9.2%)	4 (2.2%)	6 (3.1%)	2 (8%)	39 (4.8%)

Proficiency						
Arabic M (*SD*)	3.74 *(0.5)*	3.65 *(0.59)*	3.74 *(0.49)*	3.79 *(0.49)*	3.68 *(0.57)*	3.73 *(0.54)*
English M (*SD*)	3.52 *(0.8)*	3.18 *(0.85)*	3.22 *(0.85)*	2.88 *(0.85)*	3.31 *(0.90)*	3.2 *(0.87)*
French M (*SD*)	2.7 *(1.2)*	1.48 *(0.80)*	1.23 *(0.54)*	1.19 *(0.54)*	1.75 *(1.32)*	1.66 *(1.02)*
Other Language[b]	27 (13.6%)	69 (33.3%)	30 (16.4%)	40 (20.7%)	7 (28%)	166 (20.6%)
Monthly Income						
100$ and 999$	36 (18.2%)	72 (34.8%)	77 (42.1%)	40 (20.7%)	3 (12%)	228 (28.3%)
1000$ to 1999$	21 (10.6%)	19 (9.2%)	22 (12%)	12 (6.2%)	2 (8%)	76 (9.4%)
2000$ to 2999$	8 (4%)	11 (5.3%)	7 (3.8%)	4 (2.1%)	0 (0%)	30 (3.7%)
3000$ to 3999$	4 (2%)	6 (2.9%)	2 (1.1%)	2 (1%)	2 (8%)	16 (2%)
>4000$	10 (5.1%)	7 (3.4%)	4 (2.2%)	1 (0.5%)	1 (4%)	23 (3%)
Undisclosed	119 (60%)	92 (44.4%)	71 (38.8%)	130 (67%)	17 (68%)	429 (53.2)
Collection Method						
Paper & Pencil	79 (40%)	168 (81.1%)	149 (81.4%)	113 (58%)	3 (12%)	512 (64%)
Online	119 (60%)	39 (18.9%)	34 (18.6%)	80 (41.5%)	22 (88%)	294 (36.4)
Type of Rating						
Self	77 (38.9%)	107 (51.7%)	75 (41%)	97 (50.3%)	12 (48%)	368 (45.7%)
Liked-peer	85 (42.9%)	60 (29%)	63 (34.4%)	45 (23.3%)	7 (28%)	260 (32.3%)
Disliked-peer	36 (18.2%)	40 (19.3%)	44 (24%)	50 (25.9%)	6 (24%)	176 (21.8%)

Note. DEA = Diplôme d'études approfondies; DESS = Diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées. BA = Bachelor of Arts or Science; MA = Masters of Art or Science [a] Other Arab countries included: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Yemen, KSA, Djibouti, and Mauritania. [b] Spanish and German were the two most common other languages in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, and Hebrew and Spanish were the most common in the West Bank.

Procedures. The collection of data was completed between 2012 and 2013, and focused on urban and rural communities, using paper-and-pencil as well as online methods. The completion of questionnaires was particularly challenging due to the ongoing conflict in Syria, and intermittent instability in parts of Lebanon and the West Bank. For this reason, a description of the variations in data collection procedures is due. Lebanese participants8 were community members as well as students and alumni from various English-medium and French-medium universities in Lebanon. Participants were recruited in public spaces (e.g., outdoor markets), and university campuses, and also solicited through mass emails to students and employees in various institutions, and on social media pages of all universities in Lebanon.

Syrian participants were recruited differently. On the one hand, I could not recruit participants inside Syria primarily because there was fear for the physical safety of the data collectors and because potential participants were vulnerable populations. On the other hand, in the early stages of the conflict, a large number of Syrians settled in Lebanon and Jordan. I employed and trained 10 Syrian students enrolled at the American University of Beirut and one Syrian-Armenian community member to collect data from Syrians living in Lebanon through a snowballing method. The data-collectors recruited participants in their communities and then participants informed others who might be interested, resulting in a comparable number of Syrians from the capital Damascus and the city of Allepo, and a small number from other governorates. I did not approach Syrians through social media, mostly because relevant social media pages had become politicized and did not appear amenable for research solicitation.

[8] Participating institutions included Amideast: America Mideast Educational and Training Services, Notre Dame University – Zouk Mosbeh (English), Antonine University – Baabda (French), American University of Beirut (English), and Haigazian University (English).

The Palestinian sample was recruited from the West Bank, after taking several variables into account. First, it was possible to sample from the large community of second-generation Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon. However, this meant that the sample would not be comparable to the Lebanese, Jordanian, and Syrian participants (i.e., natives versus second-generation). I wanted data to reflect those immersed in indigenous Palestinian culture and language such as those living in the Gaza strip and West Bank. However, recruiting from both areas posed a problem because the Gaza Strip saw much more intermittent strife than the West Bank areas. It was decided to recruit participants only from the West Bank, using two local data-collectors who recruited participants at the University of Birzeit and the areas of Ramallah and Quds. Additional participants were recruited online through social media targeted at adults living in Ramallah. Finally, Jordanian participants were recruited by students at the University of Amman in Jordan and in the towns of Irbid, Zarqa, and Adaba, and online through social media.

All data collectors completed an online ethics course (CITI) and were trained and supervised by the first author in person or through teleconferencing. I also obtained institutional ethics approval from the American University of Beirut and Tilburg University, and all participants signed informed consent documents, which, among other key information, documented that they were all adults and not official refugees. Data was entered in SPSS, and 10% was re-entered by an independent research assistant for quality assurance.

Instruments. The 204 personality descriptors and their definitions were listed in counterbalanced order for paper and pencil and online instruments. Participants were instructed to rate themselves, someone they like, and someone they dislike, on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Does not apply*) to 5 (*Applies very much*). They were also asked to mark whether they were familiar with the word, and if they agreed with the dictionary-provided definition. The unfamiliarity statement was "*I do not understand the meaning of this*

word, despite the definition provided", and the differential meaning statement read "*I disagree with the dictionary definition provided*". Participants were also allowed to add a comment at the end of the survey. Demographics information, including nationality, country of residence, language proficiency, education, and monthly income were also part of the questionnaire.

Results

Endorsement of familiarity. In the overall sample (n = 802)[9], each person rated an average of 6 words as unfamiliar (M = 5.88; SD = 8.87), with only about one third of the sample (33.5%) being familiar with all the words. As expected, there was a significant effect of nationality on the degree of familiarity with words, $F(5, 796) = 5.60$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = 0.03$. Games Howell post-hoc analysis indicated that Lebanese endorsed significantly more unfamiliar terms (M = 8.39, SD = 11.96) than Palestinians (M = 3.93, SD = 7.08), $p < .001$. Similarly, there was a main effect for reported Arabic language proficiency, so that those with higher self-rating of Arabic proficiency had a lower average number of unfamiliar words (expected direction), and the difference was significant, $F(2, 793) = 4.88$, $p < .01$.

To identify the unfamiliar terms across the Arab-Levant, I focused on a subsample of participants who indicated to be Lebanese, Syrian, Jordanian, or Palestinian (n = 777), and excluded those with other nationalities (due to cells that had a frequency less than the recommended of five). I counted the total instances of unfamiliarity for each of the 204 terms. Overall, ratings ranged from 0% to a maximum of 24% unfamiliarity rate. There were fourteen words with more than 10% unfamiliarity rate and 190 terms with less than 10% (The 10% rate was chosen arbitrarily as the cut-off point). The 190 terms are considered *Commonly Familiar Terms* (CFT). Chi square analyses revealed that 44 terms showed a main

[9] After excluding four participants who endorsed more than 25% of terms as unfamiliar.

effect for country ($p < .05$), and 8 words had a high unfamiliarity rate *and* showed significant interaction by country ($p < .05$). This finding suggests that familiarity (and unfamiliarity) with different sets of personality terms varies across countries. Because I am interested in developing a personality taxonomy that applies commonly to the Levant, in subsequent analyses of personality ratings, I focus only on the 190 CFT across all countries.

Endorsement of meaning. Approximately half the sample (47.1%) agreed with all the dictionary-based definitions, and each participant disagreed with the meaning of four terms, on average. Results again showed a main effect for nationality, $F(5, 800) = 5.07$, $p < .001$, but post-hoc tests did not reveal significant differences between any two groups. Further analyses did not reveal a main effect for Arabic proficiency.

To identify if specific words have differential meaning across the four countries, I counted the total endorsements of "*I do not agree with the definition provided*" for each of the 204 terms. The maximum rate of disagreement was 16%, and the minimum was 0%. Only four terms had more than 10% disagreement rate. Chi square analyses revealed that 14 (out of 204) words had significant interactions by country, but their frequencies were often small. Only one word *sabahyaton* [arrogant] was among the four terms that had most differential meaning, *and* showed a main effect by country. The remaining terms that had less than 10% disagreement rate, were termed *Homogeneous-Meaning Terms* (HMT).

Discussion

To recap, thus far I identified MSA personality descriptors in a dictionary, after which I excluded infrequent and redundant terms and arranged remaining terms into personality categories. Finally, I collected participant endorsements on whether 204 traits and states are

familiar and whether their definitions are equivalent in the four countries. I consequently removed all terms that had high rates of unfamiliarity and disagreement.

Generally, in an educated sample with good Arabic proficiency, about one third was familiar with *all* the words, and about half agreed with *all* definitions. These results indicate that there is a common set of terms in MSA that can be used across the four countries. This is an important prerequisite for constructing a taxonomy or instrument for the Arab-Levant. However, it is remarkable that 30-50% of the sample had an issue with one or more words. Furthermore, strong proficiency in Arabic led to most familiarity and most disagreement with definitions.

The open-ended comments noted by the participants clarified these findings. It seemed that people disagreed with the definitions because they believed terms had multiple or contextual meanings. One participant from Palestine said, “Many times, the word can have several meanings, only one of which is mentioned,” while others from Lebanon and Jordan added, “The terms can have double meaning, so I think such adjectives are best understood in a certain context,” and, “I feel the definition doesn’t always explain the word”. Participants also disagreed with the MSA definitions because they differed from the vernacular meaning in daily life. A participant commented, “This is not what I mean when I [speak] this word,” while another said, “I rarely use the Arabic adjectives mentioned above, but I know some of them because I know Arabic”. The most exemplary comment reflecting knowing the terms, but not using them, or using them with different meaning is the following, “In [some] of the definitions I had trouble in answering the question [because] the definition is correct, but when you think of the real meaning you'll face a conflict in your head”. Therefore, despite the common set of personality terms offered by MSA, participants perceived that definitions provided were *one of many*, and were not sufficiently known to be used in an inventory or conversation about personality.

To proceed with a derivation of a personality structure that rests on commonly familiar (CFT) *and* homogeneously understood (HMT) terms in MSA, I removed the 14 words that were most unfamiliar and removed another 4 words that were differentially understood, thereby retaining 186 personality traits and states. In the following phase, participant ratings were factor analyzed to derive meaningful personality dimensions in the minds of the participants.

Emically Derived Personality Structure in Arab-Levant

The aim of this phase of the project was to find the best fitting factor structure for CFT and HMT personality descriptors in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Palestinian Territories.

Method

Participants and Procedures. I collected data as described in the previous section (N = 806). Data was analyzed using SPSS 19 and R Studio. I addressed missing values first by detecting and deleting cases with non-random missing ratings. The remaining dataset (N = 786) showed that any absent values were missing completely at random (Little's MCAR test $\chi^2 = 131957$, $p = .08$). Next, the dataset was imputed using Expectation-Maximization technique, in line with recommendations for addressing missing data prior to exploratory analyses (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). For the purposes of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), I also removed items that referred to states in order to increase comparability with other taxonomies that analyzed only traits. Finally, I removed one trait *fawri* [natural] due to excessive missing values from paper and pencil surveys. The total number of items analyzed was 167 familiar and commonly-understood personality traits.

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was applied on raw data to derive 1 to 10 unrotated factors. I first narrowed down the number of factors by comparing the 10 solutions on the drop on scree plots, the sampling adequacy and mean communalities, and results of a parallel analysis (Revelle, 2011; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The scree test showed a drop after the fifth to sixth component, and a parallel analysis found that 10 components best fit the data. I then assessed the adequacy of extracting 3 to 10 components by examining the residual correlations, the strength of loadings on each factor, and the sampling adequacy. When a good part of residual correlations are greater than the absolute value of .05, then more factors should be extracted (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). At the sixth solution, 7% of residuals were greater than .05, after which there was only small improvement, suggesting that six factors were adequate. After deciding on the number of factors, I rotated the six components obliquely (oblimin) and examined factor correlations. When correlations exceed .32, then oblique rotation fits the data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Correlations ranged from .03 to .44, suggesting that there is sufficient overlap in variance among factors to warrant oblique rotation. To test the actual interpretability of the 6-component solution and to understand how components change from one solution to the next, I calculated "path coefficients" from the first unrotated principal component (FUPC) to the 10th rotated solution. Path coefficients are obtained by computing factor scores for each successive solution, then correlating all the scores of all solutions and noting correlations between each factor and the one immediately beneath it (Goldberg, 2006). This hierarchical representation of factors from most general to most specific is shown in Figure 1. At each level, I traced how the components shifted meaning after extraction. When I reached the 7th and 8th solution, I seemed to be "over-splitting" factors (Revelle, 2011). For instance, Emotional Stability split into very specific facets that were no longer parsimonious of the concept. In contrast, stopping at the 4th solution meant that some components (e.g., Emotional Stability) hadn't

emerged yet. I then focused on the 5th and 6th rotated solutions[10]. Both had almost all concepts parsimoniously represented, but six factors were deemed more appropriate than five factors because of stronger item loadings. Specifically, the second factor was weak in the 5-factor solution (loadings between .31 and .41), and items had more double loadings on other factors (i.e. no simple structure), while in the 6-factor solution, the third factor had higher and more unique loadings (.31 to .51). Moreover, the new factor was not a mere split of a previous factor. Finally, I examined the 6-factor on ipsatized data (within-subject transformed scores). The latter structure was similar to the one obtained with raw data, except that factors were narrower in meaning because a proportion of items had loadings less than .3.

Results

Findings of the *six-factor solution* are reported. The first factor (6S/I), which remained largely similar across solutions, reflected morality, nobility, and honor versus an immoral attitude, lack of humility, arrogance, and lack of grace. The second factor was *Conscientiousness* (6S/II), which subsumed traits related to intellect, competence,

[10] By convention, the majority of psycholexical studies examine factors obtained from raw data from ipsatized the data. Ipsatization means that individual scores are adjusted for each person by subtracting the person's raw score on a given variable from their average score obtained on all variables, and dividing that by the standard deviation across variables for that individual (R. Fischer, 2004). This procedure yields a mean of zero for across variables for each person. Possible advantages of ipsatization is that it is supposed to remove individual differences in the use of the response scale (e.g., extreme responding), yield more bipolar factors which may be easier to interpret, and increases comparability with other psycholexical studies. Critics of this method claim that it may not be appropriate on data where the two poles of the dimension are not equally represented. Since personality descriptor datasets often include more negative terms than positive terms, by eliminating individual differences in response means, the researcher might also be removing real differences in responses (Saucier, Georgiades, Tsaousis, & Goldberg, 2005)). Fischer & Milfont (2010) also warn that ipsatized scores increase dependence between data, because the transformed score of person is dependent on all other scores of that person. This leads to a data matrix that may be unsuitable for factor analysis and better addressed through other reduction techniques such as Multi Dimensional Scaling.

responsibility, efficiency, and conscientiousness. Notably, it also included value-laden terms such as loyal and dignified. A new component was *Righteousness* (6S/III), featuring terms related to honor, submissiveness, patience, conservativeness, and forgiveness. The fourth factor (4S/IV), reflected elements of Extraversion (particularly positive emotionality and sociability) and Agreeableness (lovingness, forgiveness, generosity), and was named *Positive Relatedness*. *Emotional Stability* (5S/V) had terms of sadness, anxiety, insecurity, vulnerability, absent-mindedness, and irritability. Finally, a new component I named *Dominance* (6S/VI) featured coerciveness, courage, and arrogance (previously on 5S/I) and hostility (previously on 5S/III). The components of Dominance and Righteousness did not merge in the previous level of five components (See Figure 1).

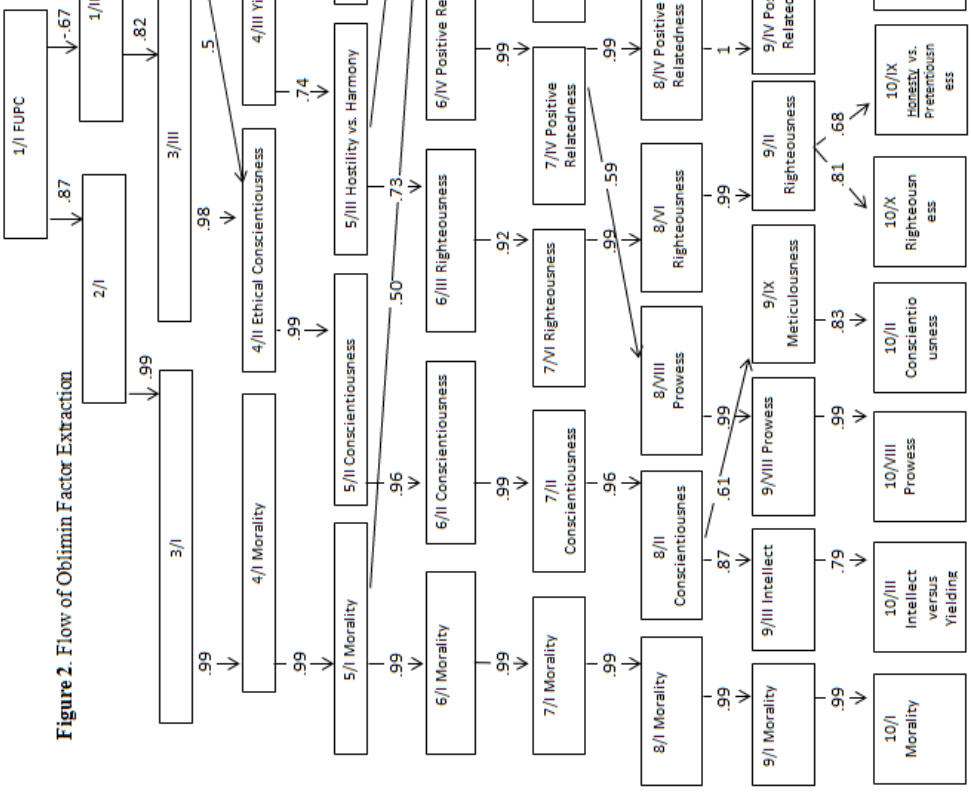


Figure 2. Flow of Oblimin Factor Extraction

Discussion

We set forth to understand how people in the Arab-Levant organize personality traits, and how this structure compares to other personality taxonomies. I found that variants of universal personality constructs emerged at different factor solutions, with the exception of Openness (that did not emerge) and that concepts of honor and power permeated across the personality factors. In the next section I elaborate on the emic and etic aspects of my findings.

The Big Two

In order to distinguish the factors as much as possible at this highest level of examination, I examined the unique and highest loadings of the unrotated 2-factor solution. Here, the first factor described someone who is immoral and antisocial in attitude and behavior (e.g., contemptuous, corrupt, manipulative, and antagonistic), as well as ignorant and incompetent, while the unrotated second factor described communal tendencies of being happy, amiable, trustworthy, and compassionate. This is broadly consistent with reports by Saucier et al. (2014) that in a 2-factor unrotated solution one of two variables will refer to traits of "getting ahead" with traits such as dominance, antagonism, and competence (Dynamism), while the other will refer to a group of traits related to "getting along" akin to agreeableness, friendliness, and nurturance (Social Self-Regulation). Along the same lines, others have also reduced personality to components of Socialization (agreeable, stable emotionally, and conscientious) and Personal Growth (dynamic, and open) (Digman, 1997), or to Antisocial (agreeable, humble, honest, and emotionally stable) and Engaged (dynamic, open, and conscientious) (Ashton, Lee, & Goldberg, 2004) or to interpersonal dimensions of Nurturance (versus Cold-Hearted) and Dominance (versus unassured) (Trapnell & Wiggins,

1990). Putting aside minor differences across these models, my findings may be reduced to two broad tendencies. However, focusing only on this broad level leaves out emic aspects of the Levantine personality conception, which I address in the section on emic factors.

The Big Three

Does the three-factor solution resemble existing three-factor models? Large scale studies have shown that the core of personality can be summarized in three factors of Dynamism, Affiliation, and Order which may be thought of as higher-order parallels of Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (De Raad et al., 2014; De Raad & Peabody, 2005). I find that only two of three factors resembled this model. What I term Positive Relatedness (3/II) resembled a broad Affiliation factor, while Conscientiousness (3/III) captured the essence of Order, although it also includes most terms of boldness, agility, and innovation. Extraversion or dynamism did not emerge at the three-factor level, with its closest counterpart emerging in the four-factor model. Another popular three-factor model has been Eysenck's model (as cited in Eysenck, 1992) of Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Psychoticism. I note that some antisocial traits of Psychoticism loosely mapped unto the first factor (3/I). A similar conclusion was reached by De Raad (2008) who compared the Dutch Virtue factor with Eysenck's Psychoticism. Other than this similarity, the remaining two factors did no neatly align to Eysenck's Neuroticism and Extraversion.

Big Five and HEXACO

The FFM and Big Five, despite some differences, organize personality into five broad dimensions of Extraversion (I), Agreeableness (II), Conscientiousness (III), Emotional

Stability (IV), and Openness or Intellect (V) (Goldberg, 1990). The recent HEXACO model (Ashton & Lee, 2004) resembles the FFM/Big Five in Extraversion and Conscientiousness, but Agreeableness emphasizes anger on its negative pole, Emotional Stability emphasizes sensitivity, and Openness emphasizes unconventionality. The model adds a sixth factor that reflects a lack of greed, trustworthiness, and integrity, named Honesty/Humility. Variants of the Big Five and HEXACO have been replicated in various languages and cultures (Allik & McCrae, 2004; Ashton et al., 2004). Below, I discuss each factor separately.

Emotional Stability. At the five and six-level structure, Emotional Stability emerged as a close replication of its FFM counterpart with an emphasis on sadness, anxiety, irritability, and mental dullness. In different factor solutions, I also found broader or narrower aspects of Big Five and HEXACO components of emotional stability (e.g., Self-Assurance and Doubt).

Conscientiousness and Intellect. Conscientiousness emerged early on in the models and had the unique feature of being closely linked to intellect, honor, and trustworthiness, until the 6th solution. In different solutions, one is not only competent, intelligent, and reliable, but also accomplishes things ethically, with grace, and without cheating or lying. This suggested that perhaps conscientious behavior is understood as guided by an honorable and trustworthy character. In addition, the fact that intellect remained closely fused with conscientiousness until 9 factors were extracted suggests that competence, skill, and intelligence are also critical ingredients of local notions of conscientiousness. The emphasis on competence is consistent with the Competence factor in the recent Dutch psycholexical study (De Raad, 2008) and also reflects the conceptual association between capacity and conscientiousness. For example, personality instruments such as the NEO-PI include perceived competence as a facet of Conscientiousness.

***Openness and Imagination*.** Whatever the form of the Intellect factor in the 9-factor solution, it did not include dimensions of Openness or its opposite, nor did Openness and/or Imagination appear in any of my solutions. This finding is consistent with past studies that failed to detect an Intellect or Imagination or Openness dimension in languages such as Italian (Di Blas, 1999), Hungarian (Szirmak, 1994), Greek (Saucier et al., 2005), and Tagalog (Church, Reyes, Katigbak, & Grimm, 1997), or noted it only after 7 or more factors were extracted (Ashton, Lee, Perugini et al., 2004). There are several ways to explain the lack of replication of Openness. One possible explanation is that Openness does not exist as a construct in the culture, because of the local values of conservatism and tradition. However, Openness as a construct was clearly represented in a parallel study among lay Lebanese, Syrians, Palestinians and Jordanian who were asked to freely describe other people (See Chapter 3). Another explanation is that Openness terms are not prominent in the Arabic lexicon due to their association with modernism and industrialization (Piedmont & Aycock, 2007). Although the dictionary used was published in 1967, which is well into an era of modernization in the Levant, it is still possible that it underrepresented these terms. A more plausible explanation for the lack of replication is methodological. McCrae (1990, 1994) argues that some personality descriptors, subsumed under Openness or Intellect, are not well represented using dictionary-based words, but instead require phrasal descriptors, or hyphenated words to capture their essence (e.g., close-minded). By using monolexical terms from the dictionary, I may have limited the inclusion of Openness terms. This finding further supported my initial impression that MSA Arabic is the starting point for a psycholexical study, but it is insufficient in fully capturing the culture through its language.

Extraversion. Extraversion did not clearly appear in its traditional sense, but instead I noted a domain describing a happy, friendly, sympathetic individual, who is also loving, affectionate, hospitable, and agreeable. It somewhat resembled traditional FFM aspects of

warmth, positive emotionality, and friendliness, but this factor lacks the component of energy, excitement, activity, and assertiveness (or their opposites). Additionally, it included being generous and hospitable – valuable social manners in the local culture. Therefore, the name of this factor reflects its fusion of extraversion and agreeableness, and its similarity to "Agreeableness-Positive Affect" in the Greek study (Saucier et al., 2005).

Agreeableness. As defined by the FFM or HEXACO models, Agreeableness did not emerge as unitary construct in the 5- and 6-factor solutions, even though its components appeared in the 3- and 4-factor models. In my five-factor solution, Hostility versus Harmony resembled the Agreeableness versus Anger component of the HEXACO model (e.g., lack of anger, patience, gentleness, flexibility), as well as the Harmony factor produced in Dutch (De Raad & Barelds 2008). Although it appeared as if it is a precursor for a full Agreeableness factor, when six factors were extracted, it split into a Dominance factor that constituted coerciveness and lack of humility, while the positive traits formed a Righteousness factor. The Dominance factor (e.g., coercive) resembled the negative pole of Agreeableness as defined in some studies (e.g., De Raad, 1992), and the negative pole of Humility in other models such as the HEXACO (e.g., arrogant). Other studies have also identified milder or "desirable" forms of dominant traits in the realm of Extraversion (e.g., assertiveness in NEO PI-R). In my model, Dominance likely represents a narrow aspect of Agreeableness rather than of Extraversion because it emerged from components resembling Agreeableness and from Morality (5/I) and was not associated with traditional extraversion in any solution. The Dominance factor had a conceptually narrower meaning than being disagreeable, lacking humility, and being "too assertive". The terms represented undesirable assertiveness and appeared to exist mostly in the context of a hierarchical relationship. For example, they could be applied to a "very bad" leader or boss but are less likely to be used in describing a subordinate or colleague of equal status. These were qualitatively different from the humility

terms that loaded on the first factor (e.g., antagonistic, selfish, and deceitful), which could be equally applicable to peer-to-peer as well as hierarchical relationships. Therefore, the name Dominance was applied to capture this hierarchical nature of disagreeableness, which seems to apply mostly to the powerful role (position) in a hierarchical relationship. Righteousness, on the other hand, described someone who is patient, forgiving, docile, honorable, and pure in their thoughts and behaviors. Together, these traits seem to describe a sort of virtuous yielding.

To sum, based on conceptual and psychometric considerations, I found that the 6-factor solution is the most fitting. Table 2 describes the positive and negative poles (when present) of the six factors by noting the most prominent descriptors in that factor, and Table 3 indicates the factor loadings.

Table 2.

Description of Six Components

Component	Description of Component
Morality	(-) Stoops low, does not follow established social norms, is contemptuous of others, antagonistic, passive-aggressive, abuses power, egotistic, materialistic, and not being strong and wise enough to follow the right principles, versus (+) Someone who is moral, honorable, and pure.
Conscientiousness	(+) Competent, skillful, intelligent and approaches matters rationally, intelligently and maturely, diligent, efficient, alert, reliable, and trustworthy, versus (-) One who is lazy and unsuccessful in what they do.
Righteousness	(+) Virtuous, pure, restrained in action and thought, and behaves in a noble, trustworthy, and merciful manner. Is patient, calm, forgiving, accepting and acquiescent.
Positive Relatedness	(+) Generally pleasant to be around; they are humorous, positive, sociable, as well as kind to others, likable, agreeable, and generous.
Emotional Stability	(-) Quite anxious as manifested in being generally worried, having insecure attachment with others (suspicious, clingy, and jealous), and also sad, hopeless, absent-minded, and irritable.
Dominance	(-) Is overbearing in relationships, forces others against their will, is hostile, merciless and concerned with winning by all means, in addition to being arrogant and boastful.

Table 3.

Factor Loadings of Traits on 6-Factor Solution

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	
Translated Term / Definition	Morality	Conscientiousness	Righteousness	Positive Relatedness	Emotional Stability	Dominance	Arabic term
Malevolent	0.95						سَيِّءٌ
Despicable	0.95						رَذِيْلٌ
Base	0.95						نَذْلٌ
Low	0.95						حَقِيْرٌ
Low-Ranking	0.94						ذَلِيْلٌ
Cunning	0.89						كَيَّادٌ
Mutinous	0.88						مَرِيْدٌ
Impure	0.88						نَجِسٌ
Malicious	0.87						خَبِيْثٌ
Immoral	0.86						سافِلٌ
Mean	0.86						شِرِّيْرٌ
Unprincipled	0.84						لئيم
Insignificant	0.81						تافِهٌ
Corrupt	0.80						فاسِدٌ
Worthless	0.80						لَئِيْمٌ
Unjust	0.80						ظالِمٌ
Ignorant	0.79						جاهل
Crude	0.79						فَظّ
Tyrannical	0.78						طاغي
Inequitable	0.78						ظَلُوْمٌ
Dissolute	0.77						خَلِيْعٌ
Deviant	0.77						ضال
Stupid	0.76						أَبْلَهُ
Unaware	0.75						غَشِيْمٌ
Silly	0.75						أَحْمَقُ
Avaricious	0.75						جَشِعٌ
Greedy	0.75						طَمَّاعٌ
Disreputable	0.73						ساقِط
Rude	0.73						شَتَام
Arrogant	0.73						عَتِيٌّ
Stingy	0.71						بخيل
Clumsy	0.71						أَخْرَقُ
Ill-Mannered	0.70						شَرِسٌ
Envious	0.69						حَسُوْدٌ

Green-eyed	0.68						حاسِدٌ
Intruder (Uninvited Guest)	0.66						طُفَيْلِيّ
Diabolical	0.63						فتّانٌ
Antagonistic	0.62						عِدائِيٌّ
Powerless	0.62						واهِنٌ
Discourteous	0.59						جافٍ
Cursing	0.58						لَعّانٌ
Feeble-Minded	0.57						بَلِيْدٌ
Submissive	0.54		-0.36				مسكين
Indebts Others	0.54						مَنّانٌ
Cowardly	0.50						جبان
Weak	0.49						ضارِعٌ
Naïve	0.48						بَسِيْطٌ
Hypercritical	0.47						عَيّابٌ
Procrastinator	0.44						مَطّالٌ
Coarse	0.43						بَرْبارٌ
Thoughtless	0.43						أهْوَجُ
Lazy	0.39	-0.33			0.34		كَسْلان
Unsuccessful	0.36	-0.38					فاشِلٌ
Sluggish	0.36	-0.33			0.36		كَسِلٌ
Rebellious	0.35				0.35		عاصٍ
Offensive	0.34					-0.38	فاحِشٌ
Obedient	0.34		-0.31	-0.32			طائِعٌ
Yielding	0.33		-0.36				خاضِعٌ
Obnoxious	0.32				0.34		عَجَّاجٌ
Tactful	-0.30		-0.31	-0.35			لَبِقٌ
Loyal	-0.32	0.39					وَفِيٌّ
Revered	-0.32	0.31					مُوَقَّرٌ
Compassionate	-0.35		-0.32	-0.36			حَنّان
Sympathetic	-0.38		-0.33	-0.30			عَطُوْفٌ
Amiable	-0.38			-0.41			مُشاشٌ
Honorable	-0.43		-0.40				شَرِيْفٌ
Sheltered (from vices)	-0.49		-0.42				مَسْتُوْرٌ
Noble	-0.51						أغَرُّ
High-Born	-0.62		-0.37				أصيْلٌ
Adept		0.71					ماهِرٌ
Qualified		0.66					كُفُؤٌ
Shrewd		0.65					شاطِرٌ
Discerning		0.65					فَطَنٌ
Intelligent		0.64					أَلْمَعُ
Skillful		0.63					حاذِقٌ
Perceptive		0.61					فاطِنٌ
Competent		0.59					بارِعٌ
Industrious		0.59					كادِحٌ
Alert		0.59					يَقِظٌ
Cautious		0.58					حَذِر
Rational		0.58					عاقِلٌ

Responsible		0.56			مَسْؤُوْلٌ
Self-Made		0.55			عِصامِيٌّ
Agile		0.54			رَشِيْقٌ
Reasonable		0.54			عَقْلانِيٌّ
Mature	-0.32	0.53			نَضِيْجٌ
Capable		0.53			قَدِيْرٌ
Innovative		0.53			بَدِيْعٌ
Efficient		0.53			خَفِيْفٌ
Realistic		0.52			واقِعِيٌّ
Educated		0.52			أَدِيْبٌ
Cautious		0.49			حاذِرٌ
Orderly		0.44			نِظامِيٌّ
Forbearing		0.43	-0.31		رَحْبٌ
Reliable		0.42			ضامِنٌ
Dignified		0.40			عَظِيْمٌ
Honest		0.38			صَرِيْحٌ
Courageous		0.38		-0.32	-0.32 جريء
Disclosed		0.36			مُفْصِحٌ
Righteous		0.34			فاضِلٌ
Giving		0.33		-0.32	مِعْطاءٌ
Brave		0.33		-0.32	-0.33 شجاع
Generous		0.32		-0.30	كريم
Audacious		0.32			-0.32 نِبْراسٌ
Unlucky			-0.31		مَنْكُوْدٌ
Forgiving			-0.35	-0.34	غَفُوْرٌ
Veracious		0.38	-0.37		صَدُوْقٌ
Patient		0.47	-0.37		صَبُوْرٌ
Trustworthy			-0.38		أمين
Sober-Minded		0.44	-0.41		هادِىءٌ
Restrained (From			-0.42		حَصُوْرٌ
Virtuous			-0.42		نَزِيْهٌ
Merciful			-0.44		رَحُوْمٌ
Conservative			-0.44		مُحافِظٌ
Pure			-0.51		عَفِيفٌ
Lenient				-0.36	غافِرٌ
Agreeable				-0.38	سَلِسٌ
Kind				-0.38	لَطِيْفٌ
Warmhearted				-0.39	وَدُوْدٌ
Companionable				-0.41	ظَرِيْفٌ
Loving				-0.41	حَبِيْبٌ
Friendly				-0.44	أَنِيْسٌ
Sociable				-0.45	إجتماعي
Affectionate				-0.47	مِعْنَاجٌ
Approachable				-0.50	أَلُوْفٌ
Happy				-0.67	فَرِحٌ
Bright-Faced				-0.67	بَشُوْشٌ
Joyful				-0.75	مرح
Joker				-0.80	نَكَّاتٌ

Comical			-0.82			فُكاهِيٌّ
Cheerful			-0.83			مِمْراحٌ
Laugher			-0.85			ضَحُوْكٌ
Humorous			-0.85			مَزَّاحٌ
Nosey		0.34		0.59		سَأَالٌ
Melancholic				0.56		حزين
Anxious				0.54		قلق
Inquisitive		0.32		0.51		سَؤُوْلٌ
Infatuated				0.50		وَلِعٌ
Sad			0.30	0.50		شَقِيٌّ
Clingy				0.49		عَلُوْقٌ
Easily-bored	0.30			0.46		مَلُوْلٌ
Suspicious				0.45		شَكَّاك
Complaining				0.42		نَقَّاقٌ
Blaming	0.38			0.38		لَوَّامٌ
Jealous				0.38		غَيُوْرٌ
Inattentive				0.38		غُفْلانٌ
Insistent				0.38		لَجُوْجٌ
Forgetful				0.37		نَسْيانٌ
Admonisher	0.32			0.37		لائِمٌ
Hopeless	0.47			0.35		يَؤُوْسٌ
Powerful	0.37				-0.61	قاهِر
Fierce	0.37				-0.52	عَنِيْفٌ
Overbearing	0.39				-0.56	جَبَّارٌ
Forceful	0.48				-0.48	باطِشٌ
Awe-Inspiring		0.36			-0.47	مَهِيْبٌ
Merciless	0.48				-0.41	قاسٍ
Oppressive	0.49				-0.40	غاشِمٌ
Coercive					-0.39	غاصِبٌ
Bold		0.35			-0.35	مِقْدامٌ
Boastful					-0.33	فَخُوْرٌ
Conceited	0.38				-0.32	تَيْهانٌ
Irritable				0.43	-0.37	عَصَبِيٌّ

Note. Items with loadings less than .3 are not shown.

General Discussion

Is the Arab-Levant Personality Structure Unique?

Across five phases, I extracted personality descriptors in the formal variety of Arabic, and systematically reduced them from 2,659 terms to 167 terms that are frequent, non-redundant, familiar, and homogeneously understood, using judges and participant ratings from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the West Bank. I also collected ratings of self and peers and factor-analyzed the 167 traits to 1-to -10 components. Psychometric and conceptual considerations suggested that six factors best fit the data, namely Morality (I), Conscientiousness (II), Righteousness (III), Positive Relatedness (IV), Emotional Stability (V), and Dominance (VI). These factors share essential commonalities with known personality factors but also contribute to understanding of culture and personality in the Arab-Levant.

On one hand, the Arab-Levant personality structure replicated basic human dispositions found in other cultures. On the other hand, three factors carry cultural values that give them a unique meaning. Notable are the related values of honor and hierarchy.

Honor (شرف) or honorable (شريف) is a twofold construct and refers to a sense of *personal* pride and dignity and *social* respect and perceived dignity (Al Maany Online Dictionary). It is almost an honorific earned or lost based on the behaviors of the individual and how they are perceived by others (Barakat, 1993; Gregg, 2005; Mosquera, Fischer, Manstead, & Zaalberg, 2008). The opposite of honorable is about "stooping low", being immoral, and losing respect and esteem from others. In my master list, honor-related terms are those of (a) *Morality/Honor* which include high-born (أصيل), sheltered (from vices) (مستور), honorable (شريف), virtuous (نزيه), pure (عفيف), and trustworthy (أمين); and (b) Social

Esteem which emphasize status such as highly respectable or revered (موقر), awe-inspiring (مهيب), and grand/dignified (عظيم).

Being sensitive to hierarchy is another cultural dimension that is relevant my findings. Although there is inconclusive evidence about the actual score of "power-distance" at the cultural level in the Arab-Levant, there is ethnographic evidence that within systems people are accepted as having unequal power and influence. In the family unit, there is a hierarchy of power that starts from *rab al ailah* [patriarch] and trickles down to other members based on age, gender, and other considerations (Kazarian, 2005). In formal settings such as work, college, and school, those considered of higher rank (for various reasons) are addressed by their respective titles by those of lower rank. Students typically call their university teachers (regardless of age difference) by their titles such as *Daktor* [Doctor] or *Anisa* [Mrs], while subordinates at work refer to their superiors with appropriate occupational titles such as *Mouhandiz* [Engineer], *Ostaz* [Teacher], *Mouallem* [Master], and so forth. Even in everyday interaction, titles and honorifics such as *Hajj* [one who has completed the Islamic pilgrimage or an elderly man or woman], and *Sett* [Lady] are used to highlight status and respect within the community.

We use this cultural context to understand the factors obtained. Notably, the Morality component includes most of the positive terms of *Morality/Honor* to describe someone who is honorable and pure in their behaviors. On its opposite pole are dishonorable and undesirable behaviors such as lowly, graceless, sly, and selfish. This factor is highly evaluative, and here I must distinguish between evaluative terms, which were removed in the initial stages of term reduction, and descriptive terms that carry an emotional or moral connotation. The terms on this factor have moral undertones and are value-laden descriptors, but they are not broad and general evaluations such as "crazy" which have been excluded. Moreover, their evaluative nature is not generic. Instead it makes sense within the cultural

values deemed important in the population. Just as terms of "honest" and "unselfish" emerged from a set of socially desirable values, perhaps so did Arabic terms such as "pure", "sheltered", and so on. The argument here is that the value-laden nature of honor/morality makes them even the more relevant at understanding the link between personality and culture in the Arab-Levant.

Honor-terms and sensitivity to hierarchy also shaped the Arabic counterpart of Agreeableness. In Figure 1, I note that the precursor of Agreeableness (Hostility vs. Harmony) split into two components in the six-factor solution. One, Righteousness describes a dignified and highly-esteemed person who is *also* patient, forgiving, yielding, honorable and virtuous, while the remaining terms describe a disagreeable, hostile, boasting, and overpowering person (Dominance). The link between honor, hierarchy, and the components of Righteousness and Dominance can be explained through the mechanisms of an indigenous conflict-resolution process called "*sulha*" (reconciliation). Studies have shown that one of main mechanisms of "*sulha*" in the Arab community is for the arbitrator (usually a respectable male community leader) to negotiate a balance between the community's need to avenge the transgression and the need to maintain the honor of the accused, accuser, and their families in the eyes of the wider communities (Lang, 2002; Pely, 2010). The successful arbitrator achieves this by convincing both parties that although revenge, hostility, and bravado towards the transgressor is a path to restore lost honor caused by the transgression, in fact forgiving the other in the eyes of the public will garner even *more* honor and respect from the community. In this context, the factors exemplify behaviors that can restore honor in different ways – either by forcing it through hostility (Dominance) or by earning it through dignified submission while maintaining social esteem (Righteousness).

All in all, my findings suggest that the cultural-specific expression of factors is moderated by cultural values of honor and hierarchy. In the Arab-Levant, maintaining honor,

engaging in honor-enhancing behaviors, and having honor-enhancing personality traits is prioritized over other values and needs (Harb, 2010; Pely, 2011). And this value seems to motivate behavior, as noted in other studies of so-called honor cultures (Cross et al., 2013; Mosquera et al., 2008; Uskul, Cross, Sunbay, Gercek-Swing, & Ataca, 2012). Even though honor is also found in many other societies, in this particular cultural logic it is sufficiently important and pervasive to drive the meaning of personality factors.

Our observation that cultural values shape the expression of personality factors is consistent with Fontaine's (2011) notion of *Construct Universalism.* Expanding on the traditional universalism-relativism continuum as outlined by Berry et al (1992), Fontaine argues that there are constructs which may not be categorically emic or etic, but instead they are universal constructs which carry a culturally-specific behavioral repertoire. Using a parallel reasoning, the metatheoretical framework of personality (McCrae & Allik 2002) posits that broad personality domains are biological dispositions, but that what is measured and observed are regarded as *characteristic adaptations* of those dispositions which are culturally formed. I started this section by asking, "Is the Arab-Levant Personality Structure Unique?" I conclude that it is not unique in the sense of uncovering a factor that is specific to this culture, but it is unique in the *way* by which cultural values shape the meaning of cross-culturally acclaimed personality factors.

Is Modern Standard Arabic Valid for Assessing Personality?

It is important that this chapter informs cross-cultural and personality literature, but it is equally important to translate the findings into practical implications for assessing personality in Arab-speaking samples.

Modern Standard Arabic, despite its claims of being a language common to Arab speakers, demonstrated shortcomings when used as a communication and assessment tool between scientists and laypersons. This is not surprising, since by definition, the two Arabic varieties of MSA and vernacular Arabic are used in different functions and spheres. MSA is a "high" language reserved for formal writings, and vernacular is a "low" language used in everyday discourse (Kaye, 2001). I can imagine that further complications would emerge when MSA-based instruments are used to assess psychological constructs in Arab immigrants, in countries where Arabic is an official language but not widely used in daily life (e.g., Djibouti Arabic), or in Arabs with a low level of education. I circumvented some problems associated with the complexity, infrequency, unfamiliarity, and differential meaning of Arabic terms by using linguistic and cultural experts, raters, and a representative sample. Despite my success at narrowing the gap between MSA and the target culture, the final 167 MSA personality traits are still not as usable as one would like for a personality instrument.

MSA terms also fall short in reflecting sufficient terms related to openness or creativity, and I do not replicate a clear factor of Openness or Imagination. This finding is not unusual because several dictionary-based psycholexical studies have not replicated Openness, and have attributed this to shortcomings in variable selection (McCrae, 1994). Therefore, using MSA alone may restrict the expression of important personality variables such as openness.

Limitations and Future Directions

My arrival at the 6-factor model is based on rigorous examination of the data. A limitation to consider is the impact of the variable selection. I cannot yet rule out that the lack

of replication of Openness and the prominence of terms related to honor and hierarchy may have been due to a biased pool of words in the MSA dictionary. As aforementioned, MSA dictionaries are not regulated by a pan-Arab body that ensures their comprehensiveness but are often individual efforts, which may lead to errors of omission (or over-presentation) of some terms. Ultimately, the structure present in this chapter reflects the personality lexicon based on dictionary-bound MSA - A logical starting point that provides comparability with other studies, but which also may or may not be the best proxy for linking personality and Levantine culture. In the next chapter, I address this possible caveat by examining vernacular Arabic and the extent to which the structure derived from vernacular will converge with the present structure.

Another issue to consider is that the link between honor and hierarchy and the factor derived is a hypothesis open to falsification. There is a need to conduct quantitative and qualitative studies to identify the behavioral antecedents and consequences of the personality factors and understand their relationship with individual and culture-level variables of honor and hierarchy. When these nomological networks are clearer, it would then be possible to compare them to known networks established for their etic counterparts. For instance, if the factor of Righteousness and its hypothesized cross-cultural counterpart (i.e., Agreeableness) predicts and relates to the same external variables, then Righteousness does not add any incremental value. However, if I find that it predicts different or more behaviors, then its cultural specificity would be better appreciated. Finally, having shown the implications of using MSA in personality assessment, I recommend that psychologists using Arabic instruments take into consideration the challenges and solutions described here, and attempt to bridge the semantic gap between MSA Arabic and the variety of Arabic used in their population of interest (e.g., immigrants). Using MSA is necessary as it provides a critical starting point and eases communication between researchers from different countries, but it

may need to be customized to the target population through the aid of experts, focus groups, and ratings of clarity and familiarity. Subsequent research should focus on providing systematic guidelines for the use of Arabic in psychological tools based on sociolinguistic and psychological considerations.

Conclusion

This chapter presents the first psycholexical investigation in the fifth most spoken language in the world and an important contributor to the universalism-relativism conversation. At a time where Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestinian Territories, and other Arab-speaking countries are at the center of the social and political global watchdog, such studies are needed to replace dated cultural and personality understandings of the region and lay a scientific foundation for future social studies and applications.

3

A Mixed-Methods Study of Personality Conceptions

Chapter 3

A Mixed-Methods Study of Personality Conceptions in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the West Bank

The structure of human personality has been summarized by means of two (Saucier et al., 2014), three (Barrett, Petrides, Eysenck, & Eysenck, 1989; De Raad et al, 2010), five (Goldberg, 1990), and six (Lee & Ashton, 2008) personality dimensions that emerged in cross-cultural psycholexical studies and in re-analyses of large data sets. Tools that measure a Five Factor Model (e.g., NEO PI-R; Costa & McCrae, 1992) and six dimensions (e.g., HEXACO-PI; Lee & Ashton, 2004) are also found to be structurally replicable in various languages. However, these popular models originate from Anglo-Germanic languages and cultures, and their successful cross-cultural replication ultimately means that they *fit* into non-Western cultures. The focus on fitting these etic models into new cultures may lead to omission of salient personality dimensions in the new culture. Conversely, examining personality indigenously from the ground-up allows us to discover how personality is construed in a new culture. It may lead to new personality dimensions, specific manifestations of existing dimensions, or the finding of solid evidence for existing models. Yet, by itself, such an emic approach will be insufficient to answer the question of the comparability of indigenous dimensions to existing ones.

In the previous chapter, I examined the personality structure from the ground up using the Arabic dictionary-bound lexicon. However, my approach can be described as quasi-emic because, despite investigating personality language using the local lexicon, I concluded that dictionary-bound Arabic may not be the most accurate proxy of Arab-Levant personality. In

this chapter, I address this caveat. I integrate emic and etic approaches in an investigation of four Arab-speaking countries, by investigating vernacular Arabic (emic approach) and also including measuring personality through an etic personality inventory (etic approach). I highlight the shared and non-shared space between personality variables measured etically and emically, aiming at a comprehensive picture of personality in the Arab-Levant.

Etic and Emic Approaches to Personality Structure

Initially, personality researchers analyzed the English and German lexicons, under the psycholexical assumption that human traits important to a society will be encoded in its natural language (Allport & Odbert, 1936; Goldberg, 1990). The most popular model derived from the lexical approach is the Big Five model in which personality structure covers the five dimensions of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness or Intellect (Goldberg, 1990). The Big Five are nowadays also referred to as the Five Factor Model (FFM), despite some differences between the two models, especially in the definition of the Openness factor and the composition of the lower-order facets (Rolland, 2002).

The Big Five are measured with instruments like selections of the *International Personality Item Pool* (Goldberg, 1999) and the NEO-PI (Costa & McCrae, 1992). These tools have been adapted to tens of languages, and their factor structure has been replicated in various languages and cultures (McCrae & Allik, 2002). This approach, referred to as an imposed-etic approach (Berry, 1989), can identify whether the constructs measured by the instrument, that was originally developed in a given culture, can be detected in a new culture. Its advantage is that it provides a blueprint or markers of likely universal personality constructs, which can be searched for in new cultures. However, this approach has also been

criticized because it attempts to impose personality models that were derived from Anglo-Germanic cultures, and originally developed in English. This weakness is compensated for by the methodology and tenets of the emic approach to personality. The emic approach aims to understand local conceptions of personality, and uses them to develop instruments that tap into culture-specific constructs. When these approaches are systematically combined, one compensates for the weaknesses of the other (Cheung, van de Vijver, & Leong, 2011; Church, 2009). Recent studies that exemplify the integration of emic and etic approaches are those conducted in South Africa (Nel et al., 2012), China (Cheung, Cheung, Leung, Ward, & Leong, 2003; Yang & Bond, 1990), the Philippines (Church, Reyes, Katigbak, & Grimm, 1997), and Mexico (Ortiz et al., 2007). For the sake of space, the approach is illustrated using two examples.

In China, researchers combined perspectives by testing Chinese-derived constructs on Western samples, thereby reversing the usual method of imposing a Western construct on a non-Western culture. They first analyzed personality descriptors found in novels and spoken language, and qualitatively reduced them to broad personality dimensions deemed important for the Chinese culture (Cheung et al., 1996). They found a five-factor model, which included only four factors from the FFM and added an indigenous factor (Interpersonal Relatedness), which described someone who keeps the harmony in relationships, and shows traditional and thrifty behaviors. Although this was an emically-derived factor, results showed that it was replicated not only in Asian, but also in Western samples (Cheung et al., 2003).

A more recent example is the development of the South Africa Personality Inventory (SAPI) (Nel et al., 2012). Through interviews, the researchers obtained spoken personality descriptors from 11 ethno-cultural groups in South Africa. Qualitative analyses reduced them to 9 personality clusters, and then quantitative testing reshuffled them into 6 clusters. Like in China, the model showed similarities with existing etic models such as the Big Five and

HEXACO. However, they also found that social and relational concepts such as Facilitating and Ubuntu could not fully be subsumed under etic models (Valchev et al., 2014).

In this chapter, I examine personality in four Levant nations, using a mixed-methods approach that combines an etic and emic approach. I use an etic tool, adapted to Modern Standard Arabic to measure the Big Five factors in the region, while I rely on qualitative analysis of descriptors in vernacular or spoken Arabic to derive indigenous (emic) personality conceptions. Importantly, I do this in a language, culture, and region understudied in cross-cultural psychology.

Arab-Levant Culture and Language

The Levant is a geographical area that includes countries in Western Asia and the Mediterranean. In this study, I use Arab-Levant to refer to the Arab-speaking countries of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the West Bank (Palestinian Territories). These countries are geographically close, and considered ethnically and culturally similar. People are described to be on the collectivist end of the individualistic-collectivist continuum. However, diversity in subcultures and rapid socio-political and technological changes mean that there may be significant individual variation from the cultural norm (Joseph, 1996; Tamari, LeVine, Stein, & Swedenburg, 2005; Ayyash-Abdo, 2001). What seems to be consistently echoed in the literature is the importance of group belonging in family and kinship, and notions of honor, shame, respect, hierarchy, patriarchy, hospitality, and reciprocity (Barakat, 1993; Gregg, 2005; Joseph, 1996; Said, 1995; Shryock, 2004).

The countries share Arabic as their language. Arabic, a Semitic language like Hebrew, is the official or co-official language of 26[11] countries in Asia and Africa, and the fifth largest language (Lewis, 2013; "Nations Online Project," 2015; Weber, 1997). An interesting feature of Arabic is that it exists in different varieties that are functionally complementary that are relevant to this study. One variety, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), is a modern version of Classical Arabic (the language of the Qur'an), which also serves as a unifying language of the countries of the Arab-Levant. It is mainly used in written expression, formal oral expression (e.g., news broadcasts, public speeches), and taught in all Arabic schools (Al-Tamimi, 2011; Ryding, 2005). It is also the language found in Arabic dictionaries. However, MSA is rarely - if at all- used in everyday oral communication. To communicate about ordinary everyday topics, people use a vernacular form of Arabic (their mother tongue). The vernaculars are spoken at work, at home, and on media (except in the case of inter-country broadcasts). MSA co-exists with the vernaculars on a continuum from a "high" language (very literary or formal) to a "low" language (very colloquial), with several levels of variation and registers in between (Ryding, 2005). Vernaculars do not formally exist in written form. However, the rising use of text messages, emails, tweets, and other informal written communications, has given rise to the need to express vernaculars in writing. Moreover, applications did not initially support Arabic characters. This led to an ad-hoc form of Arabic writing, dubbed "chat Arabic" or "Arabizi" that uses Latin characters to represent Arabic sounds. Words are spelled as they are pronounced, and written from left to right (instead of right to left).[12]

[11] The number differs slightly based on the inclusion of Somalia, South Sudan, and Tanzania. The remaining countries are Algeria, Bahrain, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Western Sahara, and Yemen.

[12] This informal usage of the Latin alphabet letters to spell Arabic words should not be confused with more formal, and controversial efforts to Romanize the Arabic alphabet that date back to the early 1920's (Halpern, 2007). There are also recent elaborate systems of transliterating Arabic (e.g., the Buckwalter Transliteration) which are used in teaching

In the context of this study, which compares the personality dimensions obtained from spoken descriptors and those obtained from ratings of personality traits written in an inventory, Arabic presents an interesting situation. On the one hand, vernaculars are crucial to a personality study since they correspond to the language of thinking, of forming impressions, and of talking about others (Ryding, 2005). They are what the average individual uses to talk about personality in everyday life. Additionally, unlike MSA, the Arabic vernaculars are fluid and permeable to modern cultural and social influences (Ryding, 2005). They are quick to coin new words, and incorporate the latest cultural concepts, thus producing a rich and modern lexicon. The Arabic vernaculars may therefore be a more grounded reflection of current Arab-Levant lexicon and culture than MSA. On the other hand, because they lack a formal writing system, vernaculars are not readily amenable to be used in a written Arabic personality tool. Any widely-used instrument will need to be written, and any psycholexical study in the strict sense of being dictionary-based, will therefore be based on MSA. This poses the problem of assessing personality by using a variety that is only formal and distant from how people usually describe behavior and inner experiences. However, there is a way to exit this problematic loop. Since MSA and the Arabic vernaculars exist on a continuum, the variety chosen for the personality tool can be close to the vernaculars, yet also exist in written form. This form of "middle" Arabic (Mitchell, 1986; Ryding, 1991) is achieved by reducing colloquialisms, words that have an idiosyncratic meaning in a given Arabic vernacular, and by using more terms that the vernaculars share with MSA. This strategy is also adopted in everyday life when people meet others who different vernaculars. For instance, because people from distant Arab countries may not understand each other's vernaculars very well (e.g., Morocco and Jordan), they circumvent

Arabic, computational linguistics, natural language processing, and Application Program Interfaces such as smart Arabic keyboards that automatically transliterate romanized Chat Arabic into Arabic characters (e.g., www.yamli.com).

this problem by adjusting their accent, eliminating colloquialisms, and opting for terms that are midway between MSA and vernacular (Ryding, 2005). Arabic speaking countries that are geographically close, such as those of the Arab-Levant, tend to have mutually intelligible vernaculars, and require little adjustment for their speakers to understand each other. This was an important reason for my choice of the best type of language to be used in those four countries, and a consideration when designing an emic-etic methodology that incorporates a written instrument and spoken descriptors.

Personality in the Arab Levant

Personality research in Arab countries has followed the etic approach, and clustered around the translation of Western imported instruments into Arabic (MSA), and the reporting of their psychometric properties in specific populations. Although this research is helpful, it does not allow for local personality concepts to emerge. One of the first studies to investigate lexical personality traits and produce an indigenous personality model was a psycholexical investigation of Modern Standard Arabic using an Arabic dictionary. In Chapter two, I illustrated how six personality factors best summarized personality traits in MSA, as rated by participants in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the West Bank. These were: Morality (I), Ethical Conscientiousness (II), Righteousness (III), Positive Relatedness (IV), Emotional Stability (V), and Dominance (VI), while an Openness factor was not replicated. The authors (2015) concluded that the basic ingredients of etic models like the FFM and HEXACO were present in the Arab Levant. However, most of the factors were colored by locally pivotal values, such as honor and social esteem, which appeared to moderate (i.e., suppress or emphasize) specific aspects of these personality factors. That served as a starting point for exploring personality concepts in the Arab-Levant. The methodology, comparable to mainstream psycholexical

methodology, allowed the authors to conduct an emic investigation, while comparing the findings with those of other similar studies. The dictionary, based on the official variety of Arabic (MSA), was a logical starting point for the first lexical study. However, the study described in Chapter 2 revealed shortcomings of using MSA as the only source of lexical personality terms. The terms needed extensive filtering to ensure that they were familiar to participants and usable in daily life. Moreover, because the varieties exist on a continuum, some MSA words had shifted meaning over time and seemed to be understood differently in the different Arabic speaking countries. Additionally, the MSA lexicon represented particular aspects of personality. Evaluative terms were over-represented, while openness terms were underrepresented. The lack of an Openness factor was attributed to the shortcomings of dictionary-bound MSA as a sole source, a problem that has also been observed in other languages (McCrae, 1990; Saucier, 1997).

In the present chapter I bypass the shortcomings of using MSA in the investigation of personality, by analyzing the vernacular varieties of Arabic. In addition, I test the FFM through an etic instrument. By integrating results from these emic and etic perspectives, and comparing them to previous findings, I highlight the divergence and convergence of personality constructs in a model of personality in the Arab-Levant that combines the culture-informed nature of the emic approach with the psychometric adequacy of the etic approach.

Method

Participants

I recruited a total of 545 participants, comprising Lebanese (n = 159), Syrians (n = 112), Jordanians (n = 147), and Palestinians (n = 124). Participants' ages ranged from 17 to 67 years (M = 27.5, SD = 10.4), with 62% identifying as female and 37% as male. The sample was fairly educated and bilingual. About half of the sample had a university degree at

the Bachelor's (43.9%) or Master's level (12.1%), and reported excellent proficiency in Arabic (M = 3.61, SD = .67) on a scale of 1 (*Poor*) to 4 (*Excellent*). Also, 83% (n = 454) of the sample was proficient in English, French, or another language, in addition to Arabic. An analysis of variance showed that self-rated proficiency in Arabic did not differ across countries, $F(3, 539) = 0.98$, $p = 0.40$. Table 1 summarizes demographics for the total sample.

Procedure

I recruited Lebanese, Syrian, Jordanian, and Palestinian adults between 2012 and 2014, using paper-and-pencil and online methods. Due to ongoing conflict and travel restrictions in the various territories, I had to be creative in data collection. Lebanese participants[13] were students and alumni targeted through mass emails distributed in Lebanese universities where English or French was the medium of instruction, and laypersons approached in public spaces, such as market places, and on social media through shares on pages. Syrian participants could not be recruited from Syria primarily because there was fear for the physical safety of the data collectors, and because they were potentially vulnerable populations. Instead, I employed Syrian students and community members who then recruited Syrians recently settled in Lebanon and Jordan, and were not refugees, through a snowballing method. Jordanian participants were recruited from the Jordanian cities of Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, and Adaba through local data-collectors, emails to constituents of companies and universities, and social media. Palestinians were recruited by two data-collectors at the University of Birzeit, Ramallah and Al-Quds in the West Bank, and through social media. All data collectors completed an ethics course, and I also obtained institutional ethics approval from relevant universities.

[13] Participating institutions included America Mideast Educational and Training Services, Notre Dame University, Antonine University, American University of Beirut, and Haigazian University.

Table 1

Sample Characteristics of Four Countries

Variable	Lebanese *(n = 159)*	Syrian *(n =112)*	Jordanian *(n = 147)*	Palestinian *(n = 124)*	Other *(n = 3)*	Total *(n = 545)*
Mean Age (*SD*)	27.3 *(10)*	30.6 *(12.37)*	29*(10.53)*	23.6 *(7.13)*	23.67 *(3.78)*	27.5 (10.4)
Gender						
Women	96 (60.4%)	65 (58%)	83(56.5%)	92 (74.2%)	3 (100%)	339(62.2%)
Men	63 (39.6%)	44 (39.3%)	64 (43.5%)	32 (25.8%)	0 (0%)	203(37.2%)
Residence						
Lebanon	154 (96.9%)	5 (4.5%)	1 (.7%)	3 (2.4%)	0 (0%)	163 (29.9%
Syria	0 (0%)	93 (83%)	6 (4.1%)	2 (1.6%)	0 (0%)	101 (18.5%)
Jordan	1(.6%)	1 (.9%)	129 (87.8%)	6 (4.8%)	1 (33.3%)	138 (25.3%)
West Bank	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (3.4%)	109 (87.9%)	2 (66.7%)	116 (21.3%)
Other Country	4 (2.5%)	10 (9%)	6 (4.1%)	4 (3.2%)	0 (0%)	24 (4.4%)
Education						
≤ High School	48(30.1)	41 (36.6%)	56 (38.1%)	58 (46.8%)	0 (0%)	203 (37.2%)
≥Bachelors	111 (69.9%)	71 (63.4%)	91 (61.9%)	66 (53.2)	3 (100%)	342 (62.8%)
Proficiency						
Arabic M (*SD)*	3.6 *(.65)*	3.48 *(.75)*	3.65 *(.7)*	3.67 *(.59)*	4 *(.00)*	3.61 *(.67)*
English M (*SD)*	3.57 *(.66)*	3.10 *(.95)*	3.3 *(.98)*	2.9 *(.91)*	3.33 *(1.15)*	3.25 *(.91)*
French M (*SD)*	2.5 *(1.2)*	1.44 *(.84)*	1.23 *(.65)*	1.21 *(.73)*	1 *(.00)*	1.64 *(1.05)*
Other	.3 (.88)	0.28 (.89)	.32 (.91)	.43 (.98)	2 (1.73)	.34 (.92)
Monthly Income						
100$ to 1999$	61 (38.4%)	47 (42%)	88 (59.9%)	61 (49.2%)	1 (33.3%)	258(47.3%)
2000$ to 3999$	42 (26.4%)	10 (9%)	17 (11.6%)	10 (8%)	0 (0%)	79 (14.5%)
>4000$	22 (13.8%)	11 (9.8%)	6 (4.1%)	2 (1.6%)	1 (33.3%)	42 (7.7%)
Undisclosed	34 (21.4%)	44 (39.3%)	36 (24.5%)	51 (41.1%)	1 (33.3%)	166(30.05%)

Instruments

Open-ended questions. Nine questions based on those used in the development of the South Africa Personality Inventory by Nel et al. (2012). The questions aimed to inquire about the personality of people important in the life of an average Arab person. Participants were instructed to think about the target person, and describe his/her personality in terms of how they think, feel, and behave across situations and settings. They were required to say or write their responses in vernacular using the popular way of writing Arabic online and in text messages. Questions asked participants to describe the personality of a close friend from the same and opposite sex, of one parent, of the worst and best spouse for oneself (or for one's children), of a colleague or classmate that performs well at work and one that performs poorly at work, and of a leader, boss, or teacher that they like and one that they dislike. I used contextualization (work, friend) and dichotomy (like, dislike) to ensure a variety of descriptions. Each question was followed by two prompts to ensure the target was described in full.

The "International Personality Item Pool" inventory. I constructed a 55-item personality inventory based on the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP; Goldberg, 1999) and the South Africa Personality Inventory (SAPI; Van de Vijver, *personal communication*). The IPIP is an open-source pool of English items that measures the lexical Big Five factors of Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Intellect/Openness. It uses brief items, simple language, and has been translated to multiple languages (Goldberg, 2015). To use the inventory, I obtained a 100-item version written in MSA (Abdullatif, 2005, *personal communication*), and selected 50-items (10 items per factor). A bilingual psychologist back-translated the items into English, then the authors formed a panel to

critically examine the back-translated items using the cognitive interviewing technique (Daouk-Öyry & McDowal, 2012). I also examined if the Arabic items could be related to markers of Goldberg's Big Five (1992). It is worth noting that despite being written in MSA, the IPIP's brevity and simplicity of items allowed us to choose words that are common and close to vernaculars. In addition to the IPIP items, I added five items from the SAPI that measure Soft Heartedness and Relational Harmony and which were found to be salient dimensions of personality in South Africa. I chose seven SAPI items to be adapted into Arabic following the same procedure outlined above. From the aggregated comments, I chose the five items that were undisputed. These items and their English counterparts were then piloted on a focus group of students at the American University of Beirut. Any discrepancies in the endorsement of items between English and Arabic versions were discussed with the participants, and adjustments were made to produce the 5 items that measure Soft Heartedness and Relational Harmony. The final instrument was a 55-item self-report, Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Does not apply*) to 5 (*Applies very much*).

Data Analysis

Reduction of emic descriptors. Qualitative analysis was based on the method of template analysis (Cassell & Symon, 2004; King, 2014), and techniques used in similar studies of personality (Nel et al., 2012) and love (Fehr, 1988). The reduction from raw statements to personality traits was conducted manually over the period of two years by the first three authors, and the help of senior psychology students. Since the responses were written in Arabic characters or Arabizi consisting of Roman characters and numerals, there were many discrepancies in the way the same word was rendered or transliterated in written

form by different participants. It was therefore not possible to use any readily available software to support analysis[14] .

In data preparation, I divided the verbatim utterances into Units of Responses (URs), which was operationalized as "a word or phrase of any length that broadly refers to one behavioral repertoire or trait" (e.g., "brave" or "I like that he asks about my well-being, even when I am far"). Each UR was given a unique identifier that linked it to the statements said before and after it (i.e., providing behavioral context), to the question that prompted it, and to the participant's demographics. This allowed me to order responses according to each of these variables, and interpret them in context. Table 2 shows the counts of utterances that were included and excluded.

Semantic coding. I clustered the units of responses linguistically, by grouping together single words, and labeling them semantically. For instance, all literal instances of a common word like "kind" were labeled as "kind". I included under the same label responses that were two-word combinations, if the additional word merely served to qualify the core trait in terms of frequency/time ("*always honest*") or intensity ("*very honest*"). When two-word combinations led to a change in meaning of the core trait, namely when the qualifier changed the meaning to an antonym (e.g., "*not honest*"), these were labeled separately. Unlike English, Arabic does not have negative prefixes such as *dis-* in *dishonest* or *un-* in *ungrateful;* instead it uses a variety of short words, which can precede the adjective, noun, or verb to negate them. I labeled all such two-word combinations with a generic negative qualifier (e.g., all variations of "*not honest*" were labeled as "*honest/not*"). This would assure that I stayed semantically close to the original response without jumping to conclusions as to the meaning of terms with negative qualifiers.

[14] In the past few years, there has been considerable progress in Arabic text-analytics. A re-analysis of the data using software may be possible in the near future, particularly in parsing word-classes.

Table 2
Counts of Responses Obtained, Excluded and Analyzed

Types of Response	Number	Example
Obtained Units of Response	**17,283**	
Irrelevant Responses Excluded	**607**	
Physical	278	Her eyes are captivating.
Other	170	I don't have friends.
Occupational	52	My father is a retired army general.
Socio-Economic	41	She comes from a lower social status.
Habit	24	Sleeps a lot.
Religious	15	From another religion.
Geographical/National	19	An Arab and not a foreigner.
Role	8	A mother.
Political	5	Communist.
Possibly Relevant Excluded	**961**	
Ambiguous	300	He brightens my day even when not near.
Relationship-focused	155	Our relationship is one of intimacy.
Feeling-focused	57	I love her a lot.
Comparative	53	He is exactly like my father.
Evaluative/Moralistic	210	A womanizer
Slang/Idiosyncratic	186	--
English Descriptors Excluded	**629**	
Total Descriptors Excluded	**2197**	
Personality Relevant Analyzed	**15,086**	
Labels	1178 (823)[a]	
Facets	195	
Subclusters	63	
Clusters	9	

Note. The total count of irrelevant responses does not equal sum of its categories because some responses are counted in two categories. Physical = A physical traits of a person; Other = Irrelevant comments; Occupational = Job or career; Socio-Economic = Financial and/or social status; Habits = Habit deemed irrelevant; Religious = A religion or sect; Geographical/ National = Ethnicity, nationality, or area of residence. Role = Relational or life role; Political = Political affiliation, or ideology; Ambiguous = Appears relevant to personality but meaning remained unclear after consultations; Relationship-focused = Describes a relationship, which alludes to the personality of the person but not sufficiently to be labeled; Feeling-focused = Describes feelings towards the target which allude to target's personality but without sufficient clarity; Comparative = Compares with others without sufficiently describing the personality; Evaluative Moralistic = Moral judgments that may be linked to personality, but are insufficiently clear to label; Slang/Idiosyncratic = Infrequent terms specific to an area, curses, gender-specific terms. [a] = In parenthesis is the number of labels without their negations.

Then, I addressed longer response units that could still be clustered semantically but were more nuanced than single-word terms. The raters were instructed to skip phrases that were too vague, unclear, or simply difficult to code, and address straightforward descriptors such as situation-specific traits (e.g., *dedicated to work*) and unambiguous behaviors (e.g., *attentive to details when working on a task*). I also coded idioms such as *qalbo aa rass lseno* [His heart is on the tip of his tongue], which is semantically equivalent to "Wears his heart on his sleeve".

At this point, I treated the previously created labels as a template of codes that I attempted to apply to these units (King, 2014). As a general rule, if a UR occurred twice or less, such as in the case of some region-specific terms or idioms, it was merged with an existing label. If the descriptive phrase was encountered more than twice or if I could not adequately fit it into the template, then a label was created for it. At this stage, labels were worded as close to the UR as possible. I did not use terms that were not found in my data. By the end of the first phase of *Semantic Coding*, I had created 1000 labels for 10,000 responses. The first author translated labels into English, and defined them based on consultations with cultural experts (see below).

Conceptual coding. In the second stage, I addressed URs that were lengthier and more complex, and that needed a more refined understanding of behavior, personality, and culture. The coders were the first three authors, and five consultants with a graduate degree in psychology who had lived most of their lives in the Arab-Levant. In a series of meetings, the coders analyzed the URs, discussed their meaning, and assigned labels from the existing template. To clarify the meaning of the responses, I arranged the descriptors in a way that allowed us to examine what other descriptors were used for the same person, and extrapolate the most likely meaning of those responses. Without this context, potentially significant

errors in meaning would have occurred. To illustrate, consider the UR "*lives in the present, without thinking about the future*". This may refer to someone mindful and grounded in the present (mapping perhaps on Emotional Stability), or someone who seizes the day and is spontaneous and carefree (akin to elements of Extraversion), or someone who lacks goal-orientation and is careless about achievement (low on Conscientiousness). By looking at other descriptors of the same person, I noted that participants also referred to those persons as being "*ignorant*", and "*backward in their thinking*". The context clarified that the response "*lives in the present, without thinking about the future*" refers to an undesirable trait, and was therefore matched to the descriptors of someone who lacks foresight. By the end of this stage, I had added 178 labels that represented concepts expressed in lengthier phrases or descriptors, totaling 1178 labels.

Consultations. I consulted with laypersons and professionals from the four countries, which I refer to as "cultural experts", in all the phases of analysis. I describe the procedures here although they do not technically form a stand-alone phase. Cultural experts were consulted to clarify terms unfamiliar to the authors and to validate my understanding of other terms. They were asked to review unclear vernacular descriptors, provide one or more definitions, synonyms and antonyms, if any. The definitions were then reviewed and discussed between these experts and the first author. Most terms were local vernacular variations, while a few were idiosyncratic expressions used in some but not all countries. When a term or label had more than one definition across the different Arabic vernaculars, all definitions were noted.

Iterative clustering. In this phase the first author conceptually organized related labels into facets – semantically-related traits. For instance, "*sad*" and "*depressed*" were assigned to the facet of Sad. Facets were then grouped together into subclusters representing medium levels of abstraction. All subclusters were defined and operationalized so that they were as

homogeneous as possible, and as differentiated as possible with other subclusters. For example, the facet of *Depressed* was joined with facets of *Hopeless* and *Self-Victimized* in the subcluster of *Depression*. Then, subclusters were grouped into broader personality dimensions, but each subcluster was defined in a way to differentiate it from other related subclusters. Following my example, *Depression,* and the *related* subclusters of *Anxiety, Depth, Dissatisfaction, Emotional Vulnerability, Impulsivity, Maturity, Moodiness, Self-Esteem*, and *Temper-Control* were subsumed in the cluster of *Emotional Stability*. The organization took into consideration the pattern of co-occurrence in the data, and the location of facets and domains from existing Western personality models. At the time of analysis, I did not yet have clear results from the Arab-Levant model derived from MSA Arabic, and thus it was not taken into consideration. The organization of labels, facets, subclusters, and clusters was reviewed over a period of six months by the authors (one Lebanese professor of psychology, one Lebanese professor of linguistics, and one Dutch professor of psychology) through frequent reflective meetings. Accordingly, I adjusted the organization until consensus was reached. Table 3 shows the final structure.

Quantitative analysis of etic model. Data of the IPIP ratings were analyzed using IBM SPSS 19 and R Studio. Analysis of the factor structure was conducted using three methods of exploratory factor analysis (EFA): scree plot, maximum likelihood analysis, and parallel analysis. The suitability of EFA was determined using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test.

Table 3

Structure of Clusters, Subclusters, and Facets and Frequencies of Responses

Cluster and Subcluster	Facets	Translated Example
Soft Heartedness (3040)		
Altruism Versus Egoism (770)	Altruistic (45)	He thinks of everyone else, and last of himself (Leb)
	Generous (276)	Has a generous soul (Leb)
	Protective (53)	Fears for my wellbeing (Syr)
	Self-Centered (238)	Thinks there is no one in the world but him (Jor)
	Stingy (158)	Really stingy, wants to account for each cent (Pal)
Empathy (1092)	Appreciative (64)	He appreciates the value of people (Leb)
	Caring (38)	Cares about my feelings (Leb)
	Considerate (123)	Feels when others have special circumstances (Jor)
	Empathetic/Sympathetic (190)	Good listener (Leb)
	Forgiving (68)	Does not retaliate if others have wronged him (Syr)
	Helpful (205)	Likes to help others (Pal)
	Inconsiderate (29)	Indifferent of others (Syr)
	Sacrificial (34)	She sacrifices a lot for her parents (Pal)
	Supportive (96)	Always there when I need her (Jor)
	Understanding (245)	He is understanding when I forget my books (Syr)
Good Heartedness (1098)	Affectionate (462)	Affections comes from deep in his heart (Syr)
	Cold Hearted (30)	Able to see you cry, and not even wipe your tears (Pal)
	Kind (153)	Treats everyone with kindness (Jor)
	Kind-Hearted (197)	Is kind-hearted to the extent he is too innocent (Leb)
	Loving (203)	Loves me (Syr)
	Tolerant (53)	Accepts others as they are (Leb)

Mistrust (80)	Distrustful (42)	Thinks everyone will cheat him (Syr)
	Innocent/Naïve (21)	Too nice, and gullible (Syr)
	Trusting (17)	He trust everything that his loved ones tell him (Pal)
Positive Social Relatedness (2321)		
Family Orientation (173)	Family-Oriented (174)	Loyal to family (Leb)
Good Manners (145)	Well Mannered (145)	She behaves with refined manners (Jor)
Guidance (246)	Advising (55)	Gives advice (Leb)
	Encouraging (20)	Encourages children to learn and live life (Leb)
	Facilitating (57)	Supports people and makes them competitive (Syr)
	Guiding/Teaching (114)	Acts like a role model (Jor)
Interpersonal Flexibility (283)	Adaptable/Flexible (20)	She behaves with others according to what the situations requires (Leb)
	Cooperative (136)	He can give and take in a discussion (Pal)
	Flexible (14)	He is willing to back down if mistaken (Pal)
	Obstinate (113)	Stubborn that you cannot change her mind (Jor)
Likability/Approachability (1073)	Amiable (661)	Is liked by everyone (Syr)
	Annoying/Obnoxious (119)	Annoying (Leb)
	Cold/Dry (29)	Dry personality (Jor)
	Respectful (159)	Respects me a lot (Leb)
	Warm (105)	Close to the heat/approachable (Syr)
Meddlesome Behavior (80)	Clingy (4)	Clingy (Jor)
	Gossiper (45)	Her gossiping can destroy families (Syr)
	Meddlesome (31)	Respects boundaries (Leb)

Social Intelligence (303)	Behaves Eloquently (91)	Is sensitive when behaving in different situations (Pal)
	Charismatic (61)	Calm but with a strong presence (Syr)
	Socially Perceptive (60)	He knows how to behave with others (Leb)
	Talks Eloquently (91)	He is smooth, mostly talks in English (Leb)
Social Involvement (17)	Socially Active (17)	Activist/active in the community (Pal)
Integrity (1786)		
Fairness (174)	Egalitarian (79)	Discriminates against people (Leb)
	Fair/Just (95)	Gives people their right, but also holds them accountable (Leb)
Honor (183)	Honorable (38)	If a situation touches upon his honor, he will defend himself in a self-respecting way (Leb)
	Respectable (145)	Has a respected position in society (Jor)
Interpersonal Transparency (691)	Deceitful (348)	Two-faced (Pal)
	Exploitative (72)	Doesn't ask about you, unless he wants something (Leb)
	Flatterer (4)	He sucks up to the boss (Jot)
	Sincere (267)	He says what is in his heart and mind (Leb)
Loyalty (193)	Loyal (193)	Can build relationships based on loyalty (Jor)
Nationalism (33)	Nationalistic (33)	Loyal to serving the country and people (Leb)
Principled (229)	Ethical (129)	He is committed to ethical and moral principles (Pal)
	Of Lineage (57)	Comes from a respectable, religious and known family (Pal)
	Unethical (43)	He accepts briberies (Leb)
Spirituality (168)	Faithful (108)	Religion is important in his life (Pal)
	Pure (2)	Pure and spiritual (Leb)

	Religiously Dutiful (58)	He likes to raise a Christian family (Leb)
Trustworthiness (115)	Discreet (45)	Keeps secrets (Leb)
	Trustworthy (70)	Lies under oath (Pal)
Humility versus Dominance (1746)		
Dominance (679)	Assertive (357)	Defends his stance (Syr)
	Authoritarian (190)	Imposes his orders without reasoning (Pal)
	Democratic (41)	Does not elicit the opinions of the minority (Jor)
	Influential (23)	Convincing (Leb)
	Machiavellian (6)	Follows the rule that "the end justifies the mean" (Syr)
	Overbearing (18)	Scary person (Syr)
	Submissive/Passive (44)	Obeys first, and then asks questions (Leb)
Hostility (374)	Caustic (11)	Sharp-tongued (Pal)
	Conflict-Avoidant (21)	She doesn't have issues with anyone (Syr)
	Critical (36)	Criticizes others (Syr)
	Denigrating (32)	Mocks others (Syr)
	Hostile (76)	Uses hurtful words with people (Pal)
	Indirectly Hostile (92)	Talks in a passive-aggressive way (Leb)
	Provocative (41)	He likes to provoke people (Jor)
	Spiteful (65)	Does not like to see others be successful (Leb)
Pomposity (537)	Haughty (349)	Likes to show he is better off than others (Pal)
	Humble (123)	Does not like honorifics and flatteries (Syr)
	Pretentious (65)	He made people like him based on pretenses and not actual success (Pal)
Satiability (156)	Complacent/Fatalistic (86)	Lives on providence (Jor)
	Grateful (3)	Does not deny or forget favors done to him (Syr)

	Greedy (67)	Is greedy (Leb)
Conscientiousness (1604)		
Achievement Orientation (322)	Ambitious (173)	Ambitious (Pal)
	Self-Improving (46)	Doesn't work on improving himself (Jor)
	Successful And Achieved (103)	A person who is successful in their lives (Jor)
Competence (79)	Competent(62)	Capable (Leb)
	Skillful (17)	Skillful (Syr)
Dedication (184)	Hard Working (68)	Works from the heart (Leb)
	Invested (116)	Serious in his work (Pal)
Dutifulness (325)	Dependent (49)	Dependent (Leb)
	Lazy (74)	Lazy (Syr)
	Reliable (158)	Responsible (Syr)
	Studious (44)	Studious (Pal)
Future Orientation (164)	Goal-Oriented (143)	He thinks about the future a lot (Leb)
	Purposeless (21)	Lost (Jor)
Meticulousness (118)	Fastidious (55)	Pays attention to detail (Leb)
	Meticulous (8)	He is not accurate (Leb)
	Negligent (55)	Negligent (Jor)
Orderliness (184)	Disarrayed (34)	Chaotic (Syr)
	Orderly (150)	Not organized (Jor)
Perseverance (92)	Perseverant (92)	Worked as a child and made it from scratch (Pal)
Resource Efficiency (136)	Efficient (46)	Punctual (Syr)
	Inefficient (19)	Wastes a lot of time (Leb)

	Pragmatic (34)	Pragmatic (Jor)
	Resourceful (25)	Manages well (Syr)
	Wasteful (12)	Spends without care (Syr)
Extraversion (1592)		
Boredom Tolerance (9)	Easily Bored (9)	Is always looking for change, and hates routine (Pal)
Captivating (76)	Attention-Seeking (9)	She likes to attract attention of others (Pal)
	Dull (17)	Bores people (Leb)
	Entertaining (51)	Is a lot of fun to go out with her (Leb)
Courage (70)	Brave (49)	It was brave of her to make this move, despite everyone advising her against it (Leb)
	Coward (21)	Gets easily scared (Jor)
Energy (95)	Energetic (83)	Is dynamic in life (Syr)
	Slow(Tempo) (12)	Slow in everything, even talking and walking (Jor)
Expressiveness (232)	Calm (148)	Calm (Pal)
	Exaggerating (3)	Show off (Jor)
	Expressive (11)	She opens up to me (Pal)
	Obnoxious (4)	Has a loud voice (Jor)
	Passionate (28)	Romantic (Jor)
	Reserved (38)	Shy (Jor)
Humor (203)	Funny (197)	He is passionate about laughter (Leb)
	Playful (6)	Plays practical jokes (Pal)

Materialism (103)	Appearance Conscious (52)	Likes to appear generous but is actually stingy (Jor)
	Materialistic (51)	His principles are based on material gain (Jor)
Pleasure-Seeking (201)	Fun/Life Loving (201)	Lives his life joyfully (Syr)
Positive Emotionality (213)	Cheerful (107)	Spreads cheer wherever he goes (Syr)
	Frowny (14)	Always a frown on his face (Leb)
	Happy (15)	Always happy (Jor)
	Optimistic (61)	Is positive, often more than he should be (Syr)
	Pessimistic (16)	Has a black view of things (Pal)
Rebelliousness (22)	Rebellious (22)	Has a defiant personality (Pal)
Sociability (368)	Communicative/Talkative (74)	Doesn't talk a lot (Leb)
	Outgoing (81)	He loves gatherings and outings (Syr)
	Sociable (146)	Likes to socialize with people (Jor)
	Socially Introverted (67)	Closed off (Syr)
Emotional Stability (1481)		
Anxiety (117)	Anxious (5)	Anxious (Pal)
	Obsessive (4)	Obsessed (Syr)
	Patient (83)	Cannot wait for what she wants (Leb)
	Worrier (25)	Worries all the time (Syr)
Depression/Sadness (48)	Depressed (41)	Sad (Pal)
	Hopeless (2)	Despondent (Syr)
	Self-Victimized (5)	She thinks of herself as unlucky (Leb)
Depth (108)	Deep (8)	Is rich with substance (Leb)
	Superficial/Lame (100)	Is concerned with silly, superficial matters (Jor)

Dissatisfaction (71)	Complaining (28)	Is always whining (Jor)
	Demanding (43)	She doesn't approve of anything (Leb)
Emotional Vulnerability vs. Ego Strength (218)	Egocentric (5)	She takes everything personally (Leb)
	Self-Controlled (38)	Likes to keep feelings to himself (Syr)
	Sensitive (113)	Becomes upset at the slightest word (Syr)
	Unstable (62)	A little crazy (Leb)
Impulsivity (74)	Impulsive (58)	Does not think before he acts (Pal)
	Self-Controlled (16)	Makes decisions only after deliberation (Jor)
Inattention (27)	Absent-Minded (12)	Constantly absent minded (Pal)
	Focused (15)	Always distracted (Jor)
Maturity (349)	Balanced (54)	Balanced (Jor)
	Childish/Pampered (35)	Acts like a child (Leb)
	Experienced (51)	Wise (Jor)
	Mature (54)	Mature emotionally and mentally (Pal)
	Petty (23)	Does not stoop to pettiness (Leb)
	Self-Aware (33)	Lacks self-evaluation and self-critique (Syr)
	Stable (99)	Has secured a future for himself (Leb)
Moodiness (89)	Self-Contradicting (12)	He thinks one thing, and says another (Syr)
	Temperamental (77)	Changes mood so it is difficult to predict what she will do or decide next (Leb)
Self Esteem (97)	Confident/Self-Respectful (97)	Confident in himself (Syr)
Temper Control (283)	Hot Headed (283)	Gets easily angered at small things (Leb)

Intellect (1012)		
Epistemological Inquisition (38)	Analytical (7)	Has critical thinking (Leb)
	Inquisitive (31)	Has a curiosity for knowledge (Pal)
Intelligence (465)	Intelligent (367)	Smart, but doesn't know how to apply it (Leb)
	Unintelligent (98)	Doesn't comprehend the lessons well (Syr)
Knowledge And Competence (401)	Academically Oriented (138)	Has a university degree (Pal)
	Cultured (164)	Can speak many languages (Leb)
	Farsighted (8)	Has deep insight into the future (Syr)
	Ignorant (9)	Illiterate (Leb)
	Knowledgeable (82)	Whatever you ask him, he can answer you (Leb)
Rationality (108)	Emotionally-Minded (4)	Has a sixth sense (Leb)
	Rational (100)	He is logical in problem solving (Pal)
	Realistic (4)	Not realistic (Syr)
Openness (504)		
Conventionalism Vs Progressiveness (190)	Backward (27)	Stuck to old ways (Leb)
	Emancipated/Individualistic (47)	She is free from the complexes of society (Leb)
	Progressive (33)	Secular (Syr)
	Traditional (39)	She likes to follow tradition (Syr)
	Unconventional/Unique (44)	She is different in all aspects of her life (Jor)
Creativity (54)	Creative (29)	His ideas are innovative and new (Pal)
	Imaginative (8)	Has a wide imagination (Pal)
	Talented (17)	Has many talents (Pal)
Openness To Experience (120)	Open (60)	She is open despite her adherence to Islam (Leb)

	Open To Activity (60)	Likes art and music (Pal)
Openness To Ideas/ Opinions/ & Values (140)	Closed-Minded (15)	Limited (Leb)
	Fanatic (50)	Fanatic towards a party or religion (Pal)
	Open Minded (23)	Her thinking is broad and open ideas (Syr)
	Open To Values (43)	Does not judge people who are different (Jor)
	Perceptive (9)	Is only able to have one point of view (Leb)

Note. The numbers in parentheses refer to the frequency of responses within the cluster, subcluster and facet. Pal = Palestine; Jor = Jordan; Leb = Lebanon; Syr = Syria.

Results

Emically-Derived Personality Dimensions

Through the manual procedure described, I reduced the personality relevant descriptors from 17,283 utterances to nine clusters of personality. I excluded about 11% of responses that were clearly not relevant to personality. I also excluded responses that were *possibly* relevant to personality, but after consultations, I was still unable to confidently assign them to a personality dimensions. As noted in Table 2, they were either too ambiguous or focused on relationships or feelings to the extent that I could not extrapolate personality characteristics, or referred to moral judgments, curses and terms specific to a region or gender. From the remaining 15,086 personality-relevant responses, I obtained nine broad personality clusters. In order of decreasing size, they were named: *Soft-Heartedness, Positive Social Relatedness, Integrity, Humility versus Dominance, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Intellect, and Openness*. Most of the clusters consisted of 4 subclusters, and the maximum number of subclusters was 11 (Extraversion and Emotional Stability), totaling 63 subclusters.

The largest cluster of *Soft Heartedness* encompassed desirable internal characteristics of being helpful, kind, affectionate, compassionate, heedful, and protective, as well as selflessly giving to others, and being sacrificial. This stood in contrast with being cold-hearted, unforgiving, paranoid, self-centered, stingy, and inconsiderate of others' circumstances.

Positive Social Relatedness defined how a person relates to others (friends, neighbors, family, and strangers), beyond the gregariousness aspects described in Extraversion. It referred to someone who is generally approachable, easy to interact with, warm, respectful of others, has good manners, is cooperative, and "gives and takes". Additionally, it included

being socially savvy and diplomatic in conflict resolution, behaving and talking eloquently to people, understanding social nuances, facilitating and guiding others, and being a nurturing family person who invests time in their children and spouses. This is in contrast to someone who is not respectful in relationships, difficult to get along with, meddlesome, tactless, lacks diplomatic skills, and has a heavy and annoying presence.

In *Integrity*, the most prominent descriptors were of interpersonal transparency and sincerity, behaving according to a set of ethical principles, being honorable, respectable in the eyes of the community, loyal, trustworthy, fair in dealing with others, and having a sense of patriotism. Integrity terms included having religious morals and good familial upbringing (presumed to bring about integrity). On the opposite pole was someone who is unprincipled, not respected, does not follow morals, and is unfair and hypocritical.

Humility versus Dominance is a cluster that despite its many responses had a narrow meaning. In terms of dominance, utterances ranged from undesirable behaviors of actively seeking and abusing power, being tyrannical, imposing opinions and orders on others, following a "divide and conquer" mentality, and being hostile, denigrating, and passive-aggressive. On the opposite pole was someone who is easily swayed, avoidant of conflict at all costs, and a follower rather than leader. Somewhere in the middle were desirable characteristics of being assertive, decisive, democratic, giving credit when it's due, and being an opinion leader with a "strong personality". *Humility*, reflected someone who is modest, and grateful for what they have (and at the extreme end, fatalistic and reliant on divine providence), and not haughty and greedy.

Conscientiousness descriptors involved being ambitious, goal-oriented, invested, dutiful, orderly, reliable, perseverant, resilient, efficient, competent, and resourceful. This is opposed to being lazy, unorganized, irresponsible, unsuccessful, and not invested towards goals.

Extraversion mostly referred to someone who is outgoing, talkative, bubbly (as opposed to calm), funny, playful, often smiley, enjoys the "pleasures of life", takes risks, is rebellious and has low tolerance for boredom. This person is the charm of the party, as opposed to someone who does not like to be around people, is calm, reserved, does not like joking, and is not concerned with his/her looks.

Emotional Stability described a person who maintains a balanced life, is mature and takes things seriously, is in control of their anger and emotional reactions, and is patient and deliberate before acting, as opposed to someone who is petty, childish, superficial, easily angered, overly sensitive, demanding, moody, sad, and dejected.

Intellect was about being smart, knowledgeable about various topics, academically-oriented, sophisticated, and logical, as opposed to lacking intellectual curiosity and education.

Openness largely reflected someone who is emancipated from social norms, is unique, and liberal in the values, is open to diverse ideas, values, and experiences, can appreciate others' perspectives, and is creative and fond of music, sports, arts, travels, and discoveries. This is in contrast to a person who is described as conventional, with a preference for tradition, is concerned with negative repercussions of going "against the stream", is close-minded to differing perspectives, and fanatical about his or her beliefs.

Etically Imposed Five Factor Model

The scree plot of a Principal Component Analysis showed a clear decrease in eigenvalues after the sixth factor, whereas a parallel analysis suggested the extraction of seven components. Based on this, I extracted and examined solutions of 5, 6, and 7 components using maximum likelihood, subjected to varimax rotation. This procedure was applied on the 55-item questionnaire that included items of soft-heartedness and relational

harmony, and the 50-item IPIP questionnaire. Since the 5 additional items showed poor internal consistently (α = .46), I focused on the results of the 50-item IPIP presented below.

IPIP with 50 items. In this sample, alpha coefficients on non-standardized data were comparable with those obtained from the English version, with .74 for Extraversion, .73 for Agreeableness, .80 for Conscientiousness, .86 for Emotional Stability, and .74 for Intellect/Openness. I then subjected the IPIP questionnaire to a principal component analysis using varimax rotation, to test whether it would produce the lexical big five. The factor loadings, as illustrated in Table 4, yielded the big five components Emotional Stability (ES), Conscientiousness (C), and Openness/Intellect (O/I). These scales had very good internal consistencies of .86 (ES), .81 (C), and .75 (O/I). However, Agreeableness (A) and Extraversion (E) did not emerge as separate factors. Instead, their items dispersed into two components. In one component, items referred to someone who is comfortable with people and tends to be conversational and sociable (E), while at the same time makes people feel comfortable, and is considerate of others and their feelings (A). This component was named *Positive Relatedness*, because it was very similar to the qualitatively derived factor of Positive Social Relatedness in terms of getting along with others socially by combining elements of agreeableness and sociability. Interestingly, the factor also included secondary loadings of ES items referring to feeling relaxed and not sad, suggesting that emotional stability also plays a role in this factor. Its internal consistency was acceptable (α = .80). The other component, *Social Withdrawal,* also had acceptable internal consistency (α = .69), and described a person who keeps in the background, lacks interest and concern about others, and is not talkative, expressive, and sociable.

Table 4.

Factor Loadings for Exploratory Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation

Item	I	II	III	IV	V
ES_Get irritated easily.	**0.79**				
ES_Get upset easily.	**0.79**				
ES_Am easily disturbed.	**0.78**				
ES_Have frequent mood swings.	**0.70**				
ES_Often feel blue.	**0.69**				
ES_Get stressed out easily.	**0.67**				
ES_Change my mood a lot.	**0.66**				
ES_Worry about things.	**0.54**				
ES_Seldom feel blue.	**-0.38**	0.41			
ES_Am relaxed most of the time.	**-0.49**	0.43			
E_Talk to a lot of different people at		**0.66**			
A_Make people feel at ease.		**0.58**			
E_Feel comfortable around people.		**0.57**			
E_Start conversations.		**0.57**			
A_Feel others' emotions.		**0.54**			
E_Am the life of the party		**0.51**			
A_Sympathize with others' feelings.		**0.50**			
E_Don't mind being the center of		**0.48**			
A_Take time out for others.		**0.47**			
A_Am interested in people.		**0.43**			
A_Have a soft heart.		**0.40**			
C_Make a mess of things.			**0.67**		
C_Shirk my duties.			**0.67**		
C_Leave my belongings around.			**0.66**		
C_Often forget to put things back in their proper place.			**0.60**		
A_Insult people.			**0.52**		
C_I procrastinate decisions			**0.44**		
C_Am exacting in my work.			**-0.50**		
C_Get chores done right away.			**-0.53**		
C_Follow a schedule.			**-0.57**		
C_Like order.			**-0.62**		
OI_Am full of ideas.				**0.61**	
OI_Have a vivid imagination.				**0.55**	
OI_Use difficult words.				**0.54**	
OI_Have a rich vocabulary.				**0.51**	
OI_Am quick to understand things.				**0.45**	
OI_Have excellent ideas.		0.47		**0.44**	
C_Pay attention to details.				**0.40**	
OI_Do not have a good imagination.				**-0.50**	
OI_I avoid philosophical arguments				**-0.52**	
OI_Have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.				**-0.55**	

OI_Am not interested in abstract ideas.	**-0.63**	
E_Am quiet around strangers.		**0.62**
E_Don't like to draw attention to myself.		**0.60**
E_Don't talk a lot.		**0.55**
E_Keep in the background.		**0.48**
A_Am not really interested in others.		**0.45**
A_Feel little concern for others.		**0.45**
E_I bottle up my feelings		**0.44**
A_Am not interested in other people's		**0.41**

Note. Factor loadings on the same factor are in bold. Loadings less than .4 are not included. Letters indicate the original factor loading as per Big Five Markers in Goldberg, L. R. (1992). The development of markers for the Big-Five factor structure. Psychological Assessment, 4, 26-42. E=Extraversion, A=Agreeableness, OI=Openness to experience, C= Conscientiousness, ES=Emotional Stability.

Discussion

To my knowledge, this is the first time that implicit personality conceptions in Arab countries are examined as such. By asking participants to describe various target persons in vernacular Arabic, and subjecting them to rigorous qualitative analysis, I arrived at nine emic personality clusters - Soft-Heartedness, Positive Social Relatedness, Integrity, Humility versus Dominance, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Intellect, and Openness. In parallel, participants rated their own personality on an etic inventory that measures the Big Five factors of personality. The organization of items in a five-factor solution replicated Emotional Stability, Conscientiousness, and Openness, while Agreeableness and Extraversion blended to form a desirable factor of *Social Relatedness* and a factor of *Social Withdrawal.*

Convergence and Divergence of Between Emic and Etic Approaches

Table 5 lists the emic personality dimensions that emerged in the emic, qualitative part, and their counterparts (or lack thereof) in the etic instrument. There are 17 personality subclusters common to both columns, indicating shared aspects of personality that were

found using either the etic or the emic approach. Conversely, there are 47 subclusters tapped only by the emic approach, which are not covered by the etic instrument. There are no dimensions unique to the etic instrument. Interestingly, the divergence in content is mostly noted in personality concepts that are relevant to relationships and to local values. More specifically, Soft-Heartedness, Positive Social Relatedness, and Extraversion**,** which make up about 45% of qualitative responses and correspond to the etic dimensions of Agreeableness and Extraversion, reflect additional characteristics and values that are relevant to local norms and culture. Similarly, Humility (vs. Dominance) and Integrity, which do not have a counterpart in the IPIP, also have dimensions relevant to local values. Finally, Dominance being a cluster by itself, may also be an extension of (dis)agreeableness. Each is discussed separately in the following sections.

Table 5

Shared and Non-Shared Aspects between Etic and Emic Personality Dimensions

Factor	Aspects of Big Five	Cluster	Aspects of 9 Emic Dimensions
Agreeableness and Extraversion (Social Relatedness)	**Soft-heartedness**	Soft-Heartedness	**Good Heartedness**
	Sympathy		**Empathy**
	Altruism		**Altruism Versus Egoism**
	-		Mistrust
	Approachability	Positive Social Relatedness	**Likability/Approachability**
	-		Social Intelligence
	-		Interpersonal Flexibility
	-		Guidance
	-		Family Orientation
	-		Good Manners
	-		Meddlesome Behavior
	-		Social Involvement
	-	Integrity	Interpersonally Transparent
	-		Principled
	-		Loyalty
	-		Honor
	-		Fairness
	-		Spirituality
	-		Trustworthiness
	-		Nationalism

	- - - -	Humility Vs. Dominance	Dominance Pomposity Hostility Satiability
Agreeableness and Extraversion (Social Withdrawal)	**Sociability (inverse)** **Quietness** - - - - - **Reservation** - - -	Extraversion	**Sociability** **Expressiveness** Positive Emotionality Humor Pleasure-Seeking Materialism Energy **Captivating** Courage Rebelliousness Boredom Tolerance
Emotional Stability	- **Irritability** **Stress** **Worrying** - - **Moodiness** - - **Sadness** -	Emotional Stability	Maturity **Temper Control** **Emotional Vul. Vs. Ego Strength** **Anxiety** Depth Self Esteem **Moodiness** Impulsivity Dissatisfaction **Depression/Sadness** Inattention

Conscientiousness	**Dutifulness** **Responsibility** - **Orderliness** - - - - -	Conscientiousness	**Dutifulness** Achievement Orientation Dedication **Orderliness** Future Orientation Resource Efficiency Meticulousness Perseverance Competence
Openness/Intellect	- - - **Imagination** **Intellectualism** - - -	Openness/ Intellect	Conventionalism Versus Progressiveness Openness To Ideas/Opinions/Values Openness To Experience **Creativity** **Intelligence** Knowledge And Competence Rationality Epistemological Inquisition

Note. Shared aspects are in boldface and dashes (-) indicate a non-shared aspect. Clusters and their subclusters are in order of size.

Emic Aspects of Agreeableness. Soft-Heartedness and Positive Social Relatedness are the closest counterparts to (the etic factor of) Agreeableness - a group of traits centering on cooperation and pleasantness (Graziano & Tobin, 2009). By comparing the two columns in Table 5, I note that both Soft-Heartedness and Agreeableness refer to a soft, forgiving, considerate, giving, and helpful person. About 97% of responses in Soft-Heartedness are subsumed by these shared components. Similarly, Positive Social Relatedness and Agreeableness share a subdimension of being pleasant and approachable (Likability/Approachability subcluster), which accounts for 46% of responses within this cluster. This exercise shows that (etic) Agreeableness is well represented in the emically derived Relatedness factors. However, about 54% of Positive Social Relatedness is not covered by Agreeableness as measured in the IPIP[15]. These non-shared subclusters are *Social Intelligence, Guidance, Family Orientation, Good Manners, Meddlesome Behavior, and Social Involvement*, with two thirds of URs included in the first three subclusters.

Social Intelligence is about being savvy and charismatic in social situations, picking up social cues and behaving accordingly, following social conventions and duties (e.g., generously welcoming visitors), being a suave talker, and eliciting social respect from others. Guidance entails facilitating the goals of others through advice and constructive criticism, cheering them onwards, fostering healthy competitiveness in a group, relaying own experience as a teaching tool, and being an inspiration and role-model. Family Orientation means being a "family person", loving and respecting parents, and prioritizing spouse and children above all else.

The content of these subclusters reflects the emphasis on values of family and hierarchy within the Arab-Levant culture. One of the most consistent findings in the Arab-

[15] Goldberg (1990) also includes markers such as trustful, flexible, courteous, generous, which are shared by Soft Heartedness and Positive Social Relatedness. However, these facets were not covered by the IPIP used in this study because we selected 50 items from the original 100-items, which may have narrowed the scope of the instrument.

Levant is that family is a central value, and a source of support on several levels (Kazarian, 2005). The Arab-Levant countries have underdeveloped social security, public education, or social benefits in cases of illness, unemployment, poverty, in addition to intermittent conflict and economic unpredictability. In this context, the family becomes the primary source of social and financial security, as well as patronage, power, and prestige. Hence, it is important to describe one's behavior towards family and the extent to which he/she is willing to spend time and money on preserving the family and its individuals, instead of being concerned with own, usually hedonistic, needs. This is exemplified in responses such as "He spends time with family, not a womanizer", or "Deprives herself of necessities, so she spends money on the kids".

Descriptors of Social Intelligence and Guidance are also relevant in the context of the hierarchical society and family in the Arab-Levant. People are expected to have unequal power and opinion depending on their position in a system. For example, within the system of the traditional extended family, the elder patriarch is perceived as the head of the family and has the most say in family matters. Remaining family members have differential power depending on a complex equation involving their kinship with the patriarch, gender, age, and other factors (Kazarian, 2005). Similarly unequal statuses exist in other groups such as village communities. Additionally, hierarchy is taken very seriously with respect to rankings in profession (e.g., teacher or physician), social or religious roles (e.g., Sheikh or Father), and other honorifics. It is therefore essential to be socially intelligent and aware of others' relative positions and titles. Social intelligence reduces the chances of disrespecting others by overlooking rank, and thus increases positive social experiences and mutual respect. Moreover, because relationships are perceived as unequal, knowledge is expected to be hierarchically passed downwards by those who are in positions of authority, whether in the

family or society at large. Descriptions of whether a person is willing to guide others are therefore relevant.

Dominance as Extreme Disagreeableness. One of the aspects of Agreeableness was sufficiently large and conceptually unique that I grouped it into a dimension by itself, namely Dominance. In early phases of data analysis, some aspects of Dominance (e.g., hostility, submissiveness) were included in Positive Social Relatedness, as the opposite pole of cooperation and flexibility. However, consultations and reflective meetings highlighted that Dominance concepts were not only about being disagreeable, in the sense of non-cooperative. Instead, it was about humiliating others, overpowering them, and resolving conflicts dictatorially. The descriptors had a hierarchical nature, which went beyond lack of cooperation and inflexibility among peers (as noted in Soft-Heartedness and Positive Social Relatedness). On its opposite pole were peoplewho were submissive, fatalistic, opinionless, and "weak", and *not* people who are cooperative, flexible, and gentle. In my sample's mental conceptions, being cooperative and being acquiescent were not one and the same. Dominance, in addition to being the fourth largest cluster, was not on a continuum of cooperative versus antagonistic, but rather on a continuum of weak versus strong.

Dominance may also be a cultural accent of Agreeableness, in line with the hierarchical culture of Arab-Levant society, described earlier. In the lexical study on MSA described in Chapter 2, I found that there was a distinct factor representing desirable agreeableness and acquiescence (a type of virtuous yielding named "Righteousness"), and another factor representing undesirable disagreeableness (featuring hostility and arrogance and named "Dominance"). Both seemed as culture-specific manifestation of agreeableness. It remains to be seen if the dominance concepts derived from this model (rather than MSA) will

form a separate factor when tested quantitatively, or whether they will merge with Agreeableness or Humility.

Other personality studies also found similar concepts in different societies. A study in Mexico found that the counterpart of Family Orientation (referred to as Family Centered Abnegation) was the only indigenous factor that was not subsumed under the Big Five in a joint factor analysis (Ortiz et al., 2007). In an analysis of personality descriptors relevant to social relatedness in South Africa, Valchev (2014) found that transmitting knowledge and giving guidance (summarized as Facilitating) were also salient concepts among the Black ethno-cultural group, and called for an expansion of the etic FFM to incorporate this dimension. Finally, studies that examined the Chinese factor of Interpersonal Relatedness jointly with the Big Five, supported that this is a stand-alone factor, which reflects additional components like social harmony, tradition, and reciprocity, valued in Chinese culture (Cheung et al., 2001).

These culturally-relevant dimensions would have been lost, had I used only one an imposed-etic instrument at the expense of an indigenous approach. The common thread across these two clusters is that they exist within a social and relational context. The noted studies in South Africa, China, and the Philippines that have used emic and etic approaches also found that social-relational aspects of personality are broad and include culturally-important aspects.

In sum, by fitting an etic model such as the Big Five in a new culture, I found that most of its factors replicated well. By using an emic approach I found nine personality dimensions, most of which were identifiable in the Big Five. The etic approach was informative because it affirmed that the ubiquitous five factors could be applied to the Arab Levant. At the same time, the etic instrument was limiting because it missed personality dimensions that were later unveiled through the emic approach, and it also did not inform

why relational factors of Agreeableness and Extraversion did not load as expected. The emic approach compensated these caveats. It revealed the personality constructs not covered by the Big Five, which made sense within the local culture. It also showed the breadth and depth of local Agreeableness concepts, which helped to partly explain, why the respective IPIP factor did not load as expected.

Integrity and the Role of Values

In the Arab-Levant, integrity-related personality descriptors became more salient as I changed approaches from etic to emic. Importantly, emic studies in different parts of the world extend personality structure in the direction of core cultural values. In the etic approach where I measure personality through a Big Five tool, Integrity is not a discernible factor. When I investigate personality psycholexically using a restricted set of MSA dictionary words, some parts of Integrity emerged (Authors, 2015). They were constricted to honor-related terms, but they impacted the expression of the lexical factors. When the emic approach was applied on free-descriptors in spoken Arabic, Integrity emerged as a large cluster. In line with my previous findings, not all facets were shared with the etic models. In the Big Five, there is no separate factor for these concepts, but some are subsumed under agreeableness (e.g., honest). Even if I had used an etic instrument that measures integrity, say the HEXACO-PR, not all indigenous aspects could be subsumed by it (e.g., nationalism). In fact, my Integrity cluster includes conceptions that are traditionally within the realm of personality and found in other studies (e.g., trustworthiness), and some that are culturally-relevant and go beyond the traditional realms of personality. Notably, the idea of being raised in a good family, believing in a deity, and being loyal to an in-group are not personality traits in the strict definition (Saucier, 1997). Whether they are a manifestation of social desirability, or values, or highly evaluative tendencies, it does not change the fact that they emerged when

people described personality. What seems to be a recurring phenomenon in personality studies in the Arab-Levant is that values – widely respected dispositions that transcend behaviors - are part and parcel of personality.

Conclusion and Future Directions

The study in this chapter had some limitations. The use of questions about different people may have influenced the saliency of some personality descriptors more than others. For instance, when asked to describe an authority figure, it is more likely that participants will talk about behaviors related to authority, such as humility, more so than behaviors related to, say, friendship. However, the variability in questions allowed different descriptors to emerge, even if some descriptors were more likely to be activated by specific questions (Tett & Guterman, 2000). Another possible critique is that the non-shared space between the models was partly because the target persons were different (self in the personality instrument, and others in the free descriptors). However, this is an unlikely explanation because studies have shown that factor structures of personality ratings remains stable across observers and raters (McCrae & Costa, 1987). Therefore, comparisons discrepancies between the two approaches could rest on different target persons. Finally, a limitation worth mentioning relates to the method of comparing between the emic and etic models. This approach ultimately rests on "eyeballing" the dimensions in the two and making comparisons, which could be prone to biases such as subjectivity. This can be addressed in future studies aimed at validating the qualitative model and comparing it to big five markers psychometrically. Subsequent studies could also focus on the development of items that measure the facets and subclusters of this model, and test their relationships in a sample of self and peer-ratings. This will provide a quantitative validation of the current model.

In this chapter, I examined personality concepts in four Arab countries using etic and emic methods, and found that all etic personality concepts appear in the indigenous model but the space occupied by social-relational aspects of personality (particularly notions of family, hierarchy, and integrity) are larger in the indigenous model than in the etic model. In the next chapter, we discuss how such combined methodology can be generalized to language-based personality studies so that a more comprehensive view of personality and culture is obtained.

4

Integrating Global and Local Perspectives in Psycholexical Studies: A GloCal Approach

Chapter 4

Integrating Global and Local Perspectives in Psycholexical Studies: A GloCal Approach

Personality across cultures has been studied using the so-called etic route and emic route. Etic studies test whether personality structures obtained in personality inventories in culture X, usually a Western culture, are fit for culture Y. Conversely, emic or indigenous studies are interested in uncovering personality conceptions bottom up in the target culture. Psycholexical studies, which investigate personality attributes contained in languages, are said to be emic in their approach. However, the majority of lexical studies, as I illustrate later, use a variation of the Western-centered methods and assumptions that were fit for the Anglo-Germanic languages and cultures in which the lexical studies originated (Saucier, Hamson, & Goldberg, 2000). In this chapter, I refer to this lexical paradigmas "global". Conversely, a minority of lexical studies deviate from global paradigms, for a number of reasons. I call their perspective "local".

In line with the overarching aim of this book, I investigated personality by borrowing from emic and etic approaches. In chapter 2, I attempted to apply the global paradigm in the Arabic studies by a) using the dictionary to find personality descriptors in Arabic, b) reducing and validating the descriptors based on commonly used criteria such as ratings of familiarity, and c) collecting participant ratings on a separate measure of the Big Five. However, I found that this approach by itself had several methodological and conceptual disadvantages (discussed in this chapter). To address them, I applied an emic or local approach by a) employing additional measures to reduce and validate the data, driven by the language characteristics (e.g., reduction of redundant words, the use of cultural experts to judge the meaning of vernaculars), and b) obtaining qualitative data in the form of spoken personality

descriptors. Then, when interpreting results, I looked at the convergence of evidence. The questions became "Within the culture, what findings consistently emerge *despite* different methodologies?", "What findings seem to be unique to a method?", and "Compared to other studies and methods, is there a similar pattern, so that some findings are shared across methods, and some are unique to a culture and/or method?" The combination of approaches had many advantages. In this Chapter, I reflect on the methodology and conceptual framework used in Chapter 2 and 3, and I explain how they can be of benefit to future psycholexical studies.

Chapter Thesis

The status quo in the results of psycholexical studies is that the findings are different within and between global and local studies across cultures. A seemingly obvious interpretation of results is that the structure of personality attributes is different between cultures. However, such conclusions cannot be drawn before taking into account alternative explanations, such as methodological differences. I argue that the global paradigm, with the intention of cross-cultural comparability and psychometric rigor, has carried certain assumptions that may not be applicable to understudied cultures.

Psycholexical work is predicated on the assumption that what matters in the implicit personality psychology of a cultural group is represented in a language's lexicon (Goldberg, 1990). This assumption has corollaries; the most important are that the dictionary is the starting point for accessing the universe of personality descriptors, that single words should provide a comprehensive picture of personality, that trait terms (stable dispositions in the form of adjectives) are key to describe the implicit personality structure of speakers of that

language, and that more important traits are more frequent and have more synonyms than those that are not (Saucier & Goldberg, 2001).

Some studies have challenged the extent to which these assumptions are applicable, notably the source from which descriptors are sampled. There is evidence that single words and traits, as found in a dictionary, are not enough to represent all relevant personality terms (McCrae, 1994). Also, the density (frequency and number of synonyms) of one term in a lexicon is not consistently predictive of its importance (Wood, 2015); traits seem more predictive of behavior in individualistic cultures than collectivistic cultures (del Prado et al., 2007), that traits are more used in free descriptions in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures (Valchev, van de Vijver, Nel, Rothmann, & Meiring, 2013).

In this chapter, I argue that the psycholexical approach would gain from more focus on, and integration of, common (universal) and unique (culture-specific) aspects of languages. A one-method-fits-all approach is unlikely to be applicable to the 7,102 languages of the world. Conversely, not every language requires its unique psycholexical approach. I propose a synthesis of both global and local paradigms in studies of personality and culture, in what I call a GloCal approach. The term GloCal was coined in the Japanese business world to describe the need for global corporations to adjust their standardized strategies to meet the demands of local markets (Robertson, 1995). This is in line with current thinking in cross-cultural psychology calling for a need to jointly study global and local aspects ,the so-called emic-etic approach (Cheung, van de Vijver, & Leong, 2011). In this perspective it is important that studies are not set up to focus either on universal (etic) or culture-specific (emic) aspects but to use different research methods that can allow the expression of both indigenous and etic aspects of personality. The GloCal psycholexical approach makes it possible to a) identify shared and unique components of the personality conceptions and structure across methods in one language, b) ensure that the lexicon relevant to the culture is

well represented and data is comprehensive, and c) increase the ecological validity of stimulus materials in personality inventories. I showcase these advantages by using examples from the Arabic psycholexical study described in Chapter 2 and other studies that combined emic and etic approaches.

Current Methods

Lexical Models of Personality

The psycholexical approach has been the main method for identifying how personality descriptors are spontaneously organized across languages and cultures. By extracting personality descriptors contained in languages, and analyzing how participants assign these descriptors to themselves and others, researchers can extract broad factors that represent personality concepts in that language and culture. Until now, there are several derived models, the most prominent of which are those of two, three, five, six, and seven personality factors. The Big Five or Five Factor Model (FFM) or its close variants have been replicated in Germanic and Romance languages of English (Allport & Odbert, 1936; Goldberg, 1990), German (Angleitner, Ostendorf, & John, 1990), Dutch (De Raad & Barelds, 2008), French (Boies, Lee, Ashton, Pascal, & Nicol, 2001), Italian (Di Blas & Forzi, 1998), and Spanish (Benet-Martínez & John, 2000). However, several analyses from diverse families of languages have found alternative results such as a three-factor model (De Raad et al., 2010; De Raad & Peabody, 2005), a six-factor model (HEXACO; Wasti, Lee, Ashton, & Somer, 2008), a seven-factor model (Almagor, Tellegen, & Waller, 1995), an alternative five-factor model (Cheung et al., 2001), and more recently a nine-factor model (Nel et al., 2012). The different results are not easy to compare and interpret because they are obtained by different methods.

Methodological Considerations

The methodology of the psycholexical approach has not been uniform (De Raad, 1994; Saucier & Goldberg, 2001). Even though studies follow a generic sequence of phases (as outlined in Table 1), some are set up in an etic manner and focus on universal personality models, while others have an emic focus on the local culture. Saucier and Goldberg (2001) report that differences in resulting structures may be due almost solely to any number of methodological differences such as:

"…the method of selecting terms, the size and representativeness and inclusiveness of the selected terms, […] the procedures used to cull and reduce the sets of terms, the type of judgments obtained […], the targets of description (e.g., self or others), the particular rating scales employed, the ways that missing data and semantically inconsistent subjects are handled, the method for addressing individual differences in response scale usage, the type of factor analysis, the number of factors extracted, and the methods used to compare factors across pairs of languages"(p. 873).

Table 1

Generic Stages of Psycholexical Methodology

Phase	**Steps**	**Description**
Identification of Descriptors	1- Source Identification	Identification of the sources from which the descriptors will be pooled e.g. dictionary, newspapers, verbal descriptions etc.
	2- Filtering	Defining personality-relevant terms, (inclusion and exclusion criteria), and defining the word-classes to be included (e.g., adjectives, nouns, verbs)
	3- Culling	Identification of specific ways of culling the descriptors from the identified source(s), including sampling method *(*e.g. all words available, first word on every page, every 4th page etc.), and judges (e.g., experts, students)
	4- Categorization	Categorization of culled descriptors into their grammatical classes (e.g., verbs, adjectives, etc), and into person-descriptive classes, and making decisions of inclusion in the final list of descriptors.
	5- Reduction	Reductions via categories (e.g., adjectives; or traits), and ratings of familiarity, clarity, synonymity, or relevance.
Identification of Factor Structure	6- Personality Ratings	Collection of self or other rating data
	7- Data Analysis	Statistical reduction of the collected ratings into a parsimonious model

A few studies have addressed the impact of methodology on emerging factor structures in personality. De Raad, Di Blas, and Perugini (1998) analyzed two Italian trait taxonomies derived independently using the two approaches, and found that the emerging factor structures were fairly, yet not entirely, similar. However, both approaches still used a dictionary as the source of personality terms. It is unclear how the models would have compared if they also extracted terms from spoken Italian or other sources.

Recently, Dutch researchers extended the psycholexical approach by sampling personality terms from sources beyond the dictionary in the same language (De Raad, 1992; De Raad & Barelds, 2008). One study extracted adjectives from a Dutch dictionary, nouns from an English-Dutch dictionary, and verbs from an online corpus, while another method used an online lexicon for all word classes. Results showed that variants of the Big Five emerged in both studies, but the study using the comprehensive online lexicon found additional personality factors not covered in the dictionary-based study. This provided further evidence that the pool of descriptors is an important source of variance that can impact conclusions about cross-cultural personality structures.

In this paper, I focus on the first few steps of lexical studies, which is the selection of the source of terms and their reduction to a manageable number. First, I review 25 studies[16]

[16] I conducted a systematic search for studies published between 1970 and 2012 in PsycInfo and the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), using the keywords "Psycholexical OR trait adjectives OR personality descriptors OR personality terms OR personality lexicon OR trait descriptors" in titles and abstracts. This led to 316 results in PsycInfo and 225 results in SSCI, which were reduced to include journal articles that: a) were published in peer-reviewed journals, b) were written in English, c) relied on primary reports of empirical qualitative or quantitative data, d) investigated personality traits among the general population, and, e) reported the methodology adopted in compiling the list of personality-descriptors. In SSCI, 15 irrelevant publications and 32 non-journal articles were removed. After reading abstracts of remaining 178 studies, we removed 135 studies that were too specific (e.g., adjectives to describe abusers); one non-English article (Hřebíčková, 1999), and 32 that did not describe the culling phase or re-analyzed previous data (Kashiwagi, Tsuji, Fujishima, & Yamada, 2005). In PsycInfo, we also removed articles that did not fit the inclusion criteria described above using the same method. The outcome of this process was 9 unique studies from PsycInfo and 10 unique studies from SSCI, totaling 19 articles. To ensure

that aimed to derive personality taxonomies through language, and highlight their differences and similarities (see Table 2). Then, I describe problems that arise from the use of one-lens perspectives, why they are problematic, and give examples of how the combination of local and global methodologies and perspectives can circumvent the limitations.

Global Studies and Sources. The systematic review of peer-reviewed studies between 1970 and 2015 revealed that 20 out of 25 studies (80%) have used the dictionary (or thesaurus in the case of Hindi), making this the main approach that is consistent with the English-Dutch-German methodologies. In the remaining studies, one used an online lexical database (Dutch), and four studies used alternative sources (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Bantu). Among the 20 investigations that employed dictionaries, there was no methodological homogeneity. Fourteen used a single dictionary, two studies used two dictionaries, and four studies (German, Croatian, Russian, and Serbian) complemented the dictionary with other sources such as previously established trait lists or translation dictionaries. Two recent studies (dealing with Iranian and Hindi) also added traits found in popular novels, and the Iranian study added traits found in a dictionary of colloquial (spoken) Persian. Across methods, there were vast differences between the inclusiveness of the dictionaries, their recency, and the number of words included. For example, the relative contemporariness of the dictionaries ranged from 4 years (Quevedo-Aguado, Iraegui,

comprehensiveness, we searched the bibliographies of these articles and identified 3 additional peer-reviewed studies in English not captured by the keywords (Caprara & Perugini, 1994; Cheung et al., 1996; Nel et al., 2012) and one published in English prior to 1970 (Allport & Odbert, 1936). The result was 23 studies. In 2015, I repeated the above steps and found two additional studies – one in Hindi and one in Persian, which were also included. The result was 25 studies. This search is not meant to be exhaustive, rather, it is meant to capture the major differences and similarities in source identification in psycholexical studies. In fact, it is readily obvious that several pioneering studies have been excluded because the studies re-analyzed previously culled terms (De Raad, Hendriks, & Hofstee, 1992; Goldberg, 1990), or the original language of publication was not English (e.g., Aoki, 1971, as cited in (Isaka, 1990); Brokken 1978; Ostendorf, 1990) or because the authors did not present the methodology of source identification and culling (Norman, 1967).

Anivarro, & Ross, 1996) to 27 years (De Raad, 1992) from the time of publication and the word entries ranged between 40,000 and 400,000 entries. In addition to heterogeneity in the source identification, there were also notable differences in the method of page sampling, filtering, culling, categorizing, and reducing (see Saucier, 1997, for a critique of page sampling). Another obvious difference was the raw number of personality descriptors derived, which ranged between 264 (Serbian) to 17,953 (English).

Local Studies and Sources. In the review, 4 studies (16%) did not employ a dictionary at all. Interestingly, all were indigenous (local) studies conducted on non-Indo-European languages (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Bantu). All used free descriptors by laypersons, and the Chinese and Korean studies supplemented those with an analysis of printed media. The reasons for deviating from mainstream methodologies are not clearly documented or linked to the target-language except in the case of Bantu. I added to these investigations, the studies outlined in this thesis, conducted using samples from Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and Palestine.

Table 2

Sources of Personality Terms

Personality Study			Characteristics of Dictionaries				Characteristics of Other Sources		
Author(s)	**Language Family**	**Language**	**Recency**	**Entries /pages**	**Other Description**	**Sampling Method**	**Source 1**	**Source 2**	**Source 3**
Nel et al., 2012	Bantu	Nguni	NA	NA	NA	NA	Laypers on descriptors	NA	NA
Cheung et al., 1996	Chinese	Chinese	NA	NA	NA	NA	Laypers on descriptions	Printed media	Chinese constructs
Zhou, Saucier, Gao, & Liu, 2009	Chinese	Chinese	2005	60,000	Newest; Includes other dialects	EP	NA	NA	NA
Allport & Odbert, 1936	Germanic	English	1925	400,000	New; International	EP	NA	NA	NA

Author(s)	Language Family	Language	Recency	Entries /pages	Other Description	Sampling Method	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3
Angleitner, Ostendorf, & John, 1990	Germanic	German	1981	96,664	Comprehensive	EP	Lists of adjectives	NA	NA
De Raad, 1992	Germanic	Dutch	1970	200 000	Comprehensive	EP	NA	NA	NA
			NS	45,000	English-Dutch lexicon	NS	NA	NA	NA
			NA	400 000	Electronic lexicon database (CELEX)	NA	NA	NA	NA
De Raad & Barelds, 2008	Germanic	Dutch	NA	130,778	Electronic lexicon database (CELEX)	EP	NA	NA	NA

Author(s)	Language Family	Language	Recency	Entries /pages	Other Description	Sampling Method	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3
Saucier, Georgiades, Tsaousis, & Goldberg, 2005	Greek	Greek	1998	150,000	Newest	EP	NA	NA	NA
Singh, Misra, De Raad, 2013	Hindustani	Hindi	1996	NS	Comprehensive	EP	5 Novels	NA	NA
Farahani, De Raad, Farzad, Fotoohie, 2014	Iranian	Persian (Farsi)	1994	NS	Contemporary	EP	20 Novels	NA	NA
			1993	NS	NS				
			1996	NS	Colloquial				
			1997	NS	Colloquial				
			1970-90	NS	Colloquial				
			1990-99	NS	Idioms				
			1994	NS	Idioms				
Isaka, 1990	Japonic	Japanese	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lay descriptors	NA	NA

Author(s)	Language Family	Language	Recency	Entries /pages	Other Description	Sampling Method	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3
Church, Katigbak, & Reyes, 1996	Malayo-Polynesian	Filipino	1978	68,000	Comprehensive	EP	NA	NA	NA
Boies et al 2001	Romance	French	1996	60,000	NS	EP	NA	NA	NA
Caprara & Perugini, 1994	Romance	Italian	1986	127,000	NS	NS	NA	NA	NA
Author(s)	Language Family	Language	Recency	Entries /pages	Other Description	Sampling Method	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3
Di Blas & Forzi, 1998	Romance	Italian	1984	40,000	NS	EP	NA	NA	NA
Benet-Martínez & John, 2000	Romance	Spanish	1989	1666 pages	NS	1st descriptor of every 4th page	NA	NA	NA
Quevedo-Aguado et al, 1996	Romance	Spanish	1992	85,500	Recognized authority	EP	NA	NA	NA

Author(s)	Language Family	Language	Recency	Entries /pages	Other Description	Sampling Method	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3
Almagor, Tellegen, & Waller, 1995	Semitic	Hebrew	1983	1600 pages	NS	1st descriptor of every 4th page	NA	NA	NA
Szarota, Ashton, & Lee, 2007	Slavic	Polish	1968	35,000	Concise	EP	NA	NA	NA
Mlačić & Ostendorf, 2005	Slavic	Croatian	1991	60,000	Newest /Standard	EP	B 5 markers	NA	NA
			1983; 1989	NS	Croatian–English encyclopedic dictionary	NS	NA	NA	NA
			1977	NS	Croatian–English dictionary	NS	NA	NA	NA
Shmelyov & Pokhil'ko, 1993	Slavic	Russian	1980	65,000	Descriptive	NS	Traits	NS data sets	NA
			1982	110,000	Orthographic	NS	NA	NA	NA

Author(s)	Language Family	Language	Recency	Entries /pages	Other Description	Sampling Method	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3
Smederevac, Mitrovic, & Colovic, 2007	Slavic	Serbian	2000	874 pages	NS	1st descriptor of every page	NA	NA	NA
Somer & Goldberg, 1999	Turkic	Turkish	1992	50,000	Modern, Abridged	EP	NA	NA	NA
			1985	40,000	Modern, Abridged	EP	NA	NA	NA
			1964	40,000	Modern, Abridged	EP	NA	NA	NA
Szirmák & De Raad, 1994	Uralic	Hungarian	1972	70,000	Latest edition/ Unabridged	EP	NA	NA	NA
			1991	60,000	Concise		NA	NA	NA
Hahn, Lee, & Ashton, 1999	Korean [e]	Korean	NA	NA	NA	NA	Free descr	Printed media	NA

Note. NS = Not Specified; NA = Not Applicable. EP = Every Page [a] When the number of word entries was not specified, we included the number of pages. [b] A relevant description of the source. [c] In Japanese study, the free descriptors and printed media were from Hahn, 1992. [d] The Big 5 markers were adopted from Goldberg 1998. [e.] Korean is considered a language isolate.

Studies on Personality in the Arab-Levant. As illustrated in Chapters 2 and 3, I analyzed the written form of Arabic, called Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and the spoken form, referred to as vernacular Arabic. Whereas MSA is the language of the written word, formal oral expression, and lingua franca of education, the vernaculars are used to communicate in everyday life, and in informal media (e.g., entertainment radio). This creates a situation that has been termed a "diglossic" state (Kaye, 2001). In a dictionary-based study, I culled MSA terms from an Arabic dictionary and after systematically reducing the number of words, I analyzed self and peer ratings on 167 MSA personality terms. The results supported a 6-factor solution that included variants of Emotional Stability, Conscientiousness, Extraversion (named Positive Relatedness), Agreeableness (as two factors of Dominance and Righteousness), and a Morality factor. An Openness factor was not found. In a parallel sample involving 545 participants, I obtained vernacular descriptions of nine target persons and qualitatively analyzed the responses to derive nine dimensions of personality (in decreasing order of size): *Soft-Heartedness, Positive Social Relatedness, Integrity, Humility versus Dominance, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Intellect, and Openness.*

From a perspective of psycholexical methods, these studies presented with interesting challenges. Arabic MSA, despite being considered a common language to all Arab countries, shows regional variations in the meaning of phonetically similar words, has redundancy in meaning so that multiple words have the exact same meaning (not synonyms), it sounds artificial when spoken out loud in everyday speech, and it can be related to a person's level of formal education in Arabic. Also, MSA dictionaries are not all alphabetical, are not regulated or systematically inspected by a pan-Arab authority, and are not based on corpora. This leads to variance in inclusion of terms, definitions, and datedness. Vernaculars, on the other hand, are not formally written, do not exist in a formal source (e.g., a database), people from Arab

countries may have different meanings of the same vernacular word, and distant countries do not have mutually legible Arabic vernaculars (e.g., Morocco and Jordan).

Since the selection of personality descriptors has been noted to be the most important determinant of a factor structure (Peabody & Goldberg, 1989), and since Arabic had two very different sources of personality variables, I was motivated to think critically about the psycholexical method. How could we, and future studies in new languages, follow global lexical paradigms so that results can be comparable to previous studies, while simultaneously addressing the issues raised by the local language, and culture? Some have proposed for psycholexical methods to follow a uniform procedure so that cross-cultural comparability of results can be optimal (De Raad, Perugini, Hrebícková, & Szarota, 1998). However, for one imposed method to be fit for all languages, it would have to be broad and generic. This is likely to lead to unsystematic variation across studies, which has thus far shown to be problematic. Another solution is to create an "if-then" algorithm, or decision-tree, that would pose a series of questions about the language, culture, and region, thereby aiding the researcher in making methodological decisions. The makers of the algorithm would need to be closely familiar with all important variables to be considered for the decision-making, in all possible languages, regions, and cultures. This could ideally work, although it is a very ambitious project; it could even be argued that a set of mechanical if-then decisions can only deal with a limited set of languages and that deriving a detailed personality structure from such decisions is unlikely to deal with culture-specific subtleties. I return to the Arabic studies and others throughout the paper to illustrate how a combination of approaches circumvented problems of using one approach alone, and led to richer conclusions about personality and culture.

The GloCal Approach and Its Advantages

I define GloCal as both a methodological and conceptual approach to deal with the universal and culture-specific aspects of personality. Methodologically, it is about triangulating two or more sources of personality descriptors. This allows us to maximize the comprehensiveness of variable selection, and therefore to overcome limitations of mono-method approaches. Triangulation also allows us to later disentangle the effect of methodology on the findings by comparing structures from both sources in the same language. Conceptually, triangulation allows us to deal with the fact that one approach may bring about some aspects of personality while another approach may bring about other aspects, and both are relevant to reach a convergent model.

Differentiate Methods from Findings

One of the problems of using a single source of descriptors is that the absence or presence of resulting factors may reflect the particularities of the source, or the culture, or a mixture of both, and they are not easy to tell apart. One of the major weaknesses of the lexical Big Five is that it is difficult to falsify, since any cross-cultural differences may be due to methodological variations (Triandis & Suh, 2002). This has been particularly noted for the so-called Factor V (De Raad, 1994). This factor, which represents Openness or Intellect or Culture, fails to clearly emerge in languages such as Italian (Di Blas & Forzi, 1999), Hungarian (Szirmak & De Raad, 1994), Greek (Saucier, Georgiades, Tsaousis, & Goldberg, 2005), and Tagalog (Church, Reyes, Katigbak, & Grimm, 1997). In other studies, it only emerges after 7 or more factors are extracted (Ashton et al., 2004). The lack of replication in these global studies may be due to methodological considerations.

Several authors have argued that descriptors of Openness or Intellect are not well represented using dictionary-based approaches, but instead require phrasal descriptors, or hyphenated words to capture their essence (e.g., close-minded) (Hofstee, 1990; McCrae, 1994). Others have argued that this factor is associated with modernism and industrialization, and terms representing these contemporary concepts have not yet become entrenched in the lexica (Piedmont & Aycock, 2007). The issue here is that it is difficult to disentangle the two reasons. If a new study, using a global paradigm based on the dictionary, fails to replicate Openness, the reason may equally be methodological (i.e., the dictionary was not sufficient to capture it), or cultural (openness is not a salient concept in the society sampled). It follows that the falsification of the Openness factor is difficult. The proposed solution is a combination of sources, within one language, as exemplified below.

In the dictionary-based analysis of Modern Standard Arabic, an Openness or Imagination factor was not replicated (See Chapter 2). Without further information, one might conclude that unconventionality, openness, and appreciation of art are not important personality aspects in the Arab-Levant culture. However, such a conclusion was falsified by obtaining data from a complementary source and methodology that used free descriptors. In the follow-up study described in Chapter 3, I obtained and analyzed personality descriptors uttered by laypersons in the vernacular variety of spoken Arabic (as opposed to the MSA variety of the dictionary). After subjecting the data to systematic qualitative analysis, I found a number of terms that exemplify openness to ideas, values, and art, forming a clear dimension of Openness across the four countries (Chapter 3). Therefore, by using two approaches on the same language, it became obvious that the absence of an Openness dimension in one of the sources was not necessarily a culture-specific finding but rather a finding specific to the language source. It may be that the traditional psycholexical methodology of analyzing the dictionary for monolexical terms was not sufficient as a stand-

alone source to capture this construct in this language and culture. There is still room to understand whether the lack of replication in other languages can be falsified by sampling their spoken descriptors or other media.

Another advantage from integrating sources is a better understanding of *how* personality descriptors are expressed. Just as early Anglo-Germanic psycholexical studies set the stage in terms of factor structure, they also defined the basic unit of analysis to be traits, often in adjectival form. This was ultimately tied to the usage of the dictionary as the main source of personality descriptors. However, studies that went beyond the dictionary have questioned the usefulness of traits in some non-Western societies (del Prado et al., 2007). Valchev et al. (2013) analyzed free descriptions of personality in 11 ethnocultural groups in South Africa, and found that the more collectivist ethnocultural groups in South Africa used contextual information, motivations, and likes more, and traits less, than individualistic groups. This information was obtained through free descriptors and qualitative analysis, consistent with a local approach. Later, these findings were subjected to methods consistent with a global paradigm, such as quantitative validation, and comparisons with the Big Five. Eventually, the development of the South African Personality Inventory was based on both global and local personality aspects of personality informed by both methods (Valchev, Van de Vijver, Nel, Rothmann, Meiring, & De Bruin, 2011).

Minimize Issues of Comprehensiveness

Dictionary entries differ in the extent to which they cover the domain of personality descriptors, especially in languages that lack a formalized source for the lexicon, and have non-alphabetical writing systems. Poor coverage of the personality domain can lead to a biased representation of personality because I cannot gauge which personality domains were missing in the original source, notably if these involved emic domains.

Issues of Comprehensiveness. Since cross-cultural psychologists are calling for further inclusion of non-Western cultures and non-literate societies, it has become important to think of how I can study languages with or without a written tradition. A recent study aimed to compare human attributes across 12 unique languages spoken in Central Africa and South America (Saucier, Thalmayer, & Bel-Bahar, 2014). The source of the lexicon was the dictionary. However, the authors found that dictionaries of the 12 languages differed significantly in their inclusiveness of attribute words, ranging from 5% to 36% of the total words. This was because the dictionaries were not systematically reviewed, but often reflected its authors' preferences. For example, the Kuna dictionary (a Chibchan language spoken in Central/South America), was missing almost half of the personality conceptions found in the other 11 languages. It was highly unlikely that the Kuna culture does not have words for universal attributes like evil and beautiful. Saucier (2014) concluded that attributes were missing because the dictionary under-sampled these attributes. In contrast, the dictionary with the most attributes (Afro-Asiatic language of Afar with more than 1,000,000 million speakers) had separate entries for attributes based on masculine and feminine forms. This inflated the number of attributes, making comparisons of frequencies in those languages more difficult.

Similar challenges of possible under-inclusiveness can exist in more commonly-spoken languages like Dutch and Arabic. Hofstee (1990) tested this assumption in the Dutch language by cross-referencing 1200 Dutch dictionary-based adjectives through a corpus that includes both *spoken* and written personality descriptors, and found that only about a quarter of the corpora-based terms were listed in the dictionary. Although the reasons for this are not very clear, this finding led Hofstee (1990) to highlight the added value of everyday personality descriptors in personality studies.

Variable representation was also noted in the Arabic dictionary (See Chapter 1). Because Arabic is a diglossic language with regional variations in the meaning of a word, the dictionaries may include or omit one of many definitions for a term (Ibrahim, 2008). There may also be arbitrary omissions of words themselves. For example, in Jibran Massoud's (2005) dictionary, the two word entries *sabahya* and *tayhan* are both defined as *moutakabir* [arrogant] but this definition is not listed in this adjectival form in the same dictionary, even though it is a frequently used Arabic term (Buckwalter & Parkinson, 2011).

The level of under-inclusiveness can also depend on whether dictionaries are organized alphabetically or through another system. The smallest unit in a psycholexical study is the single personality-descriptor in the dictionary, but languages and cultures differ in how they arrange written words. For example, English and other Latin-script languages use alphabet letters, which represent units of sound that can be sequenced alphabetically, while Chinese and Japanese languages can order dictionary entries by morphemes (meaningful groups of letters). In the case of Arabic, dictionaries are organized either alphabetically or by lexical roots. Roots are a unique combination of consonants that combine with other vowels and consonants to form words of related meaning. For instance, the root *k-t-b* can combine with a various sounds to form ***k**a**t**a**b**a*** (he wrote), ***k**i**t**aa**b** (*book), m**a**k**t**a**b**a (library), or other words related to writing. For each root, there may be 8 to 12 derived terms. Dictionaries organized by roots, do not provide comprehensive lists of all the words that can be derived from a given root. It is up to the user to derive the adjective forms from basic roots. To correctly derive words from roots, not only should the user be quite familiar with Arabic morphology, but there is also room for subjectivity as to which roots produce personality descriptors. Therefore, the writing system of a language and culture must be considered when identifying the source of personality descriptors.

GloCal Solutions for Comprehensiveness. The above illustrate the various ways in which single sources lead to lack of comprehensiveness, and the problems associated with them. There are approaches to minimize these issues. When it comes to using dictionaries, comprehensiveness is maximized if they are recent, include contemporary terms, and are endorsed by a regulating body (e.g., a language academy). If there is no recent dictionary or regulating body, then researchers can consult language and cultural authorities or a committee of linguists to identify a source that is inclusive in coverage. In the case of Arabic, there were multiple so-called "Arab Academies", but none is a regulating authority. In the Arab-Levant project I chose to consult with three Arabic experts from Syria, Kuwait and Lebanon, who voted on which dictionary is most contemporary and alphabetically arranged. A linguist was also part of the core research team.

Although these measures can minimize some issue related to comprehensiveness, they were not a guarantee, and sometimes additional methods are needed. For instance, the Chibchan and Arabic dictionaries were still missing important terms even if they were endorsed by experts. Also, sampling only from dictionaries, does not address the issues of regional or linguistic variation, since entries with multiple definitions based on regional variations are likely the exception rather than the rule. A way around this is to sample language from layperson descriptors, corpora, printed media, or formal sources of colloquial language (if the language exists in written form). Such sources have been used in the 11 official languages of South Africa, Chinese (of different regions), Japanese, Korean, Hindi, Persian (Farsi), and Arabic, albeit for different reasons. In the case of South Africa, the writing system for instance, was an important consideration. The Bantu languages of South Africa do not have a long history of written texts, making dictionaries a questionable source from a psycholexical perspective. The researchers opted to collect spoken personality descriptor from a sample representing the various cultural groups (Nel et al., 2012). As

mentioned earlier, this allowed a broader understanding of personality conceptions in South Africa.

Increase the Ecological Validity of Stimulus Materials

One of the goals of psycholexical studies is to develop a master list of personality terms. These are used to obtain participants ratings on the terms, and to construct items for personality inventories. In order for participants' responses to be valid, the terms need to be readily understood (i.e., they are familiar, frequently used, not dated), and homogeneously understood by the sample (i.e., the meaning of words is the same across the target group). Also, the number of terms must be manageable, so they are not time-consuming and prohibitive to data collection. The majority of studies seek validity by using the dictionary, because the dictionary is usually based on corpora, and entries are updated and regulated by language academies. Many also obtain judgments or ratings on familiarity (e.g., Szarota, Ashton, & Lee, 2007), relevance (e.g., Somer & Goldberg, 1999), clarity (e.g., Saucier et al, 2005), frequency of use (e.g., Di Blas & Forzi, 1998), and redundancy in meaning (e.g., Cheung et al, 1996). These measures increase the validity of terms, and reduce them to manageable levels. The question becomes whether these methods are sufficient and relevant for all languages, or at least for languages under psycholexical investigation.

The 7,102 living languages vary in a number of ways, and may pose a number of possible threats to the ecological validity of the terms, beyond what psycholexical studies are usually designed to detect. For instance, languages differ in structure, parts of speech, semantics and pragmatics and only about half of them are known to be written (Lewis, 2013). Also, several regions and cultural groups are diglossic, the most prominent of which are Arabic, Swiss German, Haitian Creole, and Modern Greek (Kaye, 2001). This means there are varieties of the same language in different regions (e.g., Morocco versus Lebanon), and

for different functions (e.g., written versus spoken), which may be mutually illegible. Also people in multi-lingual nations like South Africa present with differential proficiency of the official languages.

Therefore, additional procedures should be introduced based on the local particularities of the language and region. Because it is not feasible to know and outline all possible problems that may emerge in all possible languages, I use the Arabic psycholexical study as an example of some problems and their solutions. In the GloCal perspective to the Arabic language, I circumvented threats to validity by using a) judges and participants' ratings to refine the masterlist, b) qualitative data in the form of participant comments to clarify quantitative ratings, and c) spoken descriptors as candidates for inventory items.

Examples from the Arabic Study. Words in MSA can have different meanings across countries, a phenomenon called lexical variation (Ibrahim, 2008). This allows for the same word to mean completely different concepts across countries, as well as "the existence of different words carrying exactly the same meaning" (Ibrahim, 2008, p. 10). This phenomenon is due to several factors, that include but are not limited to, diglossia, the influence of translation from English or French, the impact of the media, the role of the language academies, and differential educational systems (Ibrahim, 2008). Although lexical variation is more common in diglossic languages, it is not unique to them.

Lexical variation is an obvious threat to the ecological validity of the terms. If a term is understood differently in Syria than in Jordan, despite its "official" definition in the dictionary, then participant responses will refer to different entities. If multiple terms are not close synonyms with subtle variations but rather refer to the exact same concept, then the list of terms would be redundant and possibly confusing to participants. The conventional

psycholexical method did not have ready solutions for these issues, so adjustments were made to fit the local context.

To address redundancy, I grouped 223 dictionary descriptors that seemed redundant to each other into clusters based on their meaning. These words had identical dictionary definitions, making it difficult to identify any nuances in meaning between them, and were often morphological variations of each other. A group of native Arabic speakers were then instructed to read the terms and dictionary definitions provided, and choose which terms to remove because they are redundant to the meaning of the cluster. They could keep all the words that they judged to have subtle differences in meaning, or they could keep one word in each cluster, if its meaning represented that of all the other words. Results showed that raters found 39% of words could be adequately represented by an existing word. Consequently, the resulting list excluded redundant terms that could lead to confusion and take up participant's time.

To address differences in familiarity and variations in meaning of the same word, a different method was used. I compiled the terms and dictionary-based definitions in a questionnaire, and asked participants from the four countries to mark whether they were familiar with the word, and if they agreed with the definition. The unfamiliarity statement was "*I do not understand the meaning of this word, despite the definition provided*", and the differential meaning statement read "*I disagree with the dictionary definition provided*". Result indicated that, despite excellent self-reported Arabic proficiency across countries, some groups (e.g., Lebanese) were significantly less familiar with specific MSA terms than other nations and 14 (out of 204) words had significant interactions by country (Chapter 1). These findings may be a result of lexical variation in the region. In other words, the terms are caught in the middle between their dictionary meaning and their regional meaning. If these MSA terms were used in an inventory, they would cause problems of differential

understanding in groups that otherwise share a common language. I imagine that in the 26 countries that have Arabic as their formal language, there will be even more significant differences in the extent to which MSA terms are familiar, and have similar meaning. Also, while Arabic had issues of redundancy, familiarity, and homogeneity in meaning, other languages may have different issues. Excluding problematic terms, based on ratings, maximizes the chances that terms retained are ecologically valid.

Ratings alone do not explain *what* the differences are, but only that differences exist. Qualitative components, such as allowing participants to add comments to their ratings, and obtaining free descriptors, can shed light into the nature of differences. In the MSA study, participants made comments such as "Many times, the word can have several meanings, only one of which is mentioned" and "The terms can have double meaning, so I think such adjectives are best understood in a certain context". These remarks served as cues to the investigators, as to why participants rated words as having differential meaning. The follow-up vernacular study was also helpful in clarifying results of the MSA quantitative study. For example, an MSA term that was defined as *baleed* [lazy], was rated as having a "wrong" definition by 6% of the Arabic-speaking sample (Chapter 1). In the follow-up study, it was found that the term was used to mean "unintelligent" among Jordanians, but "slow-moving" among Lebanese. Such differential meaning was also found for others words, such as *meltezem* [adherent]. In MSA, this was defined as *dedicated and adherent,* but in vernacular Arabic, the term was used to imply that one is dutiful to religious tasks, or one is adherent to his/her word and decision, or committed to work responsibilities, or trustworthy in relationships. The nuanced meanings of the term were revealed through the free descriptors. Such findings are not only important theoretically for the implicit personality conceptions in the Arab-Levant, but are also practically important because they flag the words that may be problematic for use in a multi-country Arabic personality instruments.

Finally, the GloCal approach also clarified the *way* in which personality conceptions were communicated. This was particularly advantageous because it provided a sample of statements that can be used in an inventory. Taking the example of Openness, participants described this trait by using extensive and contextual behavioral descriptions, such as "she comes from a conservative family, but became more open when she traveled for her studies", hyphenated adjectives (e.g., old-fashioned), adjective phrases (e.g., independent in behavior and thinking), simple adjectives (e.g., progressive), idioms and metaphors (e.g., an expression that roughly translates to "stuck to old ways"), statements of interest (e.g., loves art), and verb phrases (e.g., tries new things). Additionally, some terms did not occur as adjectives at all, but recurred *exclusively* as verbs or phrases. A prominent example is the absence of a single adjective word for "*respectful*". Participants used phrases such as "*respects me*" and "*shows everyone respect*", but there was no mono-lexical term for this concept. In a similar fashion, some descriptors appeared mostly as idiomatic expressions, and much less as single words. A common expression across the four countries is *shayef halo* which is similar to English idioms like "thinks he is something special" or "is on a high horse", and means conceited and arrogant. Among the 349 responses that referred to being haughty, this idiom made up 44% of responses. Next in frequency were the single terms *moutakabir [arrogant or snobby]* and *maghrour* [conceited] which made up 22% and 16% of responses, respectively. Valchev et al (2013) also found differential usage of personality descriptors in South Africa. Black ethnocultural groups in South Africa tended to use more behavioral statements, while Whites used more abstract traits (Valchev et al., 2013). Therefore, when constructing inventories, researchers can consider these nuances to maximize the ecological validity of items.

Conclusion

Psycholexical studies have varied in their approach, particularly in the sources from which variables are selected. This would not be an issue if results were similar across studies, but they are not. It is unclear if the differences (and similarities) reflect real cross-cultural findings or methodological issues. While more indigenous studies are needed for better understanding personality in different cultural settings, methodologies associated with such emic investigations may limit future comparability between studies. Adopting etic approaches may maximize comparability, yet at the expense of missing cultural specificities. Single lens approaches are limiting. The GloCal perspective offers a stepping stone in encouraging cross-cultural personality researchers to highlight etic and emic aspects of personality, using methods of both approaches.

The issues raised here offer an opportunity for others to critically examine the applicability of global methods in their own cultures, and find a balance between local and global paradigms. Ultimately, it is the juxtaposition of findings from multiple psycholexical investigations that would culminate in a broader view of personality structure across cultures.

5

Conclusions

Chapter 5

General Conclusion

This thesis investigated personality and culture in four Arab countries from an emic and an etic perspective. The findings informed theory in cross-cultural personality, contributed to a better understanding of methodological issues (and their solutions) in psycholexical studies, and gave Arab psychology a practical starting point for developing a personality instrument and using Arabic in inventories. Following a synopsis of the main questions and findings of the thesis, I discuss the impact of this thesis on cross-cultural psychology, personality assessment, and Arab psychology, and reflect on future directions.

The Project: A Synopsis

The overarching questions of this thesis were to understand what is the personality structure in the Arab-Levant, how similar and different is it to other structures, and how to build a foundation developing an instrument that is appropriate to the Arab culture but also comparable to other personality inventories. In parallel, we also asked ourselves whether the psycholexical method that is applied ubiquitously is really the best way to analyze the Arabic language, or if there are other methods that can enrich our findings. Therefore the contribution of this thesis is multifaceted. It contributes knowledge to cross-cultural personality at large by revealing the structure of the personality lexicon in the fifth most spoken language in the world, and shows how cultural variables are manifested in the personality structure. It also adds to the methodological critiques of psycholexical studies, because it shows the benefits of multiple methods and perspectives on one language, and also poses questions about unexamined assumptions of the psycholexical method. On the practical level, it informs Arab psychologists on how the language particularities need to be considered

during instrument development or adaptation, and lays the foundation for developing an Arabic emic-etic personality inventory.

Contributions and Implications

Theory

At a theoretical level, these findings contribute to the expansion of the definition of personality. Trait-theory ascertains that human personality is made of a number of internal, stable attributes such as the Big Five personality traits. One of the assumptions of trait theory is that traits ought to be descriptive and informative of behavior, and different from values for instance, which are meant to transcend behavior (Schwartz, 1992). This a-priori definition impacts how researchers define and study personality in cross-cultural studies. For instance, most lexicon-based studies exclude personal values from their pool of terms (Saucier & Goldberg, 2001). In chapter 2, it was noted that personality factors in the Arab-Levant were descriptive of behavior, as expected for traits, but also reflected cultural norms and values such as the importance of morality, honorable behavior, and hierarchy. In chapter 3, personality, as freely defined by participants, included personal and cultural values that transcended behaviors. These included valuing family, being concerned with social esteem and perceived dignity, and being aware of unequal status (hierarchy) in society. Moreover, an overwhelming majority of descriptors revolved around social and relational aspects of personality, which by itself reflected the value of relationships when describing personality. With evidence of this sort emerging in studies in South Africa, China, Mexico, and the Philippines, it may be that trait-theory, when used by itself, is a limiting perspective to understanding personality across cultures. Instead, combining cultural information such as values, with personality dispositions such as traits, may lead to a more comprehensive understanding of personality across cultures (Church, 2009).

As we conduct more studies using combined perspectives, and tease out what is the common denominator across studies, what is unique to the target culture, and what is the methodological confound, we may begin to find that most cultures will show emic and etic aspects of personality. By focusing on similarities across cultures, we may well continue to find that the Big Five, Big Three, or the even broader Big Two are the smallest common denominator of personality across cultures. However, as more cultures reveal their local personality conceptions, we can then append these local conceptions to etic models, either as culturally-unique constructs or as culturally flavored variations of the broader factors. Using an organizing model such as Fontaine's (2011) framework (Chapter 2), cross-cultural findings in personality can be allocated into four nuances ranging from absolutely universal to culturally relative.

Methodology

I also addressed methodological issues. When cross-cultural psychologists investigate personality with the aim of comparing personality structure across cultures, they use the psycholexical methodology. This rests on a set of assumptions such that human attributes are encoded in the natural language of a culture, that a language is best represented in its formal dictionary, that among terms in a dictionary those in adjective form are preferable to represent dispositions, and that more important traits are more frequent and have more synonyms than those that are not (Saucier & Goldberg, 2001). In Chapter 2 and 3, I explored the extent to which these assumptions and the methodologies that rest on them are applicable to the Arabic psycholexical study, and in chapter 4, I provided alternative solutions.

First, the cross-cultural usefulness of a dictionary as the only source of personality descriptors was challenged. The personality structure founded on MSA dictionary did not produce personality conceptions of Openness and Intellect, while the structure based on

spoken descriptors revealed them clearly. Second, the comprehensiveness of the dictionary was also questioned, by showing how errors of omission can occur in languages that lack a formalized source for the lexicon and have non-alphabetical writing systems. Third, the cross-cultural applicability of single-terms was contested when I demonstrated how some attributes appeared in the form of phrases and idioms more than in single-word format. I used these findings from Arabic, and examples from other languages to argue that a single dictionary approach is limiting, and the solution is to combine the dictionary with alternative language sources (free descriptors, and printed media), to obtain a comprehensive picture of personality.

Building on the above findings and arguments, I raise a higher-order methodological issue in chapter 4. Essentially what has been called "emic" psycholexical studies, meaning that a new language is studied using the psycholexical methodology, may not be as emic as the term implies. Because the lexical method originated in Western languages, its assumptions and techniques rest on the particularities of those languages. This so-called global approach is imposed on new languages under study, so that results can be compared to those of other studies. However, the global-paradigm does not take into consideration whether the method fits the language and culture. I argue that to keep comparability, we need to retain a set of generic global psycholexical procedures, but that we complement them with indigenous techniques that are grounded in the language and culture, called the GloCal approach to the source of personality descriptors. This work focused on the initial steps of the lexical approach, namely the source of the variables and some reduction techniques, but future work can also apply the GloCal perspective to remaining steps such as culling, categorization, and statistical analyses.

Application

At a practical level that concerns psychologists in the Arab region, this book set the foundations for assembling a personality inventory that is culturally-relevant and at the same time comparable to popular English instruments. In Chapters 2 and 3, I established that the five-factor model of personality is, to a certain extent, valid in measuring personality in the Arab-Levant, but that it is not sufficient. Additional concepts are equally important, such as morality, dominance, righteousness, integrity, honor, social intelligence, family orientation, and guidance.

Another key contribution is the evidence for variability of MSA terms across countries. Although this may not be new to linguists who have emphasized the variability of MSA across countries, it is novel to psychologists and test-developers who adapt inventories from other languages to Arabic and assume that psychological instruments written in MSA are the safest bet to ensure intelligibility across Arabic speakers. This research shows that, despite a common core of MSA terms, several words were understood differently across the Arab-Levant which share linguistic and cultural heritage, participants had different levels of familiarity of the words, and participants felt that MSA descriptors were not usable in daily life. These findings raise the question of whether MSA-based instruments can be validly used in the 23 Arabic-speaking countries which are further apart linguistically, or with Arab-speaking immigrants. By arousing critical thought about these issues, other researchers can begin to test the appropriateness of MSA-based tools that are intended to be used in more than one Arabic-speaking population, and provide evidence that the terms used are indeed a "common language".

Future Directions

The interpretations we have made about the cultural relevance of the personality factors in Chapters 2 and 3 must be tested. First, the qualitatively-derived model in chapter 3

must be transformed to a pool of items, and then tested on participants in the Arab-Levant and other Arab countries. Second, upcoming studies will need to identify the nomological networks of the factors of Morality, Righteousness, and Dominance (chapter 2), and of Soft-Heartedness, Positive Social Relatedness, Integrity, Humility versus Dominance (chapter 3). By locating the behavioral antecedents of these personality dimensions, and understanding their relationship with individual and culture-level variables, we can better clarify if they are similar to their etic counterparts or whether they have a unique contribution to predicting behavior in the Arab-Levant. Third, more studies are needed that systematically disentangle methodological confounds from culture and personality in psycholexical studies. Fourth, guidelines are needed on the use of Arabic in the development of inventories, by taking into consideration its diglossic state and other challenges outlined in this book. Last, but not least, we need to provide further empirical data on personality and culture in remaining Arab countries and Arab immigrants.

Conclusion

This thesis has added value to the field of cross-cultural studies in personality and psycholexical studies. It provided evidence that a combined approach provides a more complete picture of local personality and culture than one approach alone, and makes an in-depth investigation of personality in a region, culture, and language that is at the center of global attention.

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Summary of Thesis

This thesis investigates personality concepts as they are construed in the Arab-speaking cultures of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Palestine. Despite the region's importance geopolitically (it is at the center of world politics), culturally (it is considered the cradle of civilization), and linguistically (it is the fifth most spoken language in the world), these nations and cultures have been under-studied in cross-cultural psychology. The scarcity in research has led to premature conclusions about personality and culture in the Arab-Levant.

My research started with the question of "What is the structure of the personality when we psycholexically analyze the Arabic language". This question is most frequently answered by applying the generic steps of the psycholexical methodology to the new language. This way, results can be contrasted with comparable studies. However, the particularities of the Arabic language did not fit well into the tried-and-tested paradigm of psycholexical studies. Arabic exists in different varieties (diglossic state) that include, but are not limited to, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and vernacular Arabic. Both varieties are important sources of personality descriptions, but with unique challenges. MSA terms that are exactly the same could be understood differently in the four countries (regional variation), different MSA terms could have the exact same meaning (redundancy), and the dictionary is not the ultimate source of the MSA lexicon (lack of common standardization). These indigenous issues instigated other important questions "Is the generic psycholexical method appropriate for analyzing the Arabic language?" and "How can I strike a balance between following global paradigms, yet remaining grounded in the local language?". A balanced approach meant combining emic and etic approaches through a series of studies, to gain a fuller picture of personality in the Arab-Levant. The contribution of this thesis was not only to produce a factor structure of the MSA personality lexicon, but also to think critically about

the applicability of the global lexical paradigm to new languages and cultures, and to capitalize on the combination of etic and emic approaches.

I collected 2,659 terms that were possibly relevant to personality, using a comprehensive and modern dictionary. I reduced these words to a manageable set of 167 terms. The analysis of self-ratings and peer-ratings (N = 806) on these terms, and the examination of multiple solutions, revealed that a 6-factor solution best fits the data: Morality (I), Conscientiousness (II), Righteousness (III), Positive Relatedness (IV), Emotional Stability (V), and Dominance (VI), without an Openness factor. This structure replicated basic human dispositions found in other cultures though most factors carried local cultural meaning. The Morality factor is presumably related to the cultural value of honor – a twofold construct that refers to a sense of personal pride and dignity, and social respect and perceived dignity. Characteristics associated with Morality refer to someone who is honorable and pure in behavior, versus someone who is lowly, sly and not respected by others (i.e., without honor). Concepts like morality and the social importance of hierarchy and indigenous conflict-resolution methods helped explain that the factors of Dominance and Righteousness exemplify behaviors that can restore honor after conflict– either by forcing it through hostility (Dominance) or by earning it through dignified submission while maintaining social esteem (Righteousness). Positive Relatedness was also conceived as a mixture of Agreeableness and Extraversion terms.

This study enabled me to derive the first factor structure of psycholexically derived descriptors in MSA. There were several questions, however, left unanswered. Knowing that Arabic is a diglossic language with many particularities, the question arises whether this factor structure and the actual terms that comprise it, are truly relevant and ecologically valid to the way people describe others in the Arab Levant. This is the next question I addressed. Also, knowing that we must follow some sort of homogeneous psycholexical method in order

to obtain results that can be compared across studies, but also keeping in mind that new languages may not fit well into a standardized approach, the question remains how to strike a balance between the global and indigenous lexical paradigms, at least when it comes to the most important determinant of factor structure, the variables selected.

I addressed these questions by soliciting vernacular personality descriptors from 545 participants in the Arab-Levant. These attributes, uttered in native, vernacular Arabic, were qualitatively analyzed in an iterative condensing procedure by a team of psychologists, linguists, and laypersons. The results showed that 9 personality dimensions subsumed the 15,086 personality-relevant descriptors, and these were dimensions of *Soft-Heartedness, Positive Social Relatedness, Integrity, Humility versus Dominance, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Intellect, and Openness*. The same sample also completed a personality inventory based on the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP), which intends to measure the Big Five factors of personality (Emotional Stability, Conscientiousness, Openness/Intellect, Agreeableness and Extraversion). Quantitative analyses revealed that the structure of the inventory was satisfactory for all factors but Agreeableness and Extraversion, which seemed to mix together and produce a factor of *Positive Relatedness,* and one of *Social Withdrawal*.

In line with the combined emic-etic perspective of this thesis, findings were interpreted by comparing and contrasting subclusters obtained from the qualitative, indigenous, aspect of free descriptors in vernacular Arabic, against constructs measured in the quantitative, imposed-etic inventory of the Big Five. I found that 17 personality sub-clusters are common to both emic and etic models, while 47 subclusters emerged only in the indigenous model. The largest of these subclusters were those of social intelligence, family orientation, guidance, dominance, and honor-related concepts of integrity. By examining the shared space between the etic and emic models, three out of five of the Big Five

(Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness) could be broadly replicated in the Arab-Levant, whereas Agreeableness and Extraversion did not replicate exactly in a factor structure. This finding was explained by examination of the non-shared space between the emic and etic models. I found that the most salient non-shared aspects reflected social and relational aspects of personality which went beyond etic aspects of Agreeableness and Extraversion. I argued that the personality dimensions that were unique to the indigenous model were related to local relational values. The Arab-Levant culture places an emphasis on family bonds, hierarchical structuring of society, and integrity (honor), and these values impacted what attributes people found as important to include in personality descriptions.

In the fourth chapter, I reflected on lessons learned in the earlier studies, and generalized them to the psycholexical approach at large. Essentially, I argued that the basic methodology of psycholexical studies is based on assumptions originating in Anglo-Germanic languages. When applied to new languages and cultures, the methodology is either indiscriminately applied without taking into consideration local specifics, hence erring on the side of the global paradigm at the expense of local information. At other times, the methodology is very different from the majority of studies, leaning on the side of indigenous understanding at the expense of psychometric rigor. When the resulting personality structures are reviewed, it is difficult to understand whether differences and similarities are real, or due to methodological influences. Among many methodological differences, the variables selected are said to have the most impact on the emergent factor structure. Thus, I focused on the source of personality variables (i.e., dictionary, free spoken descriptors, printed media, etc.), and the way they are reduced to a manageable number to show how a combination of sources, a so-called GloCal approach, has more advantages than one source alone.

A GloCal approach is about triangulating two or more sources of personality descriptors to maximize the comprehensiveness of variable selection, and to tease out the

effect of methodology on the findings by comparing structures from both sources in the same language. It is also about accepting that different aspects of personality are more likely to emerge in one approach more than the other, and therefore both approaches are relevant. The synergistic combination has several advantages. First, it allows us to identify shared and unique components of the personality conceptions across methods in a culture. I supported this by giving examples that factors (e.g., Openness) were retrieved from free descriptors, but not from dictionaries, and that traits (as found in the dictionary) were less likely to be used by collectivist groups, than individualistic groups in some countries. Second, the GloCal perspective ensures that the lexicon used is relevant to the culture, and comprehensive. I made my case by showing how in some languages, using the dictionary alone led to errors of omission. The solution to this involves consulting with experts, and adding descriptors from laypersons, corpora, printed media, or formal sources of colloquial language. Finally, applying a GloCal perspective increases the ecological validity of stimulus materials in personality inventories. Because languages might pose a number of challenges that the global psycholexical paradigm is not designed to detect (e.g., diglossia and absence of codification), researchers risk making errors of validity when selecting terms to be used in a personality questionnaire.

The impact of this thesis as a whole is broached in Chapter 6. The worth of this work ultimately lies on its ability to produce theoretical, methodological and practical contributions. These studies are the first to provide empirical data on how Arabs in the Levant organize human characteristics, and how these are similar and different to established personality models. It makes solid interpretations about the relationship between Arab culture (subsuming values, customs and social systems) and personality, and serves as a reference point for future hypotheses about personality in the Arab world. In terms of methodology, this thesis joins a handful of existing studies that combine emic and etic approaches in cross-

cultural personality research, but it stands out as unique in using mixed methods simultaneously on two varieties of the same diglossic language. The critical insights and solutions towards improving the psycholexical method, and the use of Arabic language in personality assessment, can also be practically applied to future studies.

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