

CROSS-CULTURAL NOTES

Under this heading appear summaries of studies which, in 500 words or less, provide comparable data from two or more societies through the use of a standard measuring instrument; additional details concerning the results can be obtained by communicating directly with the investigator or, when indicated, by requesting supplementary material from Microfiche Publications.

The Journal of Social Psychology, 1981, 113, 133-134.

THREE ASPECTS OF LOCUS OF CONTROL IN GERMAN, AMERICAN, AND JAPANESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS*

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Several studies using the one-dimensional Rotter Scale suggest North-South, as well as West-East, cultural differences in locus of control (LOC) and, above all, state strong sex differences. More differentiated data can be obtained with Levenson's three-dimensional IPC scales.¹ Comparing American and Japanese students, Mahler² found significantly higher I scores (internality), almost significantly lower P scores (powerful others control) and significantly lower C scores (control by chance forces) among the Americans.

The present investigators compared the IPC scores of 80 female and 51 male German university students with Mahler's samples, expecting no significant differences between the Germans and the Americans, but anticipating differences between the Germans and the Japanese on all three scales in the direction Mahler had found for his American sample. The data were recorded in 1973 (Japan, U.S.A.) and 1977 (West Germany). Age ranges of all samples were similar (18 to 24 years).

None of the IPC scales showed significant interactions between sex and nationality in two-factorial analysis of variance. One-factorial analysis of

* Received in the Editorial Office, Provincetown, Massachusetts, on November 5, 1979. Copyright, 1981, by The Journal Press.

¹ Levenson, H. Activism and powerful others: Distinctions within the concept of internal-external control. *J. Personal. Assess.*, 1974, 38, 377-383.

² Mahler, J. A comparative study of locus of control. *Psychologia*, 1974, 17, 135-139. The authors appreciate Prof. Mahler's friendly help and the use of his data.

variance and Duncan's test showed significant values for the intercultural comparisons in all three scales. As expected, German and American students ranged significantly higher ($p < .01$) on the I scale than the Japanese, but did not differ significantly from each other ($F = 90.53$, $df = 2/442$, $p < .01$). The Americans had the lowest (less external) mean on the P scale; the Japanese mean was similar; but the German mean differed significantly from both ($F = 40.41$, $df = 2/442$, $p < .01$). In scale C the Americans also scored significantly lower ($p < .01$) than the Germans and the Japanese, who did not differ significantly ($F = 39.01$, $df = 2/442$, $p < .01$). Similar significant differences characterized the male and female national subsamples.³ Comparisons of the IPC scale values between the sexes without respect to national origin showed that males and females differed significantly ($p < .05$) only on the C scale, indicating higher externality in chance control among the females.

The results suggest it is important to differentiate the various aspects of LOC. Whereas the I scale showed, as expected, internal control values of the American and the German students to be significantly higher than those of the Japanese students, the P and C scales offered an unanticipated outcome: the Germans produced significantly higher P values than the other two samples, indicating the German students were guided by a higher degree of external LOC generated by a feeling of powerlessness. The German and the Japanese samples ranged significantly higher on the C scale than the American sample, marking the German and Japanese student groups with a higher degree of external fatalistic LOC.

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³ These results are reported in detail in an extended version, which can be obtained without charge from the first author.