

Chapter 1 : Cross-Cultural Research - Wikipedia

Cross-cultural research is a scientific method of comparative research which focuses on systematic comparisons that compares culture to culture and explicitly aims to answer questions about the.

Douglas R White World Cultures 14 2: An Introduction for Students¹ Douglas R. Human communities have a variety of practices, beliefs, social roles, norms, expressions, forms of organization and conflicts economic, political, legal, religious, expressive and artistic that exhibit various sorts of internal coherence as well as cleavages within communities. These coherences and cleavages bear many close connections to the different historical experiences, physical and social environments in which people live. They include configurations of elements and characteristic ways of interrelating that are shared with neighboring and interacting groups, and shared among dispersed groups that have common historical experiences and similarities, including common origin, common membership in historical civilizations, and languages that are mutually understood or that derive common families. Lines of cleavage, conflict, and marginality, of course, are part of cultural phenomena. Elements and relationships that individuals or communities have in common are shared in a variety of ways. Some, such as the more intensive patterns of interaction that derive from common residence, joint experience, and discourse in a common language or system of signs, are relatively well bounded. Other patterns of sharing or similarity derive from processes of dispersal: Interactions are by no means limited to localities, but to the trajectories of inhabitants who move through and between localities. Cultures consist of shared constructions that emerge out of social interactions of sets of individuals who inhabit overlapping social and physical spaces. Coherence may be viewed as an emergent property, but may be present or absent to varying degrees and along varying dimensions or trajectories. Sociocultural anthropology, as would be expected from a study of shared and contrastive constructions that embody meanings attributed to human life, is not an easy discipline, nor is there complete agreement among practitioners as to how to proceed. Cross-cultural research takes a comparative approach to the complex problems of asking: What are the patterns of coherence and sources of coherence in the practices, beliefs, social roles, norms, expressions, and forms of organization and conflict in: How much of that coherence is due to: What are the patterns of decoherence and disjuncture, misunderstanding and conflict that arise: How can we distinguish patterns of coherence that include conflict, obstruction, resistance and dysfunction from decoherence, the superposition of distinct but independent systems that, at least for some initial time period, do not interact? Unfortunately, while standards for good and honest ethnography are espoused, there is no absolute ground for legislating agreement and banishing disagreement about judgments. A strictly postmodern approach to these questions is often viewed as having failed on these grounds, to the extent that it arrogates to itself a privileged position and consensus while denying the validity of approaches that do not match perfectly to this imagined consensus. Murdock and White, in creating the Standard Sample for Cross-Cultural Research, address three central questions that revolve around the study of culture. First, what are the foci of study? Second, what are the issues of coherence or decoherence within the foci studied? Third, how do these issues apply between foci? First, there is the problem of what it is that one wants to study in terms of foci: Comparing communities through ethnographies is not the only approach to cultural comparisons, but is one that focuses on clusters of people who inhabit, at least in part, specific and stable community sites that are often the loci of ethnography. One could as well have other standard samples such as ones devoted to the study of migration, to the study of institutions and organizations, to the study of particular types of cultures, subcultures, or populations. Their insistence on this point is not on communities as representatives of larger cultures, but on communities as pinpointed times and places in which ethnographic study has been sufficiently well carried out that it is possible to list, from the ethnography, what specific bundles of practices, beliefs, social roles, norms, expressions, forms of organization and conflicts economic, political, legal, religious, expressive and artistic are present in each of the specific times and places of the distinct ethnographic foci that constitute the sample. At this level, there is no a priori assumption whatsoever that the observed elements exhibit internal coherence. That is a matter open for study, both through analyses of single cases, and through the comparisons of

different cases. Cross-cultural research has often been accused of assuming at the outset that cultures are well bounded discrete entities or that they are functionally coherent units when in fact these are among the questions that are open to study. Samples used for purposes of comparison are precisely the opposite: Both the type of community and the situations in which its inhabitants find themselves are part of the variation that is studied. Second, there are the problems and issues of coherence or decoherence within the foci studied, as in the comparative study of human communities. The functionalist approach to ethnography was vastly overgeneralized in its heyday, which lasted from the s through the s. Murdock and White Functional linkage of traits asserted by an ethnographer in one society, for example, are often contradicted that one trait but not the other is present in a similar neighboring society, or by the fact that the traits do not correlate across societies. Third, there is the problem and the issues of coherence or decoherence between foci in the study of human communities due to common historical origin or experience. Cultural coherence or decoherence within and between human communities: For the study of culture and human behavior, cross-cultural research provides evidence: The five sets of terms above are paired in brackets because the research agenda may examine any and all of these types of evidence. Negative evidence may debunk a theory or hypothesis. Positive evidence, if consistent, reliable, and replicable, may support it. The importance of this type of research is not all or none, across the board for coherence of one sort or another, but in the specific linkages that are found and the exploration of linkages and explanations. Cross-cultural research is neither functional or historical or evolutionary, but may be any combination including none of the three; it is not necessarily dependent on surveys of ethnographic snapshots without time depth, but may be diachronic and concerned with change and cultural dynamics. It is not necessarily based on trait inventories or attributes of individual cases, but may include or focus on networks of relationships between as well as with the foci sampled for study. It may be based on a sample of cases, a random sample, or an exhaustive set of all existing, extant, or available cases for study. The specific findings of cross-cultural research have been summarized in part in a book by Levinson and Malone and published in thousands of individual books and articles. Much has been accomplished in this field of research, mostly by specialized or additive increments where each individual author has selected a distinct sample. Still, in spite of the great accomplishments of cross-cultural research, and the potential for geometric increments on our understanding of human communities using the standard sample as a cumulative database, cross-cultural research has lagged behind other fields because of the seeming commitments of contributors to one or another theory exclusive of the others. The favoring of pet theories in cross-cultural research was evident in the first series of studies, from Edward Tylor to Hobhouse, Wheeler and Ginsberg , where cross- cultural correlations between traits were taken to indicate evolutionary sequences. In trying to disprove evolutionary theory in favor of the particularity of distinct historical sequences, Alfred Kroeber in the s and s used correlations and similarities between societies in the same region to infer common origin, and to reconstruct historical or prehistorical sequences from shared patterns in trait distributions. Harold Driver , questioned the validity of the methods of reconstruction of both the 19th century evolutionists and the mid 20th century Boasian historicists as well as the correlational inferences of the functionalists. It seems that scientific consensus, like that of postmodern sociocultural anthropology, does not brook criticism very well. The standard sample proposed by Murdock and White follows the agnostic approach to method and theory proposed by Francis Galton and developed by Driver and Naroll. Cross-cultural research is certainly not the sole arbiter of hypotheses and theories in the social sciences, or anthropology in particular. But as in the sciences, all of the social sciences have come to recognize that a triangulation of converging results, obtained by different methods and ways of looking at and analyzing data, is a useful requirement for development of valid results in any area of inquiry. One of the key advantages of cross-cultural research is that the data come from the widest possible diversity of sources: Ideally, data from both past and present will be part of the triangulation of sources of data. Completed ethnographies necessarily rely on data from the past and need to be understood if we are to learn from ethnographies to be conducted in the present. A glossary of terms that define some of the salient concepts in one or more topics that lend themselves to research investigation using cross-cultural data. Methods for cross-cultural analysis. Software that is useful to apply methodological strategies to existing data or, in some courses, data that is assembled by the students

themselves from the reading of ethnographies. Posing and testing of competing hypotheses. Simple statistics such as correlation coefficients methods of association and tests of the statistical significance of departures of observed empirical patterns from what might be expected from data that have no particular pattern such that the observed variation e. Some of the existing social science and anthropological literature on topics of concern to the course or to the student. Perusal and search techniques to interrogate on-line research materials coded variables, topically indexed, codebooks and library or on-line references the sources of data and of previous studies on selected topics so as to identify and select a series of variables for investigation within the timeframe of the course, and used in developing a term project. Example of investigating a relationship. Table 1A has labels for the political variable across the columns, and the absence labeled 0 or presence labeled 1 of agriculture in the rows. The numbers in the cells of the table are counts of the number of cases in the sample of communities in the standard sample, according to where each is placed with respect to the two variables. These are summed for each row in the Total column, along with the percentages of political types in each row. As will be seen, when agriculture is absent, there is a very high percentage. When agriculture is present, Note that the total number of cases is out of possible, which indicates that three societies lacked sufficient data to be included in the table. The differences in these percentages as compared with those in the final row of the table the world averages, so to speak: Example of a Cross-Tabulation data source Murdock and White; Appendix A Table 1A has labels in the columns because these were already provided in the standard sample database, but such labels are lacking for the row variable because a more complicated variable that classified the different modes of subsistence for each community, and the zero- one labels were the produce of a recoding that combined three types of agriculture advanced, horticulture, and shifting recoded as 1 in contrast to nonagricultural modes of subsistence. Recoding is one of the operations that will be learned in using the statistical programs SPSS, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences used to make the table. Here there are three different measures of correlation between the variables, and corresponding levels of statistical significance. The difference among the types of correlation is among the items to be learned. Correlation coefficients are most useful in reporting series of ratios among the entries in the same column that are monotonically increasing or decreasing in comparing pairs of rows percentages in cross-tabulations. Here, as in Table 1A, the ratios of percentages for the first three successive columns are. The presence of agricultural then, is correlated with increased political integration above the local community, and biased towards two or more levels. Association measures for data in Table 1A As shown by the pattern of decreasing ratios of the percentages between rows 1 and 2 of Table 1A, a positive correlation between the two variables is measured by coefficients Phi, V, and tau, as in Table 1B, that are significantly greater than 0 no correlation but no more than 1 perfect correlation. Significance the rightmost column of Table 1B is measured by the likelihood that such a correlation would depart from a value of zero if the values on each of the two variables were randomly and independently distributed amongst the cases. Randomization does not automatically produce a correlation of zero, but will produce a normal or Bell curve of the likely outcomes, a curve whose mean is zero, with departures from zero having exponential lower probability the further they are from zero, either in the positive or negative direction. The smaller the significance value, the more significant the correlation. Table 1C gives additional observations that are useful only if the relationship between the two variables does not follow a monotonically nondecreasing or nonincreasing pattern, as is the case with Table 1A. If the results in Table 1B were not significant e. Association measures for data in Table 1A 4. To generate cross-tabulations of the types seen in Tables 1ABC the program is accessed at the computer lab as follows instructions are also on-line at [http:](http://) Figure 1 next page illustrates some of the processes involved in producing Tables 1ABC. This database has been in development for use in a computer lab, on CDs, and on-line. This is the first year, thanks to Khaltourina, Korotayev and Divale, that the database has been sufficiently well checked for data quality, with corrected files replacing those originally published in the World Cultures electronic journal, that this teaching system merits widespread distribution and on-line documentation. Next, you find and click the file you want from the list of files and their respective topics and authors at [http:](http://) To merge files, click Data, Merge Files, Add Variables, and then the window above will open for a second time and you may select a second third, etc. For instructions for opening and merging files, for locating codebooks see: The Ethno-Atlas maps of world

DOWNLOAD PDF WHAT IS CROSS CULTURAL RESEARCH

distributions, made by the MapTab program that comes with the World Cultures journal, are available from the course web page. Maps may be copied to disk and inserted into research paper to show geographic and historical patterns. The Standard Sample facilitates adjustments that will lower statistical significance by ordering societies by an alignment of the sample that facilitates measurement of cultural clustering.

Chapter 2 : Cross-cultural research overview | Human Relations Area Files

Cross-cultural research most commonly involves comparison of some cultural trait (or relationships between traits) across a sample of societies. What is most important to keep in mind is that cultures change over time, so most cross-cultural comparisons.

Subjects Description As intercultural encounters between people in the modern world become more common, important questions have been raised about the nature of culture-specific differences and similarities. Focusing on the relationship between culture and human development, this timely book offers an interdisciplinary exploration of key developmental processes. It combines psychological and sociological approaches with cross-cultural research to examine phenomena such as the transfer of culture between generations and the universality of attachment theory. Drawing on detailed research from a range of cultural groups, leading international researchers consider the impact of social change and modernization on the development of the individual and at the societal level. Theoretical and methodological issues are presented in terms of how to apply the results of cross-cultural research as well as recent empirical research done in specialized areas of the field. Finally, short-term intercultural exchanges are examined and used to suggest some of the potential practical uses of cross-cultural research for the future. This book will be essential reading for anyone studying or researching in cultural psychology, cross-cultural psychology, acculturation or behavioral development. It will also prove an invaluable source of information for anyone interested in sociology and the social sciences in general. Table of Contents Biographical Notes. Theory and Methods in Cross-Cultural Research. Lonner, The Psychological Study of Culture: Issues and Questions of Enduring Importance. On the Development of Developmental Theories. The Case of Attachment. Morelli, Attachment and Culture: Bridging Relativism and Universalism. Wolfgang Friedlmeier, Emotional Development and Culture: Bernhard Nauck, Changing Value of Children: Seginer, Adolescent Future Orientation: Emergence of a Different Pattern. Helmut Klages, Modernization and Value Change.

Chapter 3 : Basic Guide to Cross-Cultural Research | Human Relations Area Files

Cross-cultural studies is the third form of cross-cultural comparisons. The first is comparison of case studies, the second is controlled comparison among variants of a common derivation, [clarification needed] and the third is comparison within a sample of cases.

This broad definition includes both contemporary cross-cultural psychology and cultural psychology. Contemporary cross-cultural psychology examines psychological phenomena in many cultures. It measures psychological constructs equivalently in different cultures. An ideal study would use an instrument that has equivalent meaning in cultures sampled from all the cultural regions of the world. One of the purposes of cross-cultural psychology is to establish the generality of psychological findings, and thus a broad sampling of cultures is appropriate. The theoretical framework is universalistic, and assumes the psychic unity of humankind. Thus, it focuses on one culture at a time, and examines how psychological phenomena are modified by that culture. It does not necessarily accept the psychic unity of humankind Shweder. There are several branches of cultural psychology e. Indigenous psychologies are related to cultural psychologies. They emphasize the explication of the meaning of key culture-specific concepts e. The tradition is rooted in the European Enlightenment of the seventeenth to nineteenth century, when philosophers such as Hume and Kant emphasized the basic similarity of human behavior across times and cultures and the need for cross-cultural research in identifying the principles governing this universality. In the Romantic rebellion against the Enlightenment expressed in the work of Rousseau and Herder. Attempts to compare cultures cannot but involve peripheral aspects of psychological functioning. Examples include the distinction between universalism and cultural relativism. The distinction between a comparative and noncomparative perspective in anthropology and between the nomothetic and ideographic approach in mainstream psychology have similar roots. Goals of the Study of Cultural Factors in Cross-Cultural Psychology Three goals of comparative and noncomparative approaches can be discerned: These goals have an implicit temporal order. Cross-cultural psychology has enough impetus at present to conclude with confidence that important steps have been taken toward the realization of the first goal. Instruments covering various psychological domains such as intelligence, personality, and social behavior have been administered in cross-cultural studies. The second goal has also been well studied. Social psychology provides many examples of the former; there are ample demonstrations of the vital and not infrequently neglected influence of cultural context on social-psychological functioning. The pervasive cross-cultural differences in the social-psychological domain have undoubtedly added to their popularity in cross-cultural psychology. In a large cross-cultural study, these authors demonstrated that in the built environment and with openness of the natural vista, illusion susceptibility is positively related to the occurrence of geometric shapes like rectangles and squares. Another example is the ecocultural framework that is frequently employed to link psychological aspects to features of the environment. In particular, food-gathering style has been studied, based on a dichotomy of nomadic hunting and food gatherers living in loosely organized societies in sparsely populated regions versus sedentary agriculturalists living in tightly knit societies in more densely populated regions. Various psychological differences of these societies have been examined, such as child-rearing patterns and cognitive style. The second goal has also been examined from a non-comparative perspective. Two approaches are discussed here. The first is cultural psychology, a relatively young subdiscipline. It is closely related to social constructionism and aims at an in-depth understanding of psychological functioning by studying in situ behavior, usually in only one culture. Culture and personality are taken to constitute each other in a process of mutual influences. Culture is seen as a system of meanings, with studies often focusing on how individuals gradually acquire the perspective of a culture. In line with common practice in anthropology ethnography in particular , assessment methods are utilized that impose little or no a priori categorization on the data, such as unstructured interviews and tape and video recordings. Because of the interest in learning processes, diachronic longitudinal designs are often employed. Indigenous psychologies provide another example of an increasingly popular, noncomparative approach to understanding cultural variation. Indigenous psychologies have been developed

in various areas, such as Latin America, India, Japan, and China. The need for developing an indigenous psychology is often triggered by findings that a non-Western application of a common Western theory or instrument does not do justice to the specifics of the non-Western group. In various degrees of elaboration, these psychologies try to overcome Western biases in theory and assessment, ultimately aiming at an enhancement of the adequacy and applicability of psychological knowledge for these areas. Indigenous psychologies are not yet developed enough to have a serious effect on Western psychology. To date, the integration of cross-cultural findings and mainstream theories of psychology, the third goal of cross-cultural psychology, remains an open challenge.

Methodological Issues in Cross-Cultural Psychology

The largest part of the cross-cultural knowledge base is related to the testing of the applicability of Western theories and measures. In such studies, methodological features tend to require attention. It is therefore not surprising that cross-cultural psychology has been described as a method. A good example of such a concern is the sampling of subjects within cultural populations. Whereas the anthropologist can often rely on a small number of informants who, because of their expertise, have good access to the cultural knowledge of interest, such as the indigenous taxonomy of a particular flora, the cross-cultural psychologist usually deals with psychological characteristics that vary substantially across the members of a population. The sampling procedure that is applied then has a bearing on the interpretability of the results. A comparison of two haphazardly chosen samples is susceptible to interpretation problems: Is the observed difference in psychological functioning e. Three popular sampling procedures represent different ways of dealing with confounding characteristics. The first is random, or probability, sampling. It assumes an available listing of eligible units, such as persons or households. If properly applied, such a sample will yield an adequate picture of the cultural population. Yet, confounding variables, which are not controlled for in this approach, may challenge the interpretation of cross-cultural differences. The second type is matched sampling. A population is stratified e. Using a matching procedure, confounding variables can then be controlled, but such a sample may poorly represent a whole population. The latter may be improved by applying statistical weights to individual scores e. Matching is appropriate when cultural groups are not too dissimilar with regards to confounding variables, but the procedure cannot correct adequately for confounding variables when there is little or no overlap across cultures e. The third sampling procedure combines random sampling with the measurement of control variables and enables a post hoc statistical control of ambient variables. The applicability of this procedure is limited only by the assumptions of the statistical technique utilized; for example, an analysis of covariance assumes equal regression coefficients of the confounding variables in the prediction of a target variable.

Cross-cultural studies also have to deal with the sampling of cultures.

Again, three types of sampling can be envisaged. The first is random sampling. Because of the prohibitively large cost of a random sample from all existing cultures, it often amounts to a random sample of a particular groups of cultures e. The second and most frequently observed type of culture sampling is convenience sampling. The choice of cultures is then governed by considerations of availability and cost efficiency. In many studies, researchers from different countries cooperate, with each collecting data in his or her own country. The reasons for choosing a particular culture are more based on substantive considerations in the third type, called systematic sampling. A culture is deliberately chosen because of some characteristic, such as in Segall, Campbell. Extensive experience with the application of Western instruments often adapted in a non-Western context has led to a set of concepts and recommended practices. Central concepts are bias and in equivalence. Bias refers to the presence of validity-threatening aspects of a test or inventory such as inappropriate items; a stimulus is biased if it does not have the same psychological meaning in the cultures studied. Equivalence refers to the implications of bias on the comparability of scores across cultures.

Multilingual Studies in Cross-Cultural Psychology

Cross-cultural studies are often multilingual, and recommended practices for how instruments can be translated or adapted have been developed. Most multilingual studies employ existing instruments. A translation, followed by an independent back-translation and a comparison of the original and back-translated version, possibly followed by some alterations of the translation is accomplished. Yet, they do not address all problems. First, back-translations put a premium on literal reproduction; this may give rise to stilted language in the target version that lacks the readability and natural flow of the original. A second problem involves translatability.

The use of idioms. During the last decade there has been a growing awareness that translations and adaptations require the combined expertise of psychologists with competence in the construct studied and experts in the local language and culture of the target culture. In this so-called committee approach, in which the expertise of all relevant disciplines is combined, there is usually no formal accuracy check of the translation. The committee approach is widespread among large international bodies such as the United Nations and the European Union, in which texts have to be translated into many languages. Individual and Country-Level Studies in Cross-Cultural Psychology Cross-cultural studies can compare psychological functioning at various levels of aggregation, ranging from individuals to households, classes, schools, regions, and even whole countries. By far, most studies compare individuals, while more recently there is an increasing interest in country-level comparisons. With regards to the former, much research has been carried out in the area of intelligence and cognitive development. Factor analyses of cross-cultural applications of intellectual tasks have yielded strong support for the universality of the cognitive apparatus, with factorial structures found in Western and non-Western groups tending to be identical. On the other hand, average scores on intelligence tests in particular differ rather consistently across cultural groups, with Western individuals frequently obtaining higher scores than non-Western. The interpretation of these differences was and still is controversial, and inconclusive reasons have been offered, such as genetic origin, environmental background, and measurement artifacts the differential suitability of the instrument. Piagetian theory has also spurred cross-cultural research. The order of the stages as proposed by Piaget has been found to be universal, yet the age of onset of each stage tends to differ, with more cross-cultural variation in age found at the higher stages. Evidence for the universality of the highest stage, formal-operational thinking, is weak, although the poor applicability of formal-operational tasks in particular cultures can at least partly account for this observation. Evidence from cultural anthropology based on observations of behavior in situ supports the universality of formal-operational thinking. In sum, there are no studies refuting the universality of basic features of cognitive functioning, like primacy and recency effects in short-term memory retrieval, the virtually unlimited storage capacity of long-term memory, the attainment of Piagetian conservation, and logical reasoning. Nevertheless, the area of application of certain cognitive skills may differ across cultures and often across professional groups within cultures. The second line of research attempts to establish the universality or cultural specificity of certain traits or personality structure in general. Despite minor problems in both traditions Eysenck applied a statistical procedure to demonstrate factorial stability with a low statistical power, while the fifth factor of the Big Five could not always be retrieved, the personality structure among Western subjects seems to be essentially universal. However, some non-Western studies have pointed to the incompleteness of Western models of personality.

Chapter 4 : Cross-cultural studies - Wikipedia

Cross-Cultural Research (formerly Behavior Science Research) is a peer-reviewed academic journal that publishes papers in the field of Social Sciences.

Fred van Raaij , Tilburg University ABSTRACT - Cross-cultural consumer research witnesses an increasing interest of researchers, both for the managerial strategy of multinational companies and in order to establish the universality or specificity of theoretical construct and findings. In this paper the validity of the hypothetical constructs is discussed in order to create functionally equivalent constructs across cultures and equivalence of samples from the cultures. A theoretical structure in which a hypothetical construct is embedded serves as a manner for attaining the functional equivalence of instruments and constructs in order to interpret the findings and to implement managerial strategy. At the meeting Galton criticized this paper, raising the problem of independence of cases. Elder describes this as follows: What if society A "borrowed" the juxtaposition from society B, in which case the juxtaposition is historical rather than functional? What if A and B are merely variants of some common overarching society C? In either case, what appear to be two cases may actually be two illustrations of the same case, in which event the cross-cultural comparison has not produced any further evidence for the generalization of the juxtaposition than did the single-culture observation. Triandis, Malpass, and Davidson mention the following reasons for conducting cross-cultural research: Some introductory remarks make clear the ground for the remainder of this paper: First, cross-cultural research as comparative research is not unique. All behavioral research is comparative; that is, it involves a comparison of experimental and a control group, e. Secondly, consumer research is largely "made in the USA. This may introduce "ethnocentrism" in the type of questions we address, the concepts we employ, and the explanations we give of the results. For instance, the study of "consumer satisfaction" is relevant in a western mass-consumption society but not, or in a different way, in a developing country. Another example is a book by Nieuwenhuijze reporting the results of an analysis of Islam, that was banned in Indonesia on the grounds that a non-Muslim could not properly examine either the history or the tenets of Islam. A last example is a questionnaire statement: In that case, we have to measure "social responsibility" with another statement or set of statements. Thirdly, the terms "cross-cultural" and "cross-national" are used in the literature. I prefer "cross-cultural" because this term reflects more possible differences in consumer behavior than "cross-national. Many of the problems and caveats that apply for cross-cultural research are also valid for market segmentation studies using the segmentation variables of race, ethnic background, and social class. Cross-cultural studies on consumer behavior include: These studies compare a US sample of consumers with samples in France, England, Canada, Mexico, and Germany, all nations of the western world. Sheth and Sethi developed a theory of cross-cultural buyer behavior for the diffusion of innovations, and Dubois developed a framework for the study of the cultural factors that affect the rate of adoption of an innovation. Green and White give methodological considerations in cross-cultural consumer research. De Vos and Hippler and Triandis, Malpass, and Davidson review cross-cultural research in psychology. A long cross-cultural tradition exists in anthropology. Benedict suggests that cultures - especially of small, isolated groups - are often integrated wholes wherein the parts coalesce around certain basic values. To extract parts from the wholes, compare them out of context with parts extracted from other cultures, and then conclude that one has found cross-cultural similarities or differences does gross injustice to social reality. Osgood , using the semantic differential technique, demonstrated that persons speaking different languages have different subjective cultures. Arguments still continue over the degree to which language determines thought processes and thus subjective culture: The Whorfian Hypothesis Whorf, The argument in anthropology is that cross-cultural data can be used primarily for the identification of cultural uniqueness or the establishment of cross-cultural contrasts, describing the contrasting cultures in their own context. We study more-or-less similar cultures in Northern America or Western Europe. We may expect more culturally unique behavior patterns in the study of Japanese consumers or consumers in developing countries. Borrowing the psycholinguistic terminology, a distinction will be made between an emic culturally specific and an etic culturally universal approach. In an

emic approach from phonemics the behavior is described in terms and concepts of that specific culture and with internal criteria; hence cross-cultural comparison is difficult or impossible. In an etic approach from phonetics the behavior is described in universal categories and with external criteria. Cross-cultural comparison is feasible in the etic approach. Davidson criticizes the "emic-etic dilemma" and advocates the use of etic concepts with which comparisons among cultures can be made and emic ways of measurement in the context of the culture under study. We will see that this is the central issue in cross-cultural methodology, also referred to as the functional equivalence of measuring instruments. Another historical development is the evolutionary or revolutionary theory of socio-economic change. Cross-cultural contrasts are used to identify, in a quasi-experimental way, why socio-economic changes in one culture differ from those in another culture. Weber discusses why industrial capitalism developed in western Europe but not in China or India Protestant ethic. Certain cultural conditions were different or absent in China or India, and industrial capitalism did not develop there. Hsu explained why clan, caste, and club emerged respectively in China, India, and the United States. Marx argued for a contextual view of social phenomena; the basic mode of production in a culture or nation determines social and cultural phenomena. Engels identified a sequence of politico-economic stages based on the means of production and the class relationship to the production means. Knowing these stages feudal, bourgeois-capitalist, socialist one can develop generalizations for societies in the same stage. Meaningful cross-cultural comparisons can only be made between societies at the same level of development differentiation. Consumer behavior differs depending on whether it occurs in a capitalist nation, a dependent nation colony or a socialist nation. What type of sample we select depends on our research objective. For a comparison of income and age distributions in different cultures one needs a random sample to employ statistical tests for the significance of differences. For descriptive studies on attitude-value structures, attitude-behavior relationships, life-style, or opinion research sample representativeness is essential. This means that the sample has to be representative for the culture from which it is drawn. In this case, we study the relationships between variables in different cultures and we are not primarily interested in the absolute scores distributions of the variables as such. In some cross-cultural studies we need functional equivalence of samples, e. Here we try to find "similar" organizations and samples of the personnel of the organizations. Generalization of the results to the general culture, however, becomes hazardous. For causal studies across cultures, we may employ "matched" samples with matching variables such as age, income, education, etc. One increases the power of the statistical test for the significance of differences using paired observations. But the danger exists that one eliminates real cross-cultural differences through the matching procedure. One has to have a theory to distinguish between the matching variables and the independent variables in a research design. Except for the random samples, sampling procedures involve an a priori distinction between variables "that are controlled for" in sampling and "real" independent variables that are important from a theoretical viewpoint. To control for sampling inadequacies and to partial out covarying factors that could not be controlled for in the sampling procedure, the technique of analysis of covariance ANCOVA may be used. But one has to be aware of the dangers of these control procedures. Controlling for obvious variables such as age, income, and education in the sampling procedure may create samples unrepresentative of the population. A sample from a culture in India with the same age, income, and education distribution as a US sample may be largely unrepresentative of the Indian culture. Pretest data will often help to pinpoint the best sample. Pearlin and Kohn were interested in sampling people from equivalent class positions in the USA and Italy. Their preliminary data showed that income and education were not suitable for manifesting similar class positions, but that occupational prestige was. They approached the sampling problem by minimizing the extremeness of the groups chosen to be interviewed, finally selecting members of the middle and working classes. They concluded that "some intra-class variation is obscured by using only those two broad social class categories but what is lost in precision is gained in increased cross-national comparability" p. Brislin, Lonner, and Thorndike advocate the plausible rival hypotheses approach. The differences or similarities that are found may be attributed to different sampling methods or to different qualities of the samples age, socioeconomic status rather than to "real" cross-cultural differences or similarities. In the research design one has to eliminate all plausible rival hypotheses that may explain the results from sampling inadequacies. Essentially, equivalence

of samples, based on the control of variables in a design that eliminates plausible rival hypotheses, must be the objective of sampling in cross-cultural research. Rival hypotheses cannot always be ruled out in a design with only one sample from each culture. If we study the differences and similarities of French and American wives, it may be illuminating to include control samples of French and American husbands. How do the wives differ from the husbands not necessarily their husbands! Thorelli, Becker, and Engledow, on the other hand, conclude that information-seeking consumers higher education and higher income are more similar across cultures the USA and Germany than the control group of non-information-seekers. Katona, Strumpel, and Zahn find more similarity across nations for white-collar than for blue-collar respondents. Formal equivalence is the ideal of the survey technician but is impossible in cross-cultural research in nearly all cases. Translation problems and procedural problems such as whether to use a mail questionnaire or a personal interview, may arise. Formal equivalence can be attained to some extent through back-translation translating the questionnaire and instructions into the other language and then back into the original language by independent translators, and then comparing the two versions, the use of bilingual respondents, expert judges, and writing translatable English. See Brislin, Lonner, and Thorndike, pp. Formal equivalence is treated as an instrument reliability problem: How reliably does the instrument measure the variables in different cultural settings? It will be clear that we can easily attain formal equivalence in measuring behavioral variables. In these cases, we are interested in measuring and comparing behavioral variables as such. But as soon as these behavioral variables become an indicator or operationalization of a hypothetical construct, it becomes another case. Functional or conceptual equivalence of instruments for measuring a certain construct is a validity problem. The survey methodologist strives for functional equivalence of instruments, i. Although questionnaire items may be different for different cultures the intention is that they measure the same hypothetical construct. In such cases, functional equivalence of instruments can only be attained through a theoretical a priori framework and pilot studies how a hypothetical construct becomes manifested in actual behavior or attitudes in the culture under study. Straus distinguishes formal and functional equivalence of stimulus material questionnaire, test, task and of mode of quantifying. Instead of the terms "formally and functionally equivalent" he uses the terms "phenomenally identical" and "conceptually equivalent. A psychological test can only be used for a new population provided new norms are developed based on standardizing the test among samples of that new population culture. The four quadrants have the following interpretation:

Chapter 5 : Cross-Cultural Research and Back-Translation “ The Sport Journal

Cross-Cultural Research is the official journal of the Society for Cross-Cultural Research. Founded in , the purpose of the Society is to "support and encourage interdisciplinary, comparative research that has as its object the establishment of scientifically derived generalizations about human behaviour".

Generalizations, very common in social disciplines, must be supported empirically to satisfy the external validity of the conclusion. An intensive study of a single nation or culture provides rich insight into the society or culture as a functioning organism, but hardly permits any generalization to other societies or cultures or subcultures of the same nation. On the other hand, the purpose of research using cross-cultural dimensions or multinational comparisons can be divided into three types: This approach, using the cultural variable as the experimental treatment is one of the latest developments in the cross-cultural method. One of the necessary requirements to establish universal scientific laws is that the observed phenomena be applicable to all pertinent environments. In social and psychological disciplines, behavioral laws need to be tested against the universal human being. If this is not done, proposed behavioral laws or general goals can only be accepted in the particular society or culture in which they are found. For this reason, using abstract generalizations about some cultural groups without looking at their relationships with society is methodologically wrong and ethically inappropriate. To achieve this objective, the cross-cultural method as a part of the comparative approach is a meaningful tool for obtaining empirical data from the existing cultural and social system, the educational system and the complexity of human nature. However, no discipline has a method which is only unique to itself. All disciplines are in fact using the same method, the scientific method. The logic of the formal scientific approach to knowledge of setting up a hypothesis, developing a technique, gathering the data and drawing conclusions and the informal scientific or qualitative approach involve only three different methods “ historical, descriptive and experimental ” but they all apply to the study of cultures in the comparative dimension. When the cross-cultural research deviates from its scientific approach, it is dependent not upon its methodology, but upon its practitioners. In other words, while cross-cultural research can be considered to use a scientific methodology, not all practitioners of cross-cultural research are in fact, systematic scientists. Under this consideration we can operationally define cross-cultural research as the activity of solving problems cross-culturally; this process leads to new knowledge using the scientific method and the comparative technique which are currently accepted as adequate by scholars in the field. Today, the area of qualitative and quantitative cross-cultural research has been expanded to many different social and behavioral fields. There are a very important number of professional associations dealing with comparative studies and cross-cultural dimensions and journals in such disciplines which covers a substantial amount of cross-cultural studies. In addition, some of those periodicals only accepts studies which do more than just compare two or more cultures. Dependent variables must be linked statistically to one or more independent variables that are also measured. This is a very important issue because an observed difference could be the result of any other difference or complex casual interactions between or among the cultures compared. To the linear models of the past and with the more sophisticated techniques and research tools of today, cross-cultural research is moving towards more complex designs. These non-linear designs focus on holistic concepts rather than on fragmented perspectives; they are more concern with interactive effects between variables than with isolated variables themselves. This is the first of several articles on this nature that I will be writing in regard to the strengths and limitations of comparative studies and cross-cultural research methodology in human sciences. Can you label a cross-cultural study by only studying one culture or sub-culture? Is cross-cultural approach the same that cross-national? How do we measure multicultural entities in regard to intercultural processes? How we compare social learning with cultural learning? How ethnicity relates to cultural identity? How neuroscience contributes to understand cultural cognition? How do we increase diversity by achieving unity? I will argue that many of these labels have contributed to see the container but not its content. It has provided the growth of nationalistic attitudes, selfish behaviors and the reproduction of fanaticisms. Permission to reprint with appropriate citing.

Cross-cultural research is neither functional or historical or evolutionary, but may be any combination (including none) of the three; it is not necessarily dependent on surveys of ethnographic snapshots without time depth, but may.

However, using an adapted or translated instrument does not ensure that the adapted or translated one measures the same constructs as the original one does as a result of the cultural and lingual differences. Therefore, researchers who would like to adapt or translate in instrument from English version into different language version should be cognizant of such potential problems. The purpose of this paper is to provide researchers with an overview of issues regarding the cross-cultural study as well as the adapting or translating an instrument. In addition, the practical guidelines and the possible methods that can detect such problems are also included.

Introduction Due to the fact that the world is becoming a global village, more and more fields, such as business, public affairs, and research are becoming borderless. This phenomenon is also salient in Asian countries, i. Such translations and adaptations seemed to assume that these translated instruments have as satisfactory validity and reliability as the original one does. Under such a circumstance, the validity could be one of the problems causing inaccurate results. Therefore, a more careful examination on these issues is needed when a researcher translates or adapts the existing tests or questionnaires from another language. The purpose of this paper is to examine the potential issues that might be encountered by researchers when they are translating or adapting instruments or tests from another language. Moreover, remedies and practice from existing studies will also be discussed. The following are the elaboration of each type of bias as well as the possible methods to alleviate the potential problems: Further, translating an existing instrument is more likely to result in such a bias than developing an instrument for different languages simultaneously. This bias could affect most or even all items of the measurement. In addition, the difference in scores between groups could result from the bias in the administration procedure of the test as opposed to the intrinsic differences of the groups studied if the method bias exists. There are several methods that could be adopted to examine the method bias: It may cause problems if such situations as poor wording, inaccurate translations, inappropriateness of item content in a cultural group exist at the item level of the measurement. More specifically, differential item functioning is present when two people with the same ability or level of the trait differs in response due to cultural differences. The statistical techniques developed to detect item bias are divided into two main categories: Moreover, another widely used technique to detect the item bias is an independent back-translation Brislin, In addition, Geisinger raised some issues regarding cross-cultural assessment by using translation and adaptation of an instrument. The following are the descriptions and some suggestions of each issue: However, if an instrument is surveyed in the subjects who speak another language instead of the language used in that instrument originally, then translation or adaptation is needed. Further, not only language but also cultural differences between the original and the target populations should be taken into account. Namely, the construct validation and the reliability should be checked after a measure is adapted to a new linguistic context Geisinger, b. There are a variety of differences, such as cultural and linguistic differences, that may render greatly different interpretations. Thus, carefully examining both construct and instrument comparability across cultures before giving interpretations is necessary and critical.

Practical Guidelines for Cross-Cultural Research This section will present the practical guidelines for cross-cultural researchers to ensure satisfactory reliability and validity of the cross-cultural studies. The general guideline for the cross-cultural study is to avoid construct, method, and item bias as much as possible. Although it may be not possible to totally eliminate them, a researcher should minimize them. Back-translation procedures do not ensure the validity can be achieved. Instead, other techniques including multiple group confirmatory factor analysis should be utilized. Try to avoid slang, jargon, and colloquialism. Make sure that the accuracy of the translated instrument and the equivalence of all language versions are carefully examined. The physical environment for the administration of an instrument should be tailored or adjusted as similar as possible. The score differences among samples of target populations should not be just explained at the face value. Documentation is needed for information regarding how to use the assessment device and collect reactions and

feedback from users, participants, and subjects. Literature Concerning the Issues of Cross-Cultural Research

Watkins pointed out some problems with the traditional exploratory factor analysis and illustrated the advantages and applications of confirmatory factor analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis is based on the statistical theory of structural equation modeling and possesses some good properties, such as allowing researchers to specify the factor loadings, correlated residuals, and correlated factors. The utilization of confirmatory factor analysis can assist interpretation of an instrument, provide a better way of comparing factor structures and testing competing models, and aid the analysis of the multitrait-multimethod matrices when cross-cultural studies are conducted. Sireci and Berberoglu attempted to evaluate translated-adapted items by means of bilingual respondents because there is no guarantee that the different language versions of instruments are equivalent in their research, they utilized an English-Turkish version of a course evaluation form. They pointed out some advantages and disadvantages of using bilinguals to evaluate translated items. The same examinees responding to both language versions of an item eliminate the problem of item translation difference. In addition, the bilingual test takers possess the ability to place nontranslated items in both test forms. However, there are some disadvantages of employing bilinguals. For example, the generalization of the results may be problematic since the bilinguals are typically a selected and limited group of people. In Myers et al. They assessed three constructs derived from cross-cultural advertising research across U. They found that most but not all constructs used in this study met the requirements for cross-cultural equivalence. However, the model did not fit well when the factor loadings were constrained to be equal across groups. Some specific items may be the likely source of the problem detected by further tests. In sum, they concluded that multi-group structural equation modeling is a useful tool for model fit in cross-cultural research. Ellis used item response theory IRT to evaluate the measurement equivalence of translated American and German intelligence tests. Also, content analysis was utilized to detect probable problems when differential item functioning DIF was identified in some items. The conclusions in this study are as follows: Translations of instruments are an inevitable tool to conduct such studies. However, literal translation does not ensure that the translated instrument measures the same constructs as in the original instrument. The reason is that there may exist lingual or cultural or both differences across samples. Therefore, cross-cultural researchers should be cognizant of the numerous potential problems, such as construct, method, and item bias that could affect the results of studies. After identifying the possible bias, cross-cultural researchers should use appropriate statistical analysis techniques including confirmatory factor analysis and item response theory to examine, avoid, or eliminate the bias. Further, cross-cultural researchers should also pay close attention to the details regarding the administration of the tests or measurements. For instance, the physical conditions of administration of the measurement, avoidance of using slang, and how to interpret the score differences across samples are the critical factors that could undermine the quality of the studies. Consequently, only when the possible factors that could potentially influence the results of the cross-cultural studies are identified and remedied can researchers ensure the accuracy of the cross-cultural research. Translation and content analysis of oral and written material. Cross-national application of psychological tests. *Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 56, Implications for test translations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 74 6 , The metamorphosis of test validation. *Educational Psychologist* , 27, Translation and adaptation issues influencing the normative interpretation of assessment instruments. *Psychological Assessment*, 6 4 , The next generation of the ITC test translation and adaptation guidelines. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 17 3 , Differential item performance and the Mantel-Haenszel procedure. Confirmatory factor analysis of multigroup-multimethod self-concept data: Between-group and within-group invariance constraints. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 28, An application of multiple-group causal models in assessing cross-cultural measurement equivalence. *Journal of International Marketing*, 8 4 , A review and critique of analyses of multitrait-multimethod matrices. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 12, Using bilingual respondents to evaluate translated-adapted items. *Applied Measurement In Education*, 13 3 , Van de Vijver, F. *European Psychologist*, 1 2 , The role of confirmatory factor analysis in cross-cultural research. *International Journal of Psychology*, 24,

Chapter 7 : Definition: Cross-cultural research

Cross-Cultural Research (CCR) publishes peer-reviewed articles that describe cross-cultural and comparative studies in all human sciences. Each issue, published quarterly, examines topics that span societies, nations and cultures, providing strategies for the systematic testing of theories about human society and behavior.

A Guide to Social Theory: In the Introduction to the Guide, Levinson states that it is a new kind of information retrieval tool, an analytical propositional inventory of theories of human behavior that have been developed or tested by means of worldwide cross-cultural studies. There are five volumes of the Guide. This introductory volume contains a description of the Guide and tells one how to use it, including copies of the codebook that were used in the process of compiling the Guide.

Relativity in spatial conception and description. Through the work of the Max Planck institute, this project demonstrated that languages code for space by one of three means: This represents a particular perception of the world which is encoded in language through grammar or body language.

Morgan, Louis Henry Kinship research based on interviews and questionnaires distributed across America to Native Americans and people of European descent. In this book Morgan detailed the seven stages of society. The text contains a system for classifying cultures to determine their position on the cultural evolutionary ladder.

Murdock, George Peter The Common Denominator of Cultures. New York, Macmillan Co. In Murdock used the HRAF as the foundation for his book Social Structure in which he correlated information on family and kinship organizations around the world.

Ferraro It is a coded data retrieval system, which initially contained the ethnographies of over cultures and different cultural headings collected by the s from ethnographies of Boas, Malinowski, and their students, among others, who were not always professionals.

Ferraro The entries to the HRAF increase annually and subscriptions are bought by institutions on a yearly basis.

Murdock wrote The Common Denominator of Cultures In American Anthropologist University of Pittsburgh Press.

Atlas of World Cultures. What have we learned from Cross-Cultural Surveys? Ochs, Elinor, and Bambi Schieffelin Language Acquisition and Socialization: Three Developmental Stories and Their Implications. This piece highlights child socialization in white middle-class American, Kululi, and Western Samoan societies. Of particular note, Ochs and Schieffelin found that baby talk is not universal.

Universal Patterns in Cultural Evolution: A modern day test of universal evolutionist theories, this study examined archaeological evidence in order to make inferences about cross-cultural trends in the development of technology. Overall, their results generally supported the universal evolutionary sequences like those developed by E. Tylor and Lewis Henry Morgan, although they did not describe such cultures as savage or barbarous.

Levinson considers this book to be one of the important cross-cultural contributions of this century.

The Science of Society. Yale University Press; London, H. Milford, Oxford University Press. Three volumes of entries of societies catalogued by Sumner. Volume 4 is the index of the entries. The fourth volume index had a great influence upon Murdock.

On a Method of Investigating the Development of Institutions: Applied to Laws of Marriage and Descent. Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute Tylor was the first to attempt a statistical cross-cultural analysis with this paper, delivered to the Royal Anthropological Institute.

Whiting, Beatrice, and John W. Children of Six Cultures Cambridge, Mass.: This project was a far-reaching concept of the effect of child-rearing practices on adult behavior, which utilized cross-cultural analysis, but was based in the school of Culture and Personality. This project resulted in a book by the same name, but it really did not add to anthropological knowledge and exposed some problems concerning the use of inappropriate methodology for research that is not specific enough in its hypothesis.

Child training and personality: This piece represents a cross-cultural survey with a psychodynamicist approach to cultural anthropology. It examined 75 primitive societies to analyze links between childhood practices and adult behavior, focusing on oral and anal fixations, causes of guilt, and irrational fears.

Regional comparison is an attempt to define classifications of cultures and then make inferences about processes of diffusion within a cultural region.

Levinson and Ember It examines how cultures relate to each other as whole cultural units. This approach is well represented by the works of Kroeber and Driver, and it comes more from the Boasian tradition. Holocultural analysis, the more recent term for

cross-cultural analysis, has developed out of the ancestry from Tylor to Sumner and Keller and then to Murdock. In this approach, cultural traits are taken out of the context of the whole culture and compared with cultural traits in widely diverse cultures in order to determine patterns of regularities and differences within the broad base of the study. Both of these approaches compare cultural units, but their unit of analysis differs from other approaches. The comparative method, as utilized in the worldwide approach, presents a basic problem to anthropology, and to anthropologists. Since the comparative method as applied by Murdock examines traits as separate from their cultural context, it conflicts with the holistic approach developed by Boas, in which each culture must be treated as a distinct unit that can only be understood in its particular historical and geographical context Winthrop, 44 Controlled Comparison is the approach toward smaller scale comparative studies. Eggan suggests the combination of the anthropological concepts of ethnology with structure and function, allowing the researcher to pose more specific questions on a broader range of subjects , Spoehr detailed these changes with an analysis of the historical factors responsible for them and the resulting processes Eggan Holonational study is the study of universal traits within a national framework. Coding refers to the process by which cross-cultural analysts obtain data from other sources. This can be done in two ways. Data can be coded directly from ethnographic sources, or it can be accessed from the ethnographic reports in the HRAF files. The first method requires reading and interpreting original sources, and the second entails using previously coded data from ethnographic sources or holocultural studies. Levinson and Malone suggest that dependent variables should be coded from the HRAF files or ethnographic sources and that independent variables should come from the compendia of coded data. Not all Cross-Cultural analysts agree on the same methodology, but there are two main concepts: To understand culture, societies must be compared. Without comparison there is no way to evaluate if presumed cause and effect are related. If cause is not present then the effect should not be present Levinson and Ember The comparative method is a search for comparable culture patterns in multiple societies, particularly the comparison of cultural traits taken out of cultural context Winthrop There are two main goals of cross-cultural analysis. The first goal is to describe the range and distribution of cultural variation existent in the ethnographies recorded. The second goal is to test the hypotheses and theories that are proposed to explain the variation recorded Levinson and Ember General requirements that are stringently applied to the comparative method are: Scientific principles, method, and research design must be used. Explicit theory or hypothesis must be stated. Detail involved in study must be shown, allowing others to replicate study. Research must show measures are valid and reliable. Sampling procedure must be objective and clearly specified. Data must be made available to other researchers. Appropriate statistical tests must be employed. Results must be displayed for verification Levinson and Ember Methods that are specific to Cross-Cultural Analysis are: Cases must be chosen from different cultures. Research aims must represent the entire ethnographic record or geographic region. Research must compare cases that agree with hypothesis with and without the presumed causes to verify if the presumed effect is associated with causes. This beginning grew into the Human Relations Area Files, which is now available in over institutional libraries both here and abroad. Murdock combined the modern statistical method with modern ethnography, and statistical cross-cultural comparative method to create the HRAF. Murdock compiled the Ethnographic Atlas, published in *Ethnology*, a journal founded by Murdock in Galton voiced what he saw as obvious flaws in the comparative methodology. Galton asserted that the circumstances in which the adhesion occurred, whether by diffusion or by independent emergence, would affect the interpretation of the cases. Problems with the Comparative Method have been discussed by many anthropologists, including Murdock , White , Eggan , Driver and Chaney , and Hobhouse, Wheeler, and Ginsberg From these and other authors have emerged four major problem areas: What determines the scale of the items? What is the scope of the degree of expected difference between the pairs of social units compared? Are the comparisons made for descriptive or analytic purposes? Is the style of argument inductive or deductive? How much control can be exercised over exogenous variation? How much attention is paid to sampling and statistical reliability?

Chapter 8 : Cross-Cultural Psychology - IResearchNet

Cross-cultural psychology is a branch of psychology that looks at how cultural factors influence human behavior. While many aspects of human thought and behavior are universal, cultural differences can lead to often surprising differences in how people think, feel, and act.

Contact Us Cross-cultural research overview Cross-cultural research most commonly involves comparison of some cultural trait or relationships between traits across a sample of societies. What is most important to keep in mind is that cultures change over time, so most cross-cultural comparisons need to focus on particular time frames and sometimes particular place foci for each culture. The choice of focus often depends upon the research question. For example, if you want to know about traits that were present prior to colonialization, you might choose the earliest time frames. If you want to know about responses to the introduction of money, later time frames might be more appropriate. Introducing Cross-Cultural Research , a visual online course, overviews the logic of cross-cultural research, framing a research question, deriving hypotheses from theory, design of measures, coding procedures, sampling, reliability, and the use of statistics to analyze results. The research design should depend upon the research question. If you want to estimate the frequency of a particular trait, a representative sample is essential. If your research question is about a relatively rare trait, you should over-sample societies with that trait. Ask yourself whether any of the variables that are important have been coded by other researchers? Are these codes that you want? Decide on a sample that fits your design. Because the HRAF Collections contain some special programs, such as immigrant and other subcultures in North America, the whole collection should not be considered a good sampling frame for scientific research. To find out how to do this, click here for the SCCS. The procedure for the EA is similar. This should be accomplished by Representative samples within eHRAF: It can be used to test hypotheses. We also include tradition sequences leading to civilizations. While these may be compared, eHRAF Archaeology does not yet contain all known sequences nor were the choices random. We based processing of sequences based on member interest. This allows you to study changes over time and regional variation. If you use some data from other researchers and code some yourself you will introduce measurement error unless you pick the same focus. Where can I find precoded data? Most cross-cultural researchers make their codes available to scholars either in print or upon request. Many have put their codes into the electronic journal World Cultures. World Cultures mostly includes codes from the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample, but it also includes codes from the Ethnographic Atlas as well as other data sources. Click here for information on how to find precoded data for the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample and the Ethnographic Atlas from that electronic journal. Recommendations if you are using precoded data It is extremely important to read the original article or book from which codes come. That is where the author explains the purpose of the code, the coding instructions, and the coding scale. If a code seems like it is something you want to use, it is also important to try to code at least a portion of the societies yourself. If you can follow the instructions and come up with the same decisions, it should give you more confidence. If so, you may want to design your own code. Using the HRAF collection of ethnography in conjunction with the standard cross-cultural sample and the ethnographic atlas.

Psychology students work with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures, so it is particularly important to gain greater understanding, knowledge and understanding of different cultural perspectives and also develop cross-cultural communicative competence.

Muslim societies in Africa are classified as being in the Middle East. All the cultures in the paper and microfiche version of the HRAF Collection of Ethnography are grouped into these eight regions. Each culture is therefore listed in its regional, political, and cultural context within the Collection. The cultures in the Collection are selected mainly on the basis of the following criteria: Source Materials Once the decision has been reached to build a collection on a particular culture, extensive bibliographic research is undertaken to identify as thoroughly as possible all of the significant literature on that culture. HRAF also solicits the advice and expertise of specialists. As always, researchers are encouraged to inform HRAF of any salient material which might have escaped notice. The materials processed for the Collection of Ethnography are largely descriptive rather than theoretical, with the great majority being primary documents resulting from field observation. The ideal document is one which consists of a detailed description of a culture, or of a particular community or region within that culture, written on the basis of prolonged residence among the people documented by a professional social scientist. Many documents which do not meet all the criteria are included in the Collection of Ethnography because they are still important pieces of information; in fact, it is likely that they may be the only sources available for particular time periods, regions, or subjects. Thus the collection for each culture may contain documents written by travelers, missionaries, colonial officials, traders, etc. The Collection of Ethnography provides researchers with a comprehensive picture of life in one or more communities and in one or more time periods. Classification Every page in each document is indexed and assigned any number of appropriate subject category codes according to the classification scheme in the Outline of Cultural Materials OCM Murdock et al. The categories are grouped into seventy-nine major subject divisions, each assigned a three-digit code ranging from Orientation to Adolescence, Adulthood, and Old Age. Within each major subject division, up to nine more specific categories are defined. For example, the Family division is subdivided into seven more specific subject categories as follows: Each category in the OCM includes a brief descriptive statement, indicating the range of information which may be classified under that category. Beneath this statement is usually a list of cross-references to other categories under which related information may be classified. Every document page has at least one OCM assigned to it. In the paper and microfiche, the OCMs are written in roughly where the subject starts. If five consecutive paragraphs discuss categories , , and , all three OCMs will appear at the beginning of each of the five paragraphs until the subject changes. Cross-cultural worldwide comparative researchers ask four kinds of questions. The first is descriptive and deals with the prevalence or frequency of a trait: Which is the most important subsistence activity among food collectors – gathering, hunting, or fishing? How common is female infanticide? A second kind of question considers the causes of a trait or custom. Why is polygyny permitted in most societies known to anthropology? Why do women as opposed to men do most of the agricultural work in some societies? Why is the extended family the customary form of household in many societies? The third kind of question explores the consequences or effects of a particular trait or custom. What are the effects on infant care of high involvement of women in subsistence activities? Does punitive childtraining affect the frequency of warfare? The fourth question, which is not significantly different from the second and third, is a relational question. Rather than postulating causes or consequences, a researcher may simply ask how a particular aspect of culture may be associated with some other aspect s. Is there an association between most important subsistence activity and level of political complexity? Of these four questions, the causal question is the most challenging because it does not completely specify what the researcher needs to do. The descriptive question tells the researcher what to count. But the causal question does not tell the researcher where to look for causes. It only specifies what scientists call the dependent variable the thing to be explained. Think of the causal question as analogous to the format of a detective story. Finding the solution usually entails hypothesizing

about suspects and their possible motives and opportunities, eliminating the implausible possibilities, and concluding who is probably the culprit. Similarly, in science, the pursuit of causes involves the testing of alternative explanations or theories which purport to say why something is the way it is. The researcher who chooses a causal question needs to identify plausible explanations or theories to test and to decide on a strategy for collecting and analyzing data that could falsify or disconfirm explanations. If all theories fail, researchers must come up with new theories. Although these requirements may suggest that the researcher who searches for causes may need to act differently from other researchers, this is really not the case, as we shall see. The basic strategy for examining relationships in cross-cultural research is the same, whether the relationship involves presumed causes, consequences, or just hypothesized association. To illustrate that strategy, let us turn to an example of a test of a causal explanation. In the first study we did together M. Ember, our question was: Why do some societies practice matrilineal residence and others patrilineal residence? We started where most people start – with explanations found in the literature. One of the most common was the idea that the division of labor based on gender in primary subsistence activities would largely determine residence after marriage Lippert. In other words, female dominance in subsistence should produce matrilineality; male dominance should produce patrilineality. Even if we can be sure that presumed causes preceded the presumed effects, we cannot rule out the possibility that something else is the real cause. So how do we test such a causal explanation? The simplest way is to examine a relationship that should be true if the theory is correct, and then make a statistical test to see if the predicted relationship actually occurs significantly more often than would be expected by chance. Notice that although the prediction or more formally the hypothesis has almost the same form as the theory we stated above, it differs in a fundamental way: Still, if two things are causally related, they should be statistically associated. In our case, when we examined the association between division of labor and residence in a worldwide sample of societies, the predicted association was not found. This led us and later Divale [] to reject the theory that division of labor largely determines residence. Eventually we ended up developing a new theory that internal warfare warfare within the society would produce partilineal residence, and purely external warfare particularly if women do a great deal of subsistence work would produce matrilineal residence. Note that division of labor remains a partial cause in our explanations. Note too that even if a predicted relationship is supported, it may still be open to different interpretations. Indeed, Divale offers a vary different explanation for the obtained relationship between type of warfare and residence. The study we just discussed illustrates the fundamental assumption of worldwide cross-cultural or holocultural research; if a theory has merit, the presumed causes and effect should generally be associated synchronically see J. Naroll, Michik, and F. The cross-cultural method therefore provides a way of eliminating theories that have no predictive value. Theories that postulate causes, consequences, or relationships are tested in the same way; that is, by looking to see if predicted associations obtain. Sampling Cross-cultural researchers must decide what societies to examine. No one can examine all cultures; even if one could, the labor and time costs involved would not justify doing so. The most important operating principles in a scientific test of a hypothesis are: Instead, cross-cultural researchers usually sample from one of a number of published cross-cultural samples. Most of the samples mentioned above contain bibliography or pointers to bibliography and at least some coded information on traits of interest to a variety of researchers. The HRAF Collection of Ethnography is different in that it contains no precoded data, but full texts indexed by subject matter and grouped by culture for the rapid retrieval of particular kinds of information. If you want to read about a particular aspect of culture and make your own coding decisions on a sample of societies, the HRAF collection is ideal because you do not have to collect all the books and articles on each of the cultures and then search for a particular subject through all the texts. If you are working from the print version of the Outline of Cultural Materials OCM for short, the easiest way to find a subject category is by using the extensive index in the back of the OCM. This index will point you toward a number of possible numbered subject categories. When you read about these subjects in more detail, you will find out if the subject categories are appropriate. The OCM system is mostly hierarchical in that the first two digits usually reflect the major subject category. The A-Z list has a filter so that if you start typing a word it will try to find it. If you are in Advanced Search you can execute your search once you have chosen a subject category. Often

researchers will need to search for more than one subject category to ensure that they will find what they are looking for. Keep in mind that not all ethnographers discuss all topics, so some categories will be empty for some cultures. It takes trial-and-error to find what you need and tailor a search to your needs. The only reason it might be necessary to examine all the cases is if some trait or custom occurs rarely or is only rarely described. In that case, researchers might have to scan all the societies to find enough cases of a particular type. Examples of relatively rare traits are age-set systems, cannibalism, and woman-woman marriages. Researchers use a variety of strategies to sample the collection. If researchers want to use some already coded data coded previously by themselves or other researchers for their study, they usually choose to limit themselves to those sample cases for which the desired precoded data are available. Some researchers find that the HRAF Collection of Ethnography speeds up their data retrieval so much that they use it for as many cultures as they can and then look up books and articles for the remaining cultures. Others choose the overlap between the HRAF sample and another sample. The important thing to keep in mind in using information from two different samples is that the information in the different samples may pertain to different time periods and different communities. Since cultures change over time and vary from community to community, it is extremely important to make sure that the same-named cases in the overlapping samples actually are the same in time and place. Otherwise, the researcher is introducing error. For example, suppose one is examining the possible relationship between male mortality rates in warfare and frequency of polygyny see M. Ember for a test of the hypothesis that high male mortality in warfare should be associated with appreciable polygyny. For information on a given society with regard to male mortality in warfare, one would look in categories Mortality , Instigation of War , and Aftermath of Combat and might find ethnographic material from indicating that many men died in warfare. For information on extent of polygyny category the researcher may find the best information to be from If you used these two pieces of information one from and the other from you might very well have a case that looks like it does not support your hypothesis.