

Abstract of thesis entitled:

Cultural Fit and Subjective Well-Being: Endorsement of Cultural Values Predict

Subjective Well-Being Only in Collectivistic Societies

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The current research examined the effect of cultural fit, or the congruency between values that individuals endorse and values that are normative in their culture, as a predictor of life satisfaction. In a large international dataset drawn from the World Values Survey (Study 1), the effect of cultural fit was found in collectivistic societies but not in individualistic societies. While the endorsement of collectivistic values was predictive of life satisfaction in collectivistic societies, the reverse effect in individualistic societies, the endorsement of individualistic values predicting well-being, was not found. Study 2 examined these effects with a more comprehensive set of individualistic and collectivistic values administered to Chinese and Western participants. Findings replicated those in Study 1 in that the effect of cultural fit was observed only among Chinese participants. In Studies 3 and 4, the societal collectivistic societal normative characteristic in Hong Kong was manipulated

to examine the role of cultural fit experimentally. It found endorsement of collectivistic values was a significant predictor of life satisfaction when collectivistic normative characteristic in Hong Kong was salient. The asymmetric pattern of the results may reflect diverging ways of approaching culturally valued goals.

*Keywords:* cultural fit, subjective well-being, collectivism, individualism