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Growing Apart: Collectivism and Acculturation

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ABSTRACT

Geert Hofstede's cultural research serves as a guide to understanding how the different dimensions (collectivism/individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, indulgence, and short-/long-term orientation) vary between cultures and ethnicities. However, little research exists to show the relationship that exists between acculturation and these dimensions—specifically, with collectivism. Because Hispanics rank exceptionally high with collectivism, this research aims to explore the relationship between acculturation of Hispanics and collectivism. Suggestions as it pertains to findings as well as future research are included.

INTRODUCTION

While Hofstede's six dimensions of cultures (Hofstede 2011, p. 8) provide insight into a culture's perceptions and reactions, these are often viewed as static and not temporal. Earlier marketing communication initiatives found that "segmenting only on ethnic identification may omit important segmentation variables like language use and preference" (Alvarez, Dickson, & Hunter 2014, p. 109), which eventually led to more nuanced Hispanic marketing efforts. As individuals and families migrate to the United States, they begin to acculturate in several ways: they could "keep their original culture, add elements of the second culture to their repertoire, abandon their original culture in favor of the second culture, or claim a new identity (Korzenny, Chapa, & Korzenny 2017, p. 201). In light of this, Hispanics in the United States cannot be viewed as one homogeneous market segment, but rather as a segment comprised of numerous sub-categories with its population constantly shifting throughout.

While "Hofstede's scores show Hispanic countries have more pronounced collectivism tendencies" than their non-Hispanic counterparts, a shift is likely to occur when exposed to the American culture (Korzenny et al. 2017, p. 12). Collectivism itself contains two dimensions: horizontal and vertical (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand 1995, p. 244). With horizontal collectivism, the "individual sees the self as an aspect of an in-group", while vertical collectivism demonstrates the individual as "an aspect of an in-group, but the members of the in-group are different from each other" because of a social hierarchy (Singelis et al. 1995, p. 244). In the case of Hispanics, they have been described as allocentric, leading to a more horizontal collectivist nature (Marin & Triandis 1985, p. 80). Many have "proposed that familism and other Hispanic values are changing due to acculturation, urbanization, migration, and increasing contact with the U.S. mainstream culture (Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable 1987, p. 398). Over time, the pillars of Hispanic culture begin to weather, with certain attributes exhibiting more resilience than others. In a study conducted by Sabogal et al., a correlation between increased levels of acculturation and decreased familial reference groups was observed across the different subgroups (Mexican, Cuban, and Central-American) (Sabogal et al. 1987, p. 406).

Carolina Gomez observed a variation in collectivistic attributed between less-acculturated Hispanics and their well-acculturated counterparts, highlighting education levels as a contributing factor (Gomez 2003, p. 1100). This indicates that acculturation does not happen in a vacuum, but is a living characteristic that is ever-changing based on what an individual is exposed to.

Although a correlation has been observed between levels of acculturation and collectivism, a gap in existing literature exists that discusses the specific stages of acculturation and its relationship with shifting scores of Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Felipe Korzenny and Betty Ann Korzenny discuss acculturation as bi- or multi-dimensional, where Hispanics do not necessarily abandon their core culture in favor of another; rather, there is the potential to expand as opposed to replacing (Korzenny et al. 2017, p. 201). However, while acculturation is defined as the "cultural changes that occur when individuals originating from one country accept the culture of the host country" (Valentine 2001, p. 459), a delineation between integral phases and their relationships to a shift in value is absent.

Specifically, this literature gap affects Hispanics in the United States. As Hispanics continue to acculturate with varying levels of exposure, marketing efforts can become diluted because once-powerful messages may not resonate as they previously did. This study will provide academic insight regarding the correlation between the levels of acculturation of Hispanics who reside in the United States with shifts in collectivist behavior. With this, marketing communication professionals and scholars alike will be able to establish better relationships with Hispanics through communication efforts. Additionally, this will support marketing initiatives, such as brand positioning. Hofstede's dimensions of culture will be used as a validation tool to aid in the measurement of acculturative impacts.

Therefore, this study aims to explore how levels of acculturation affect collectivism along with the potential implications to marketing initiatives focused on Hispanics in the United States. Specifically, by identifying the stages of acculturation among Hispanics in the United States and the factors that lead Hispanics to transition between them, communication can be tailored to match the current scores of Hofstede's cultural dimensions.

Literature Review for Acculturation

In 1936, Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville Herskovits initiated investigation on acculturation. Here, they proposed an early definition to accompany the research, where acculturation was defined as the comprehension of "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits 1936, p. 149). Their research proposal included the types of contacts, acculturative situations, the process of acculturation, and the results of acculturation (e.g., acceptance, adaptation, reaction) (Redfield et al., 1936).

In 1974, John Berry and Robert Annis investigated how communities' responses to social change attributed to acculturation. In this study, they sampled Amerindian peoples and found that increased cultural discontinuities led to increased acculturative stresses (Berry & Annis 1974).

Berry and Annis also highlight that this varies across cultures, as each culture's unique identity and behavior leads to its own respective response to these pressures.

By compiling results from 334 Cubans and 251 white Americans, two scales were developed: one for self-reported behaviors and one for value dimensions (Szapocznik, Scopetta, Kurtines, Aranalde 1978). As a result, the behavioral scale provided a reliable and valid measure of acculturation and was superior to the value scale. Further, results indicated that acculturation occurs at a faster rate in younger family members than in older ones. Another study was conducted in 1980 to understand biculturalism and to develop a scale to capture biculturalism and cultural involvement (Szapocznik, Kurtines, Fernandez 1980). The scale used results from Hispanic American junior high students from the Greater Miami area. As a result, the scale proved to be reliable and valid for Cuban Americans.

To provide depth to acculturation, a study was conducted to explore and develop an acculturation scale among Mexican Americans (Cuellar, Harris, & Jasso 1980). In this study, psychiatric inpatients of Mexican American descent were asked to rank their levels of acculturation on a Likert scale. The results showed a correlation between acculturation levels and the corresponding generation of the Mexican Americans (e.g., first, second). The study was performed again in 1995 to allow for a revision of the original scale (Cuellar, Arnold, & Maldonado, 1995). This provided two subscales to measure Anglo orientation along with Mexican orientation. Additionally, the revised scale allowed for identifying if individuals rank as integrated, separated, assimilated, or marginalized.

Interested in cultural context and individual behavioral development, Berry researched the "long-term psychological consequences" of acculturation (Berry 1997, p. 5). Here, Berry analyzed several variables that contributed to an individual's acculturation. These variables included issues that the individual encountered in the new culture, such as acculturation strategies, which include cultural maintenance and contact and participation; which subsequently lead to assimilation, integration, separation, or marginalization (Berry 1997, p. 9). Ultimately, Berry aimed to utilize the acquired variables to identify the most successful points of acculturation. In 1997, Berry and David Sam provided further insight into acculturation and adaptation. They explored acculturation through theoretical and conceptual issues; then by its framework; and then through empirical studies, which included examples from immigrant and refugee groups (Berry & Sam, 1997). Berry and Sam continue by explaining that "acculturation has to be comparative...in order to understand variations in psychological outcomes that are the result of cultural variations in the two groups in contact" (Berry & Sam 1997, p. 317).

In 2005, Berry's research focused on conflict and negotiation: specifically, Berry sought to identify barriers that inhibited individuals from acculturating (Berry 2005). Berry refers to acculturation occurring in multiple dimensions: how people pursue acculturation, the level of stress experienced, and how successfully they adapt psychologically and socioculturally. Television media preferences were examined in a 1985 study by O'Guinn and Faber. In examining existing scales, the study probed and found that acculturation "is not composed of just a single underlying dimension, but, rather, is comprised of several separate lower-order constructs" (O'Guinn & Faber, 1985). Essentially, acculturation requires an examination on multiple layers as opposed to a simplistic approach. A subsequent study (Faber, O'Guinn, &

McCarty, 1987) found that acculturated Hispanics had product importance ratings that fell between lowly-acculturated Hispanics and the dominant Anglo culture, which supports the notion that values change over time through acculturation.

With regard to media preferences, a study conducted by Ueltschy and Krampf (1997) investigated acculturation in Hispanics and how it relates to their language preference and the model used when reading advertisements in print media. The results of this study found that highly-acculturated Hispanics prefer English with Anglo models; however, the lowly-acculturated Hispanics were found to prefer Spanish in an Anglo model. Additionally, bicultural Mexicans were found to prefer English with Anglo models for high positivity, but Hispanic models to maximize recall. Another study conducted in 1996 (Kara & Kara, 1996) examined how a product's positioning with regard to its utility influenced purchase behavior among Hispanics. The study indicated a relationship between acculturation levels and different product attributes.

Levels of acculturation are not without their health implications. A 2005 study found that acculturation had a positive relationship with healthcare use and perceived health; however, there was a negative relationship with acculturation and health outcomes, substance abuse, and dietary practices (Lara, Gamboa, Kahramanian, Morales, & Hayes Bautista 2005). Lara et al. discovered a gap and recommended an integration with acculturation and public health practice and research.

To account for market segmentation, Palumbo and Teich (2004) conducted research into levels of acculturation, countries of origin, and its relationship to market segments and overall marketing practices. The study highlights different marketing approaches and emphasizes the differences in geographic clusters as well as the potential for brand loyalty when a relationship is established with a lowly-acculturated immigrant. Additionally, the study further highlights how one marketing approach should not be used across all segments; rather, the culture and acculturation levels need to be understood before moving forward.

Literature Review for Collectivism

The collectivist nature of the Hispanic-Latino culture is evident in generational aspects and social contexts. While the collectivist background unifies the Hispanic-Latino community, it can often cause dissonance between those who comprise it. It is important to understand the evolution of collectivism while also understanding how it impacts the members of a community. Hofstede (1980) tried to determine empirically the main criteria by which their national cultures differed. He found four criteria, one of which he labeled Individualism-Collectivism, and found a correlation between it and wealth. Triandis et al. (1986) worked to further understand the dimension of individualism-collectivism, as identified by Hofstede (1980), that was studied using items developed both theoretically and empirically in nine diverse cultures. The dimension was found to be analyzable into four stable etic factors: individualism had two aspects (separation from in-groups and self-reliance with Hedonism) and collectivism had two aspects (family integrity and interdependence with sociability). Earley and Gibson (1998) sought to examine the cultural and personal construct of individualism-collectivism, or the distinction between the self and collectivity. They identified traits that included the subordination of

personal for collective goals, detachment from in-groups, interdependence, family relationships, level of analysis regarding issues, and pursuit of personal versus group objectives.

Vandello and Cohen (1999) wanted to change how individualism-collectivism dimension was examined, as it was usually in a U.S. versus Asian context. They observed a variation within the United States and found collectivist tendencies were strongest in the Deep South, and individualist tendencies were strongest in the Mountain West and Great Plains. Vandello and Cohen continued, stating that states with large numbers of ethnic minorities should be generally more collectivist, highlighting a strong correlation between this variable and a state's collectivism score. Triandis (2001) found collectivism in numerous areas: minority groups in the United States, homogeneous societies, densely-populated areas (for functional interdependence), in agricultural societies, older members of a society, large families, religious groups. Triandis (2001) continues to say that collectivism is maximal in tight and simple cultures and engage in indirect and face-saving communication more than individualists.

Oyserman, Coon, and Kimmelmeier (2002) took note of the psychological implications collectivism and looked for its impact on self-concept, well-being, cognition, and relationality. They found that when researchers did not assess seeking advice as part of scoring collectivism, Latino Americans were higher than European Americans; however, when researchers did assess seeking advice, Latino Americans were no different from European Americans, suggesting that these groups of Americans do not differ in the extent that they seek advice from others.

Triandis et al. (2006) went on to conceptualize psychological collectivism as a multidimensional construct with the following 5 facets: preference for in-groups, reliance on in-groups, concern for in-groups, acceptance of in-group norms, and prioritization of in-group goals. The study supports the construct validity of the measure and illustrates the potential value of collectivism as a predictor of group member behavior (e.g., imitation of group members' behavior as a means to comply with group norms and the value that collectivists place on complying with these norms). Miranda et al. (2006) describe acculturation's role in shifting younger Latinos away from a collectivist mindset and toward an individualist one in the United States. Family conflicts appeared common and especially severe when the children who were Americanized reached adolescence. Jensen-Arnett (1999) explains a similar finding by suggesting that adolescents who were U.S. born strive to be more independent and autonomous, and this leads to parent-child conflict because Latino families are collectivistic and discourage individualism. Schwartz et al. (2011) examined relationships among collectivism, ethnic identity, acculturation, and self-disclosure rates in Latinos' intercultural and intracultural friendships and acquaintanceships and found that relationship type (friend vs. acquaintance) and relationship partner ethnicity (Latino vs. White American) had significant relationships with self-disclosure. Participants in the study disclosed more personal information to friends than acquaintances, and they disclosed more to Latino than to White American persons. Schwartz et al. (2011) attributed collectivism as an index to disclosure rates; and acculturation level to disclosing to a Latino or White friend or acquaintance.

Arevalo and McNaughton-Cassill (2016) attempted to explain the lower Latino college graduation rate as it related to collectivism in kin and non-kin. They found that Latino-American college students were significantly more collectivistic toward non-kin groups compared to their

non-Latino-American counterparts. By looking at the different support systems, a relationship between support and graduation rate may exist, especially because Latino students are removed from their support system at home. The implications of the current study reinforce how important the group-oriented setting is for Latinos—whether in college or in the workforce. Tamis-LeMonda et al. (2008) show that scholarship and collectivism are related. They found that cultural values and developmental goals may be viewed as conflicting or functionally dependent. The influence of the parents may cause conflict, where the goal of autonomy interferes with the goal of relatedness. Gloria et al. (2017) look at Latino males who are entering and graduating from higher education at significantly lower rates than their counterparts, focusing on their educational coping processes. They found Latinos contend with incongruent cultural values between their home and family (e.g., collaboration and collectivism) and those of the university setting (e.g., individualism, competition). This leads to psychological, social, and cultural challenges to their education. To cope with this internal conflict, Latinos search for others who reflect their realities and share similar experiences.

Saad-Lessler and Richman (2014) sought to understand how Mexican-Americans' collectivist cultural values affect their savings behavior and their preparation for retirement. Even when Mexican-American workers are eligible to participate in retirement savings plans at work, they have low participation rates because collectivist informal economy of Mexican immigrants and their children is at odds with the formal defined contribution retirement savings system—which is geared toward both autonomous individuals and higher-income workers who benefit from the program's tax deductions. Their collectivist nature leads them to be more comfortable with relying on their personal networks, rather than banks, for loans. Treas and Mazumdar (2002) acknowledge the collectivist nature of immigrants and observe the familiar relationships. They noticed the rise in older individuals who migrated to be close to their children. Their collectivist nature leads them to sacrifice their personal happiness in order to support their children's families—almost as if in the role of a subordinate. Treas and Mazumdar (2002) noted that they were more likely to blame American culture for their unhappiness and not their children.

Campos and Kim (2017): Relationships are at the center of the human social environment, and their quality and longevity are now recognized to have particular relevance for health. Despite the predominantly favorable effects of familism values, there is also indication that the centrality of family can also adversely impact Latino health when relationships fail to meet cultural ideals of closeness and positivity (e.g., attempted suicide in young Latinas experiencing high mother-daughter conflict). Still, positive relational processes are linked to healthy and long lives, and the role of the collectivist Latino culture is likely important for Latino health.

Perhaps through understanding the correlation between collectivism and acculturation, further insights into the Hispanic consumer behavior can be gleaned. As collectivism incorporates the community into decisions and ideals, layering acculturation's effects would allow for modeling to further understand what happens upstream and downstream from the decision-maker—and how it varies contextually between generations within the community.

HYPOTHESES

The literature review suggests that as the level of acculturation increases, the level of collectivism might decrease. In addition, it is also assumed that younger Hispanics are more prone to acculturation than those who are older. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Increased levels of acculturation among Hispanics living in the United States will have a negative correlation with collectivism scores.

H2: Younger Hispanics living in the United States are more likely to be high acculturated than older Hispanics.

METHOD

Data for this study was collected via an online survey method. The data collection was performed by a private company that used a national panel. The private company employed a pre-screening technique and sample validation to ensure that appropriate responses were captured. Respondents were offered incentives in the form of e-Rewards® points. The questionnaire required approximately 15 minutes to completed with age as the main qualifier: individuals were required to be at least 18 years of age in order to participate.

To ensure validity, three quality control questions were inserted throughout the questionnaire. The final sample size used was 707 respondents. Hispanic countries of origin were Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Peru and Colombia.

Levels of acculturation were measured using a previously-developed scale (Primary Research Acculturation Model Summary Explanation, 2014) which scores respondents and assigns them a specific acculturation category. The adopted scale was originally created in 1998 with 20 questions that were asked to 100 different individuals. The current model contains five questions, which are as follows:

1. When you are at home, speaking with family and friends, would you say you prefer to speak...?
2. Were you born in the United States?
3. [If “no” to the previous question”] At what age did you come to the United States?
4. How long have you been in the United States?
5. Thinking about Latino and American cultures and lifestyles, would you say...?

After receiving the responses, the scores for each question are added and an acculturation level is assigned as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Acculturation Scoring

Total Points	Level of Acculturation
From 0 to 6	Unacculturated
From 7 to 13	Partially Unacculturated
From 14 to 20	Bicultural
From 21 to 27	Partially Acculturated
From 28 to 34	Acculturated
Maximum of 34 points	Maximum acculturation

However, as the results were totaled, the *Unacculturated* category did not receive enough results to be considered significant and reliable. Because of this, the results from this section were rolled into the subsequent section. As a result, the following categories (shown in Table 2) were used:

Table 2: Acculturation Scoring (Modified)

Total Points	Level of Acculturation
From 0 to 13	Partially Unacculturated
From 14 to 20	Bicultural
From 21 to 27	Partially Acculturated
From 28 to 34	Acculturated
Maximum of 34 points	Maximum acculturation

To measure collectivism, five items from the Collectivism-Individualism scale (Yoo, Donthu, & Lenartowicz, 2011) were used:

1. Individuals should stick with the group even through difficulties.
2. Group welfare is more important than individual rewards.
3. Group success is more important than individual success.
4. Individuals should only pursue their goals after considering the welfare of the group.
5. Group loyalty should be encouraged even if individual goals suffer.

The results were then used in a Pearson correlation and Bonferroni post hoc analysis in order to validate H1 and H2, respectively. A sixth item was removed because the loading was below 0.60. The cut point for factor analysis loading used was 0.70.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The results from the modified scale of acculturation levels among the 707 respondents are shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Acculturation Scoring and Results

Total Points	Level of Acculturation	Results
From 0 to 13	Partially Unacculturated	7.8%
From 14 to 20	Bicultural	18.7%
From 21 to 27	Partially Acculturated	40.5%
From 28 to 34	Acculturated	33.1%
Maximum of 34 points	Maximum acculturation	6.5%

A Pearson correlation analysis was used to understand the relationship between acculturation and collectivism in H1. As shown in Table 4, the correlation was significant to 0.037, which indicates that a negative relationship exists with the level of acculturation (-0.079). Therefore, as the level of acculturation increases, the level of collectivism decreases, and H1 is supported.

Table 4: Collectivism and Acculturation Correlations

		Sum of Total Points of Acculturation	Collectivism Levels Total
Total Points of Acculturation	Pearson Correlation	1	-.079*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.037
	N	707	707
Collectivism Levels Total	Pearson Correlation	-.079*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.037	
	N	707	707

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

A Bonferroni post hoc test was used to understand age and acculturation as discussed in H2. An ANOVA test indicated that a significant difference existed among age groups 35-44 and 55-64 as shown in Table 5. Specifically, the univariate post hoc Bonferroni test shows that a significant difference exists between the age groups of 35-44 and 55-64, indicating that (MD = -2.51128. Sig. = 0.05) this group of 35-44 has a higher level of acculturation than the 55-64 group, but not among others. Therefore, the hypothesis is only partially supported.

Table 5: Acculturation (Bonferroni Post Hoc)

What is your age group?	What is your age group?	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
35 – 44	18 – 24	-1.58747	.95446	1.000
	25 – 34	-1.12782	.78479	1.000
	45 – 54	-2.41791	.82005	.092
	55 – 64	-2.51128*	.80034	.050
	65 – 74	-2.50708	.98537	.313
	75 – 84	-.65414	2.27655	1.000
	85 or older	-8.32080	3.85890	.879
	55 – 64	18 – 24	.92381	.94581
25 – 34		1.38346	.77426	1.000
35 – 44		2.51128*	.80034	.050
45 – 54		.09336	.80997	1.000
65 – 74		.00420	.97700	1.000
75 – 84		1.85714	2.27294	1.000
85 or older		-5.80952	3.85678	1.000

DISCUSSION

This study examined the relationship between acculturation and collectivism as well as acculturation among different age groups. Acculturation's impact on collectivism was examined because it has been shown that it leads to a shift in values over time and generations (Jensen-Arnett, 1999; Miranda et al. 2006), which can then lead to different product preferences as well

as preference toward differently-positioned advertisements. This provides exploratory direction for future research regarding acculturation and collectivism.

Studies do support that values change over time, as indicated by Faber et al. (1987). While this relates to how Hispanics rate the importance of certain attributes of a product, this can also be traced back to how acculturation impacts the dimensions of the Hispanic culture, with collectivism included. Over time, a product's position as providing a group benefit may have a reduced impact, which will lead marketing communication professionals to review attributes that may be of higher significance at that current stage of acculturation among Hispanics.

Additional research into the changes of Hofstede's other cultural dimensions (e.g., power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, short-/long-term orientation, indulgence) might also further highlight how acculturation changes Hispanics' perspectives over time. This would allow for an understanding of how some attributes might replace collectivistic attributes as a key selling point to some products. While the study indicates a negative relationship between acculturation and collectivism, the scale did not account for an increase in individualism, which might be captured in future research considerations.

Finally, it is important to understand that acculturation is constant process and requires consideration on multiple fronts. As Palumbo and Teich discussed, acculturation plays a significant role and can generate a long-term relationship with a lowly-acculturated Hispanic consumer, as they are willing to make purchases and collectively possess great buying power (Palumbo & Teich, 2004). By applying acculturation scores to the target audience, marketers can gauge the relevancy of certain product attributes and the effectiveness of positioning statements before releasing the campaign for public reception.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between acculturation and collectivism as well as the relationship between age and acculturation. Through the research and analysis conducted, the study provides a contribution to existing literature by highlighting that a relationship exists between acculturation and collectivism, which indicates that it is fluid and changes over time. This information provides value to marketing communication professionals as they continue to compete for Hispanic consumers' attention amidst a sea of advertisements. For example, Hispanics who index high on collectivism are likely to have a more favorable response to an advertisement that reflects the group benefits of a product, while those who have a lower score may find other attributes more attractive. This can also be used to shape advertisements in areas where Hispanics show below-average interest. By highlighting the benefits of a service or product to the group as opposed to the individual, the marketing communication professional may have a greater likelihood of obtaining the target audience's attention.

The study contains its own respective limitations as it pertains to its results. Because it is based on a convenience sample, the results cannot be generalized to the greater population. Additionally, the study did not measure rates of acculturation between age groups (i.e., 25-34 acculturating at a higher rate than 55-64) and only measured the existing level of acculturation in

the age group. Further, it did not measure purchasing behavior as it relates to collectivism and product messaging. This should be considered in future research.

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