Background

- The Transformation of Motivation (ToM) means inhibiting self-centered impulses and choosing to engage pro-relationship behaviors instead when accommodative dilemmas happen (Rusbult & Arriaga, 2000).
- ToM is epitomized in many forms, including sacrifice, forgiveness, accommodative behaviors, and other pro-relationship behaviors (Schroeder et al., 2015).
- However, research on ToM is still mostly from individualistic, independent contexts (Karney & Bradbury, 2020; Williamson et al., 2021). The conclusions from independent contexts might not hold true in a more interdependent context.
- Individuals from a more interdependent background are closely tied to and influenced by their social partners. Therefore, it is likely that they are less likely to default to self-centered behaviors in accommodative dilemmas (Heine, 2016; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).
- This study replicates a seminal study of ToM (Yovetich & Rusbult, 1994) to examine if there is a cross-cultural difference in the process of the Transformation of Motivation.

Research Questions

1. Does the process of ToM happen across cultures?
   - H1: ToM happens across cultures.
2. Is there any cross-cultural difference in ToM?
   - H2: The magnitude of the ToM is larger for European Americans than for Thai.

Method

Sample

- Data was collected from 187 participants from two public universities in Thailand and the United States. Specifically, there were 97 Thai participants and 90 White (European background) American participants.
- 80.7% of the participants were female, 17.2% were male, and 2.0% were other/non-binary. The average age of the participants was 24, ranging from 18 to 55.
- All participants were currently in a romantic relationship of >1 month duration.

Procedures

We replicated study 1 of Yovetich & Rusbult (1994).
- Participants described "the most memorable incident when your partner said or did something that made you feel upset or angry."
- Participants were asked to rate (1-5) their considered and enacted responses from a list of Exit-Voice-Loyal-Neglect (Rusbult et al., 1991).
- We calculated Exit and Neglect because they are regarded as destructive responses.

Results

Between-group differences

![Graph showing differences in Relationship Length and Relationship Satisfaction between Thai and White American participants.]

Results for Research Question 1

The average destructive responses by culture is shown below. The results of t-test show that the ToM did happen across cultures, such that considered destructive responses were higher than enacted destructive responses for all sample and both subsamples (p < .001).

![Graph showing mean level of destructive responses by culture and type.]

Discussion & Future Directions

- The Transformation of Motivation happens across cultures, but is attenuated in individuals from an interdependent background, whose initial responses to a partner’s transgression are less destructive.
- Further investigation of cross-cultural differences in the Transformation of Motivation is warranted to determine the implications of this difference for relationship functioning.

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