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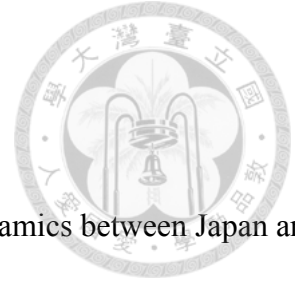
Individualism and collectivism in transition:
A comparison study of Japan and Taiwan regarding cultural shifts
and their impact on social media activities

吉中悠乃
Yuno Yoshinaka

指導教授：林嘉薇（博士/專任助理教授）
Advisor: Joy Lin (Doctor/Associate Professor)

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Abstract



This thesis investigates nuanced differences in the cultural dynamics between Japan and Taiwan. Prior cross-cultural comparison research often points out the cultural similarities in collectivism and individualism between the two countries due to their historical, geographic, and economic ties. Inspired by my personal experience and drawing from country-specific research on culture, religion, history, philosophy, and social movement, we found that the backgrounds of collectivism and individualism in Japan and Taiwan were not entirely the same as commonly assumed. Therefore, this study aims to elucidate the disparities in how collectivism and individualism were presented in these two countries and how they affect people's perceptions and behaviors and even social media usage.

To our knowledge, this is the first research that directly compares Japanese and Taiwanese attitudes toward the cultural shift on individualism and collectivism. To deepen our understanding of the topic, we conducted 12 in-depth interviews exploring individual perceptions and attitudes toward collectivism and individualism..

We found that both countries were still influenced by traditional collectivistic culture in several aspects, as classic literature suggests. However, more importantly, we discovered that Japanese and Taiwanese people react differently to the new-era of individualism and when it crashes with collectivism reacting to individualistic behaviors or expressions within the group. These differences can also be seen in the usage of social media.

This research offers several theoretical and practical contributions. Firstly, it extends our knowledge of the cultural differences between Japan and Taiwan beyond Hofstede's cultural comparison theory. Practically, this research provides insights for global companies and individuals alike helping them understand the cultures of Japan and Taiwan.

Keywords: Collectivism, Individualism, Cross-Cultural Research, In-depth Interview, Social Media



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Chapter 1 Introduction

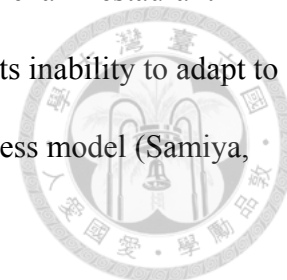


The inspiration for this research is rooted in my personal experiences and observations accumulated during my residence in both Taiwan and Japan. The two countries share a deep relationship in various aspects, including geographical proximity, political interactions, economic exchanges, historical ties, and cultural connections. Consequently, it is often assumed that, due to these shared aspects, the cultures of Taiwan and Japan exhibit substantial similarities (Minkov, 2013). However, my extensive residence in Japan for 20 years, combined with two years in Taiwan, has revealed numerous significant differences between their cultures, particularly in areas such as communication styles among friends, family, and strangers, constructs of self-identity, and patterns of social media usage.

These observations challenge the common presumption, suggesting that the cultural variances between Taiwan and Japan may be more pronounced than initially perceived. Accordingly, this thesis aims to elucidate some of these observed cultural differences, thereby providing a platform for a more nuanced understanding of the cultural dynamics between Japan and Taiwan.

Beyond academic curiosity, this research holds managerial significance due to the substantial scale of the Taiwanese and Japanese markets. In 2023, Japan's GDP was 4.21 trillion U.S. dollars, ranking fourth globally (Tanaka, 2024). Taiwan, identified as the 14th richest country among 193 countries and territories in 2024 according to Global Finance magazine, has a market that is currently expanding (Ventura, 2024). Furthermore, economic interactions between the two markets continue to prosper, evidenced by the increase in Working Holiday visas from 2,000 in 2009 to 10,000 in 2023 (Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association, 2009 & 2023). This research can provide valuable insights into the unique consumer attitudes and behaviors in Japan and Taiwan that global companies often overlook

when expanding into the East Asian market. For instance, Japanese chain restaurant Shirakiya has withdrawn from the Taiwanese market twice due to its inability to adapt to local business culture and a lack of flexibility in adjusting its business model (Samiya, 2021).



To understand the nuanced differences between Japanese and Taiwanese cultures, we first examined Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory (Hofstede, 2009). The 'Country Comparison Tool' published by the Culture Factor Group illustrates the degrees of Hofstede's cultural dimensions for each nation worldwide. This tool reveals that Japan and Taiwan differ significantly in terms of people's aggression toward success and their tolerance for deviance. However, it is insufficient for making fine comparisons between the two cultures.

This thesis investigates the dimension of collectivism versus individualism, as the literature review reveals significant differences in the backgrounds of Japanese and Taiwanese collectivism and individualism. The influence of modern individualism also manifests differently in both cultures, suggesting that the cultural gap in this dimension may be more pronounced than indicated by Hofstede's data. The comparison of the Individualism index by Culture Factor Group does not fully explain the social phenomena discussed in cultural, psychological, or social literature focused solely on Japanese or Taiwanese societies. For instance, Taiwanese culture is heavily influenced by Confucianism, yet it is also shaped by historical events such as Japanese colonization, 20th-century dictatorship, and subsequent liberation. In contrast, Japanese culture has its roots in Shintoism (Breen, 2013), which later integrated Buddhism and Confucianism (Eaude, 2014) and contributed to nationalism (Winfield et al., 2000). Additionally, American individualism has impacted Japanese culture in the 20th century (Kasai, 2009).

Based on the literature regarding Japanese and Taiwanese history and society, cultural shifts, organizational behavior, and consumer behavior, this thesis investigates how Japan and Taiwan have reacted differently to the transition from collectivism to individualism and what factors may contribute to this variance. Due to the intricate cultural differences between the two countries, we conducted in-depth interviews to explore this research question. Our findings from 12 interviews emphasize the perspectives of collectivism and individualism, manifesting as a concern for not disturbing others and a sense of uniqueness within Japanese and Taiwanese cultures. Additionally, we examine how these differences specifically manifest in group dynamics and on social media platforms.

This research offers several theoretical and practical contributions. Firstly, the theoretical contribution extends our understanding of cultural differences between Japan and Taiwan beyond Hofstede's cultural comparison theory. Most existing studies tend to focus on the origins of cultural differences and their influences. In contrast, the current thesis emphasizes the changes in the cultures of Taiwan and Japan due to the new wave of individualism and explores how individuals respond to these transformations.

Practically, this research can serve as a valuable resource for global companies seeking to understand the cultures of Japan and Taiwan, particularly through the lens of impression management. This understanding can aid in the planning of effective localization strategies. The relevant industries are diverse, encompassing luxury fashion, marketing, and beyond. Additionally, the insights gained can be applied to product design and other areas, such as HR training and development.

This thesis is organized into the following chapters: Chapter 2 presents an extensive literature review on relevant topics. Chapter 3 formulates the research questions. Based on the literature review and outlines the key question categories for the interview in response to the research questions. Chapter 4, delineates the sampling method, interview procedure, and

coding and analysis for the in-depth interviews. Chapter 5 discusses our findings from the in-depth interviews, while Chapter 6 offers conclusions and suggestions for future research.



Chapter 2 Literature Review



2.1 Culture and Impact of Culture on Consumer Attitude and Behavior

Culture is defined as an interactive and integrative form of collective mental conditioning experienced by individuals within a particular environment (Hofstede, 1980). Although mental conditioning cannot be directly observed, it shapes and influences people's thoughts, aspirations, morals, philosophies, personalities, motives, myths, and more. For instance, dining manners and religious beliefs serve as examples of this conditioning. Collective mental conditioning refers to the shared beliefs and practices of a specific group, including respect for the elderly, language, and interpersonal distance (Hofstede, 1980). When we refer to the culture of a nation, tribe, national majority or minority, geographical region, or any group, we are discussing the collective mental programming that these individuals share; this programming differentiates them from other nations, tribes, regions, and groups. Culture is not merely a characteristic of individuals; rather, it encompasses the experiences and education shared by a population shaped by similar life experiences (Hofstede, 1980).

Culture is important due to its profound impact on societies. It changes only gradually, as it is shared among large groups of people and collaboratively shaped by them. All aspects of culture reflect the shared beliefs, religions, organizations, education, and other elements integral to the collective life experiences of a community (Hofstede, 1980). Swidler (1986) characterizes culture as symbolic vehicles of meaning—including rituals, art forms, ceremonies, language, gossip, and stories—and categorizes it into settled and unsettled forms. Examples of settled culture include fairy tales and the customs surrounding funerals and weddings. Settled culture represents tradition and common sense, while unsettled

culture refers to ideologies—specific self-conscious beliefs and systems designed to address social problems. Both types of culture critically influence human actions, highlighting culture's significance. Settled culture shapes long-term human behavior by providing resources for strategic planning and establishing a cohesive style within organizations. Conversely, unsettled culture exerts strong control over short-term actions, particularly when individuals encounter other unsettled cultures (Swidler, 1986).

As global markets expand and existing markets become increasingly segmented along national and cultural lines, the need to effectively market to consumers from diverse cultural backgrounds has become more pressing than ever. Consequently, the concept of culture has emerged as a primary focus of research in consumer psychology (Shavitt et al., 2018). Culture influences consumers' attitudes and behaviors in various ways, including their self-regulatory psychology, risk-taking tendencies, cognitive processing of advertisements, and responses to social desirability (Shavitt et al., 2018).

According to Hofstede, culture can be analyzed through six dimensions: power distance, individualism, motivation toward achievement and success (Su and Liu, n.d.), uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, and indulgence (Hofstede, 1980). Utilizing Hofstede's method to characterize a national culture does not imply that every individual within that nation possesses all the typical traits associated with the culture. However, this method effectively describes the common characteristics prevalent in specific nations and is regarded as one of the classic and most reliable frameworks, summarizing various earlier studies on human behavior.

First, power distance refers to the extent to which individuals in a group, institution, or organization expect power to be distributed equally (Hofstede, 1980). Second, the dimension of individualism versus collectivism indicates the degree to which individuals are dedicated to and integrated within groups (Hofstede, 1980). Third, motivation toward achievement and

success pertains to traits associated with aggressiveness and competitiveness, driving individuals to maximize their efforts for success (Kim, 2015). Fourth, uncertainty avoidance describes how individuals tend to avoid unfamiliar or novel situations (Hofstede, 1980). Fifth, long-term orientation versus short-term orientation reflects the time horizon that individuals prioritize (Hofstede, 1980). Lastly, the dimension of indulgence (Hofstede, 2010) measures the extent to which individuals in a society are open to expressing their desires and emotions.

The Culture Factor Group publishes the "Country Comparison Tool," which measures and displays the degree of Hofstede's cultural dimensions for each nation worldwide, including Taiwan and Japan, along with their actual scores. According to the data, Japan and Taiwan exhibit no significant differences regarding power distance, individualism, long-term orientation, and indulgence. This theory explains the differences between Taiwan and Japan in terms of people's aggressiveness toward success and their tolerance for deviance; however, it may lack the precision needed to discern the subtle differences between these two cultures.

2.2 The dimension of Individualism vs. Collectivism and their impact on consumer attitude and behavior

In this thesis, I focus on the individualism/collectivism dimension, as it is a significant aspect for comparing the cultures of Japan and Taiwan. Ogihara (2017) defines individualism as a societal pattern characterized by loosely bonded individuals who view themselves as independent entities. In such a context, interactions are typically practical, where individuals weigh the pros and cons of their engagements. Conversely, according to Yan (2015), collective efficiency refers to the shared mindset among group members, wherein each individual possesses a deep-seated consciousness of achieving a common goal together.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the definitions of Hofstede's individualism and collectivism can be reinforced through a detailed analysis and observation of the cultural backgrounds in Japan and Taiwan. This exploration will shed light on how individuals in these countries respond differently to the conflicts between collectivism and individualism. Such nuances are not immediately apparent, and the insights we provide will highlight various aspects of the individualism index in these two regions.

The concepts of individualism and collectivism are essential for understanding cultural values. Trandis (2004) identifies this dimension as the most significant among all others, as it directly relates to variations in ecological contexts. The ways in which individuals in individualistic cultures perceive and act differ fundamentally from those in collectivistic cultures, which has significant implications for consumer behavior. Similarly, Oyserman, Coon, and Kemmelmeier (2002) highlight that individualism and collectivism influence basic psychological areas, including self-recognition, well-being, and interpersonal relationships. Ali (2005) further underscores the importance of examining individualism and collectivism across different cultures, arguing that this aspect is central to understanding human behavior, both interpersonal and intrapersonal. He also stresses that these dimensions can affect various societal aspects, including economic growth, politics, and business management, making them vital considerations for this thesis.

Trandis (2001) emphasizes that the dimensions of individualism and collectivism are historically significant and among the most extensively explored topics in research. In his paper, he examines the personalities of individuals in collectivistic and individualistic cultures. In collectivistic cultures, people seek connections within specific groups and prioritize group goals. When conflicts arise, they are more concerned with maintaining relationships than with asserting individual viewpoints (Trandis, 2001). Additionally,

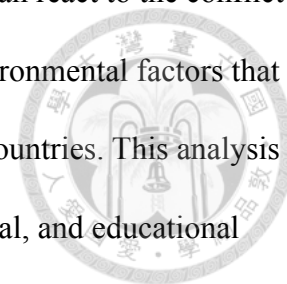
individuals in these cultures tend to adjust their personalities based on societal expectations or environmental contexts; their personalities are more adaptable, and their traits are less defined (Trandis, 2001). In contrast, individuals in individualistic cultures favor pursuing personal goals according to their own standards and are open to exchanging ideas with others. During conflicts, they are inclined to seek legal resolutions. These individuals perceive themselves as stable entities in a mutable environment, shaping society to align with their personal traits (Trandis, 2001).

Although both Taiwan and Japan are traditionally recognized as collectivistic cultures compared to Western countries, a wave of individualism has emerged due to urbanization, economic growth, and globalization (Su, 2015; Ogihara, 2017). Boltayeva (2024) examines how urbanization and globalization have influenced the development of individualism. These social shifts have empowered individuals with new freedoms while simultaneously leading to feelings of alienation, isolation, and a detachment from traditional communal ties. Furthermore, the alienation resulting from rapid social change has introduced psychological complexities, prompting self-discovery and a redefinition of personal roles, thereby reinforcing individualism (Boltayeva, 2024).

Hofstede defines individualism as a focus on self-orientation, where identity is based on the individual, emphasizing personal initiative and achievement, along with valuing private life. In contrast, collectivism is characterized by loyalty to the group, group orientation, identity rooted in social systems, an emphasis on belonging, and a private life that may be encroached upon by social groups. While Hofstede's framework is highly useful, it is important to note that the differences between Japanese and Taiwanese cultures may not fully conform to the parameters of Hofstede's cultural comparison theory.

In the literature review of this thesis, the cultural timelines of Taiwan and Japan are presented, emphasizing aspects related to collectivism and individualism. To explore the

subtle cultural differences in how individuals from Japan and Taiwan react to the conflict between collectivism and individualism, I will outline the key environmental factors that have contributed to the development of these dimensions in both countries. This analysis will be approached from historical, political, religious, philosophical, and educational perspectives, arranged in a loose chronological order.



In Taiwanese culture, which has traditionally been deeply rooted in Confucianism, the concepts of "mianzi" and "guanxi" are highly valued (Chang, 2013). These concepts highlight the importance of strong bonds with family and friends. Mianzi is particularly significant in interpersonal relationships where guanxi is embedded, leading individuals to have rights and obligations that dictate their communicative actions within the group. This often includes seeking uniqueness and status to stand out in relation to outsiders. In contrast, traditional Japanese culture is characterized by concepts related to emptiness, including Shintoism (Breen, 2013), "Zen" (Suzuki, 2019), and "Wabi-sabi" (Jupiner, 2011). These cultural elements emphasize indirectness, the notion of nothingness, and a profound respect for group harmony and societal norms, where avoiding the disturbance of others is particularly noteworthy.

Additionally, the influence of individualism during this new period should be considered. In the era of globalization, individualism has gained prominence in both Japan and Taiwan, and as a result, the shifts in people's attitudes and behaviors will be a key focus of the current thesis research.

2.3 Factors that cultivated collectivism and Individualism in Japan

First, in ancient Japan, the collectivistic culture was profoundly influenced by regional beliefs and philosophical concepts, including Shinto (Breen, 2013), Zen (Suzuki, 2019), the idea of emptiness (Eaude, 2014), and wabi-sabi (Okakura, 1906).

The origin of Shinto (Breen, 2013) is believed to date back over 10,000 years. The primary belief of Shinto is that the entirety of nature is sacred, and humans should strive to live in harmony with it. When agriculture was introduced to ancient Japan, this harmonious value underpinning Shinto facilitated cooperation among people, as they shared the belief in the same divine presence—nature itself. Eade (2014) explains that Shintoism embodies the most ancient and fundamental perspective in Japanese culture, with the concept of the selfless self being particularly distinctive. This concept suggests that one's self is perceived as open and empty, distinguishing it from external entities, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of all existence. Today, Japan is home to numerous religious groups coexisting together, yet Shinto remains the foundational philosophy underlying many of them as the oldest religion in Japan. This core mentality of prioritizing group harmony and emphasizing the virtue of cooperation continues to thrive in contemporary Japan, exemplifying the essence of collectivism (Inoue, 1998).

Zen, which was established in the 13th century, represents the Japanese adaptation of Zen Buddhism, originally derived from the Chinese tradition of meditative training focused on awareness and equanimity, emphasizing a natural lifestyle (Suzuki, 2019). A key aspect of Zen is the concept of selflessness, which involves the negation of the self. This concept is a significant feature of collectivism (Gillette, 2012).

As a similar and interactive concept, emptiness, which is also called wabi sabi (Okakura, 1906), is characterized by the Japanese traditional tea ceremony and prevails in the whole Japanese culture, meaning Japanese people value the empty space and time. This element is Individualism and collectivism derived from the Jomon Period (10,000 BC), and has been influenced by Buddhism and many other thoughts introduced later. Tsaknaki and Fernaeus (2016) says that there are three aspects of wabi sabi, which are “nothing lasts, nothing is finished, and nothing is perfect.” Within the wabi sabi spirit, nothing is valuable, because if

something is valuable, then there has to be something invariable, meaning that everything is equal. This can be said to be one of the characteristics of collectivism (Davies, 2016). Therefore, Shinto naturally aligned with the later introduced Zen Buddhism and Confucianism, as both Zen Buddhism shares the concept of emptiness, while Confucianism emphasizes the importance of social relationships (Eaude, 2014).

The relatively peaceful and homogeneous society of Japan persisted until the late Muromachi Period (16th century), when the government began to collapse and decentralization took hold. This era, known as the Warring States period, saw the establishment of hundreds of small governments across Japan, accompanied by thousands of battles and conflicts. As a result, many people faced constant danger, leading to the rise of Buddhism with its concept of transmigration. The accumulation of karma was believed to be essential for transmigration, fostering an internalized moral belief system based on relationships with others (Teranishi, 2020). This trait can be seen as a reinforcement of Japanese collectivism. This ethical framework endured even after the chaos subsided and peace was restored with the establishment of the Edo Period in the 17th century (Teranishi, 2020). During the Edo Period, Confucianism was introduced into the social system of Japan. At that time, Japan was a feudal society where governors placed a high value on loyalty and interpersonal bonds, drawing upon Confucian principles (Lai, 2018). Consequently, it can be asserted that Japanese collectivism further developed during this period as well.

Overall, Shinto established the foundational roots of the Japanese spirit, Buddhism contributed theoretical frameworks and practical applications, and Confucianism introduced moral, ethical, and political dimensions (Eaude, 2014).

Secondly, similar to the aforementioned concepts, two characteristic phenomena in Japanese communication are negative politeness (Ciubancan, 2015) and the concept of amae (Doi, 1962). Negative politeness refers to the speaker's effort to protect the hearer's self-

esteem by valuing and respecting their personal boundaries. In contrast, positive politeness involves the speaker reducing personal space with the hearer to enhance the hearer's self-esteem. In Japan, negative politeness is more prevalent than positive politeness, as people prefer to avoid infringing on others' boundaries; consequently, maintaining personal space and not imposing on others are critical aspects of interpersonal relationships (Ciubancan, 2015).

Amae is another significant concept in the study of Japanese culture. It refers to the behavior of expecting and relying on the benevolence of others. According to Doi (1962), amae is a term unique to Japan and is not easily found in other cultures, highlighting the Japanese emphasis on interpersonal relationships and the beneficence of others. This suggests that such dependence is less common in other societies. Individuals in an amae culture are expected to be modest and reserved in expressing their desires. The psychodynamics of amae emerge from this cultural context, with underlying norms that discourage free expression of feelings and perhaps instill a moral sense of not disturbing others. The reality behind amae is a culturally inherited prohibition against openly expressing desires (Doi, 1962).

The antonym of amae is enryo (Otaki, 2015), which signifies restraint and modesty. Japanese people tend to favor enryo over amae, as it is generally considered more socially acceptable. In Japanese society, individuals can only feel close to one another in specific situations, necessitating clear interpersonal boundaries; thus, the concept of amae remains prominent (Otaki, 2015).

The concept of amae arises from a cultural backdrop that encourages modesty and reservation in self-expression (Doi, 1989). I believe that the culture of negative politeness may also stem from this similar social context. Doi (1989) points out that the reasons for the development of such norms are open to interpretation, yet there is a prevailing demand for

individuals to “not express themselves freely.” This is accompanied by a moral sense that emphasizes “not bothering others,” which is relevant to the social framework.

The previously mentioned sense of collectivism contributed to the Japanese inclination toward nationalism during the modern World War Period. During the Meiji Period, the government began to cultivate Japanese nationalism by promoting the notion of the emperor's divinity, a concept that stems from Shintoism. This era saw the establishment of a stable hierarchy and the pervasive influence of nationalistic education, fostering cohesion and unity among the populace (Winfield et al., 2000).

Following Japan's surrender in World War II, the nation came under the control of the U.S. government, which significantly influenced Japanese society's transition from collectivism to individualism. According to Kasai (2009), the Japanese people began to abandon traditional values related to interpersonal obligation, emotional bonds, and connectivity, alongside the idea of anti-ultranationalism, largely due to the new educational policies mandated by the U.S. government.

Above all these cultural elements, there has been a notable shift to individualism in Japan, particularly among younger generations, driven by the influence of Western countries (Matsumoto, 1996).

However, conflicts arise between traditional values and newly introduced ones. While Japanese independence is somewhat constrained by traditional collectivism, interestingly, collectivism also supports the movement toward individualism. Factors such as urbanization and economic growth contribute to this shift (Ogihara, 2017). Japanese individuals often view individualism positively in terms of independence and freedom, yet they also maintain a collectivistic perspective regarding society, emphasizing the importance of maintaining good relationships with others. Consequently, individualistic personas within Japanese society may experience negative subjective well-being (Ogihara, 2014). Moreover, Japanese

independence is often bolstered by interdependence, whereas the reverse does not hold true (Taniguchi, 2019).

2.4 Factors that cultivated collectivism and Individualism in Taiwan

In Taiwan, Confucianism has been traditionally dominant since the Qing Dynasty's governance began in the 17th century. This cultural framework emphasizes the importance of family, values hard work and endurance as virtues, and stresses the significance of appropriateness (Chiang, 2013). As a result of Confucian principles, Taiwanese people are significantly relationally interdependent, with their relationships contributing to the development and maintenance of self-esteem (Kawabata, 2014). In Confucian societies, including Taiwan, these relationships are referred to as *guanxi*, forming the foundation of all social networks and interactions. *Guanxi* is defined as the mental framework for establishing connections in interpersonal relationships, encompassing shared understandings of specific obligations and subtle social nuances (Luo, 1997).

Particularly, the concept of "face," known as "mianzi" in Chinese, plays a crucial role in *guanxi*. Generally, face refers to the outcome of one's internal consistency that is validated by the judgments and perceptions of others. In a social context, individuals must maintain their face to secure their position and uphold their dignity. Each member of society has their own role, and behaviors should align with these designated functions. The ritual of face encompasses pride, honor, dignity, consideration, and composure. The principles governing human communication serve as the foundation for any social organization, where individuals strive to present themselves favorably in comparison to others to uphold their pride and honor, thereby exerting influence over their peers (Goffman, 1967).

Mianzi is particularly effective in interpersonal relationships where *guanxi* is embedded, granting individuals certain rights and obligations regarding communicative actions within the group (Chang, 2013). For instance, Taiwanese businessmen often frequent hostess clubs

as venues for socializing with peers, enhancing affective bonds, and showcasing their moral character and social competence. Such self-branding is vital for cultivating relationships within the business community. Conversely, failing to perform well in these social settings can lead to a loss of face and a weakening of interpersonal ties. The distinction between business and personal relationships is often blurred. Hostess clubs facilitate social processes such as solidifying group identities, conferring and confirming status and hierarchy, and engaging in masculinity rituals (Bedford, 2011).

These characteristics of Confucianism, where individuals strive to maintain relationships, are closely related to collectivism. However, the pursuit of uniqueness through comparison with others and the desire to stand out reflect individualistic tendencies.

After the Qing Dynasty lost to Japan, Taiwan became a Japanese colony. During this era, there was comparatively less conflict between the Japanese government and the Taiwanese people than in other Japanese-occupied regions, such as Korea. The Taiwanese elite were relatively accommodating, as Taiwan had not yet established a cohesive indigenous identity; under Qing Dynasty rule, the people did not recognize distinct geographical boundaries. During this period, many Confucian elites either returned to mainland China or lost their influence in Taiwan, allowing Taiwanese individuals to be more smoothly assimilated into the Japanese education system.

After Japan surrendered in World War II, Jiang JieShi arrived from mainland China to govern Taiwan. His dictatorship faced significant resistance from the citizens, leading to the achievement of democratization in 1987. During this era of democratization, conflicts arose between Liberalism and Confucianism, as they represent opposing concepts regarding individuals; Confucianism emphasizes social hierarchy and individual obligations, while Liberalism advocates for individual equality and freedom. However, this tension gave rise to a new form of democratization known as Confucian Democracy (Ling and Shih, 1998). At

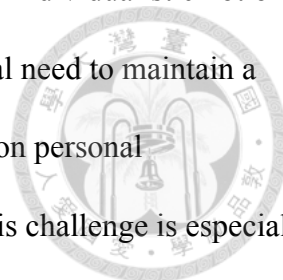
that time, the burgeoning nationalism in Taiwan reinforced Confucian moral politics, promoting a sense of selflessness for the common good (Ling and Shih, 1998). To this day, Taiwanese politics continues to be grounded in Confucian principles.

Today, Taiwanese society remains deeply rooted in Confucianism, with its people prioritizing family, valuing hard work and endurance as virtues, and emphasizing appropriateness (Chang, 2013). However, despite the enduring influence of Confucian collectivism, Taiwan has also been impacted by Western culture and thus the cultural shift to individualism. For instance, Taiwanese feminism faced significant obstacles stemming from traditional Chinese Confucian values until recently. The advancement of women's rights in Taiwan is closely tied to the population's aspirations toward modernization and democratization (Ku, 1988).

Keyser-Verreault (2022) explains the phenomenon of Taiwanese Neoliberalism, which embodies the concept of being the “entrepreneur” of one’s own life and is closely related to individualism. In Taiwan, neoliberal individualism operates within the context of collectivism and even reinforces it, and vice versa. For instance, this new wave of individualism promotes social normalization and conformity regarding slender body ideals in terms of women's beauty. This dynamic similarly influences business contexts; in Taiwan, the concept of *mianzi* has a greater impact than relational investment, indicating that Taiwanese businessmen's perspectives are still significantly shaped by traditional Confucian values (Chen, 2017).

Moreover, younger generations find it challenging to fully embrace individualism due to the strong cultural framework. Despite globalization leading to noticeable shifts in social value orientations across Taiwan, many urban and rural youth continue to identify as collectivistic. Notably, collectivistic youth report higher percentages of achieved status compared to both individualistic and transitional youth groups. Confucian collectivism

instills in the youth a skepticism towards the importance of Western individualistic notions related to personal identity achievement, emphasizing the traditional need to maintain a good reputation and bring honor to the family rather than focusing on personal developmental gains, particularly in education and career paths. This challenge is especially pronounced for rural youth, who often lack access to state-of-the-art technology that can help them cultivate independent identities (Lee, 2009).



Chapter 3 Research Question



Our literature review revealed that there is a lack of scholarly work that directly compares Japanese and Taiwanese attitudes toward the new-era trend of individualism and its interaction with collectivism. Traditional culture comparison research also seemed to be insufficient to identify the factors that caused disparities between these two countries' collectivism and individualism. Nevertheless, literature in history, religion, culture, and social psychology in Japan and Taiwan respectively highlighted the unique characteristics of each culture and hinted at how their collectivism might be different. Therefore, this research aims to uncover the nuanced differences between Japanese and Taiwanese perspectives on individualism/collectivism, their varying attitudes toward the recent shift to individualism, and how these differences manifest in social media.

For our research questions and the limited existing knowledge found in the literature, qualitative research is a more suitable method for an exploration of subtle nuances and digs deeper into the background and context behind the observed outcomes. According to Carson et al. (2001), the advantage of qualitative research lies in its ability to capture concrete cases and individual perspectives, while its disadvantage is its subjective nature and difficulty in generalization. In contrast, quantitative research yields objective results grounded in extensive data but often fails to capture all relevant elements.

To respond to our research questions, we first identified some critical topics that we would like to gather insights. As reviewed in Chapter 2, compared to the Western culture, both Japan and Taiwan are still quite collectivistic. However, the current thesis research focuses on the minute differences between Japanese and Taiwanese collectivism. Therefore, the first category of questions aims to reveal how interviewees regard collectivism. We plan

to ask how people feel about the groups they belong to and how they feel about and interact with in-groups versus outgroups. Similarly, the literature suggests that in both Taiwan and Japan, the recent influences of globalization, urbanization, and economic growth have ushered in a wave of individualism. The next category of questions is related to how interviewees regard individualism. We are interested in garnering insights from their desire to express themselves and their openness for others to express themselves.

The next category addresses the research question regarding how individualism interacts with collectivism in society. This thesis would like to see if the interviewers generally feel they are more collectivistic or individualistic. More importantly, we would like to know if this tendency is a general principle or only for certain occasions. This is meaningful because in the research of comparing Japanese and Taiwanese collectivism/individualism it is crucial to know which people prioritize and why. Another angle we plan to approach in the collectivism-individualism interaction is to examine if people feel there is a conflict between collectivism and individualism, and how exactly they think the two can coexist in society. .

Next, since both Taiwan and Japan have a high score of collectivism, it was important to know the nuanced differences of the collectivistic factor in the two cultures.

As reviewed in Chapter 2, we identified distinct cultural factors. Japanese culture has historically emphasized concepts of emptiness and selflessness, with individuals valuing harmony, personal space, and the importance of not bothering others. On the other hand, , Taiwanese culture is deeply rooted in Confucianism, where the dynamics of relationships and one's status both within and outside of the group hold significant importance. Therefore, we also plan to explore question categories specific to Japanese and Taiwanese cultures. Finally, as the early form of this research idea comes from my observation on the social media usage in Japan versus Taiwan, one of our key research question is about how the difference in the perception of collectivism and individualism influence how people

in these two countries utilize social media. We also intend to create questions specifically addressing how cross-cultural differences appear in social media. It also gives further insights of the minute differences that other categories have revealed.



Chapter 4 Methodology



The current thesis aims to elucidate the differences between Japanese and Taiwanese people's attitudes toward the shift from traditional collectivism to new-era individualism through in-depth interviews. These interviews are designed based on a literature review of the cultural factors relevant to both Japan and Taiwan.

For this study, I conducted a series of one-on-one, semi-structured, in-depth interviews after receiving training in qualitative research methodologies. In-depth interviews enabled the research to not only gather general perceptions about collectivism and individualism in both countries but also to explore the interviewees' comprehensive and nuanced thoughts in relation to the questions, along with specific contextual backgrounds. Moreover, the use of open-ended questions and the inviting atmosphere of one-on-one interviews facilitated a space for interviewees to express deeper personal thoughts that they might not typically reveal in public settings (Cote & Raz, 2015).

4.1 Participants

We employed quota sampling to recruit an equal number of Japanese and Taiwanese participants, including six from Japan and six from Taiwan, resulting in a total of 12 interviewees. Each participant received a 200 NTD gift card as compensation for their participation in the interviews. Age was used as a secondary criterion to create group quotas, categorizing participants into their 20s, 30s, and 40s & 50s to ensure representativeness. This age segmentation was essential, as attitudes toward collectivism and individualism may vary according to age, particularly given that the wave of individualism has accompanied

urbanization and economic growth (Su, 2015). Each generation may be impacted differently by these societal and economic changes based on the era in which they were raised.

Additionally, since one of our main focuses was on social media, we chose not to interview individuals over the age of 60, as more than half of adults aged 65 and older with smartphones actively use social media (Faverio, 2022).

To ensure that we obtained insights from a heterogeneous group, we recruited two participants from each age group for both countries. These efforts resulted in the following chart. Additionally, convenience sampling was employed to recruit interviewees within each group.

For your reference, there were two male and four female in the Japanese interviewees, and all Taiwanese were male. Also, Japanese interviewees consisted of one student, four business professionals and one retiree. Taiwanese counterpart were all business professionals.

Table1 Nationality and Age Groups and the Number of Participants Recruited

Nationality\Age group	20s	30s	40s and 50s
Japanese	2	2	2
Taiwanese	2	2	2

4.2 Setting and Procedure

The interviews were conducted online via Google Meet, with each session lasting between 1.5 to 2 hours per participant. We developed a question pool consisting of 60 questions categorized into 12 themes derived from our research questions outlined in Chapter 3. These questions were designed to elicit participants' perceptions and sources of information regarding collectivism versus individualism, their attitudes toward the shift toward individualism, and their use of social media. During the interviews, participants were

asked several open-ended questions to encourage them to share their honest opinions, as well as the specific backgrounds and detailed contexts underlying their responses.

In the introductory segment of the interview, I first introduced myself and then explained the purpose of the interview along with our privacy policy. After obtaining the interviewees' consent to participate, I provided a layperson's explanation of individualism and collectivism before proceeding with the questions. I described collectivistic societies as those where individuals identify themselves as members of a group and prioritize the interests of that group, emphasizing the strength of the bonds among group members. In contrast, I explained that in individualistic societies, people see themselves as independent units and prioritize their own wants and needs, resulting in generally weaker bonds among group members.

I began the interviews by asking the broadest overarching question regarding how the interviewees perceive themselves in terms of individualism versus collectivism. Based on their responses, I followed up with relevant questions. For example, if an interviewee expressed a collectivistic perspective, I prompted them to elaborate further on that aspect, asking questions such as, "What do you care about in order to get along with others within the group?"

When discussing collectivism, if an interviewee indicated that they view themselves as part of society, I proceeded with questions about social recognition, including whether they regard the entire society as a group. Conversely, if the interviewee mentioned individualistic tendencies, I shifted to questions about individualism, such as, "How much do you value your own wants and needs?"

After addressing individualism and collectivism separately, I posed comparative questions to ascertain which value was more significant to the interviewees. This included

inquiries like, “In what situations do you prioritize yourself, and in what situations do you prioritize the group to which you belong?”

If interviewees expressed feelings of conflict between individualism and collectivism, I followed up with questions exploring the specifics of those conflicts. This category included questions like, “What kinds of situations make you feel that there is a conflict between individualism and collectivism?”

Additionally, I inquired about specific elements of collectivism and individualism in Japanese and Taiwanese cultures whenever the interviewees discussed relevant topics or when conflicts arose. These elements included social harmony, face, uniqueness, and the importance of not bothering others. For instance, I asked, “How do you define the term group harmony?”

Whenever interviewees referenced personal space, I transitioned to questions about that topic, asking, “How important is your personal space when communicating with others?”

This category could also be triggered by related comments from the interviewees.

In the final segment of the interview, or whenever social media was mentioned, I asked about their usage of social media. Questions included, “What social media platforms do you use?” and “For what purposes do you use social media?”

The appendix contains the full question pool.

4.3 Analysis and Coding

We followed Salmons’s (2022) recommended procedure to analyze our in-depth interviews. To prepare for data analysis, all interview recordings were first transcribed verbatim using Plaud, a transcription software. I subsequently listened to the audio files, reviewed the generated transcripts for accuracy, and made necessary revisions.

To create a coding scheme, two researchers independently reviewed the transcripts and identified relevant data units aligned with our research questions using open-coding methods. During this process, we read the transcripts thoroughly and multiple times, breaking down sentences or paragraphs into smaller, meaningful segments. We then assigned codes to each segment, which involved labeling the observed phenomena with concise words or phrases (Delve & Limpaecher, 2024).

For example, one participant, JP-20-1, responded, “When voting for something in school, I always guess which everyone would choose and follow the majority, even if I disagree. For example, when a teacher retires, everyone wants to write a message card to him together. I would say that I want to write it with everyone, too, even if I do not know the teacher well and I am not willing to write to him.” In this response, I divided her comments into two parts: the first part, “When voting for something in school, I always guess which everyone would choose and follow the majority, even if I disagree,” and the second part, which included the remainder of the statement. For the first segment, I assigned three codes: “respecting the majority vote,” “observing others,” and “adapting to others.”

In the first round of coding, the researchers generated as many codes as possible, initially identifying 269 codes. We then organized related codes to uncover more sophisticated themes, labeling each theme accordingly. Throughout this process, we added, deleted, or combined codes and themes as necessary. For instance, the codes “sacrificing one’s opinions,” “sacrificing one’s emotions,” “sacrificing one’s face,” and “sacrificing one’s likes” were consolidated under the umbrella code “sacrificing oneself.”

Following any modifications to the coding, we conducted a re-coding and regrouping process. The researchers carefully examined the data to uncover embedded meanings and potential relationships among the codes. We then engaged in discussions to reach a consensus on the codes and themes, ultimately identifying participants' perceptions

regarding their experiences with the conflicts between individualism and collectivism, as well as other cross-cultural differences. In the end, we condensed the data to 209 codes, which were organized into 54 sub-themes under five broader themes.

The five themes identified were individualism, collectivism, boundaries, conflicts, and group size. These themes were further divided into sub-themes based on more precise categories of codes, including contexts, reactions, and emotions.

Here is the table of themes and subthemes.

Table 2 table of themes and subthemes

Theme	Subtheme	Definition and examples of codes
Individualism	Respecting uniqueness (In general, at workplace, with friends, and with family)	Respecting others' uniqueness in the group. #everyone is different #respect individualistic group members
	Valuing personal benefits (In general, at workplace, at school, with friends, and with family)	Prioritizing personal benefits, wants, needs and purposes in a group. #valuing personal achievement #be the true self inside the mindset
	Competing with each other (In general, at workplace, and at school)	Competing with other group members in the group. #caring for face #comparing with others
	Aloof human relations (In general, at workplace, with family, and towards outsiders (separated to actively and passively))	Human relations are aloof in the group. #respecting others' personal space #not interfering
	Living true to oneself regardless of others (In general, with family, and in social media)	Being the true self regardless of how others see them. #not caring how others regard me #not caring the hidden rules
	Inside self-esteem (In general, and in social media)	Self-esteem derives from the inside of oneself. #being the good version of me #taking responsibility for one's decision
	Respecting the group (In general, at workplace, with friends, with close people, and with family)	Respecting and prioritizing the group that one belongs to or other group members. #adapting to the groups' wants #prioritizing others
Collectivism	Wanting to contribute to the group (In general, at workplace, in the whole society, and with family)	Wanting to make contributions to the group one belongs to. #wanting to make others happy #wanting to contribute to the company
	Close human relationship (In general (separated to behavior and mindset), with friends, and with family)	Close human relationships inside the group. #valuing interactions #valuing cooperation
	Valuing harmony (In general (separated to behavior and mindset), with close people, and in the whole society)	Valuing group harmony. #observing others #valuing everyone's agreement
	Sacrificing	Sacrificing oneself for the sake of the group. #sacrificing one's emotions #wanting freedom
	Avoiding conflicts (in general and with close people)	Avoiding conflicts with others #not wanting others to be upset #indirect expressions of opinions
	Not standing out (In general and in social media)	Not wanting to stand out in front of others. #not wanting to be different from others #not posting too much posts
	Disliking disharmony (behavior and mindset)	Disliking disharmonious situations in the group. #disliking disharmonious persons #persuading disharmonious persons
	Disliking others' social media posts	Disliking the way others post social media. #Disliking those who post too much #Disliking those who post too often
	Respecting norms (In general (separated to limited and not limited) and with family)	Respecting group norms #Being polite #Respecting the rules
	Outside self-esteem (In general and in the whole society)	Self-esteem deriving from outsiders. #wanting to be valued by others #identity based on the group
	Adapting to others	Adapting to others with certain limitations. #Adapting others in important situations #Sacrificing one's opinions in important situations
Boundary	Showing off	Bragging with certain limitations #Showing off needs to be to the appropriate extent #Not bragging too much
	Generation gaps	Generation gaps of being collectivistic or individualistic #Younger people are more individualistic #Older people are more collectivistic
	Coexistence	Recognition that individualism and collectivism can coexist. #individualism and collectivism can coexist #Do not feel the conflicts between the younger and the elder
Size of the group	Small groups	The groups that one belongs to are small. #Groups are small #Acting different according to groups
	Large groups	The groups that one belongs to are small. #The whole society is group #Acting the same in every groups
	Range of relationships (Wide and narrow)	The range of human relationships that one is involved in. #Selecting close friends #Not be aware of others

Next, the data was analyzed using a deductive approach based on the participants' nationality and age. A table was created to code the most salient quotes corresponding to each theme, providing examples in the thesis and ensuring alignment with the research questions. We recorded how many times each code appeared in the interviews and tallied the occurrences according to age and nationality groups. Additionally, we counted how many interviewees mentioned each code.

Discrepancies between coders were discussed and resolved until a consensus was reached. In the current study, it was established that data collection would continue until no new information emerged that could potentially lead to the creation of additional categories regarding individuals' recognition of the conflicts between collectivism and individualism, as well as their sources of information.

Chapter 5 Results



5.1 Collectivism

5.1.1 Cross-country Similarity in Social Harmony

The similar coding scores (the number of times the codes were mentioned) for the subthemes “respect for social groups,” “respect for group rules,” and “respect for group harmony” suggest that Japanese and Taiwanese individuals share comparable attitudes in these three areas. All interviewees indicated that they respect their social groups and the concept of group harmony, with five participants from both Japan and Taiwan expressing their appreciation for social norms. Each aspect of respect can be categorized into various contexts, including family members, friends, colleagues, and society as a whole, indicating a broad spectrum of values.

Respecting group harmony involves prioritizing the group over oneself, honoring group goals, and valuing the group as an important entity. For example, JP-20-2 explained her commitment to respecting company decisions, stating, *“Since I am just a hired employee, I have to adjust my behavior to the company’s environment.”* Similarly, TW-20-1 mentioned, *“I always prioritize my family and friends. I do not actually have any conflicts with my close family and friends because I can endure anything about them. Even if I am not happy with their behavior, I do not speak out.”*

Respecting group norms entails adhering to the prevailing rules and expectations within in-groups, such as being polite or honoring the majority's decisions. For instance, TW-30-1 emphasized the importance of establishing discipline within families, saying, *“In every family, when parents educate their children, there has to be discipline; they have to be fair, so they need to establish some rules that the children need to keep.”* Likewise, JP-30-2

noted the significance of company regulations: *“In work, every aspect is regulated by rules, such as how colleagues interact with one another, so I only do as the rule says.”* This sub-theme was further divided into “family” and “groups in general.”

Respecting social harmony encompasses being considerate of others' opinions and caring about their feelings. For instance, JP-40-1 shared his commitment to maintaining company harmony: *“I have to endure some things sometimes in order to keep the group harmony.”* Meanwhile, TW-20-2 articulated the value of group consensus, stating, *“If someone is too selfish in a group, there may be conflicts, but since everyone in the group needs to reach an agreement, I am willing to talk to that person and persuade them.”*

The observed similarities align with the literature reviewed. In Japan, ancient concepts such as Shintoism (Breen, 2013) and Zen (Gillette, 2012) have established a foundation of collectivism. In the 17th century, Confucianism was introduced into the social system, emphasizing bonds and loyalty (Lai, 2018). Ogihara (2014) notes that Japanese society remains rooted in collectivism, as the overall culture values interpersonal relationships within groups. Consequently, individualistic personas in Japanese society often experience negative subjective well-being. Although the younger generation is increasingly adopting individualistic values, Japanese independence is still supported by interdependence; however, the reverse is not true (Taniguchi, 2019).

In Taiwan, collectivism is predominantly based on Confucian principles. Since the governance of the Qing Dynasty in the 17th century, Confucianism has instilled values such as prioritizing family, viewing hard work and endurance as virtues, and emphasizing appropriateness within in-groups (Chiang, 2013). While Taiwan, like Japan, is experiencing a shift toward individualism, the populace remains influenced by Confucianism (Chen, 2017), and this individualism occurs within a collectivist context (Keyser-Verreault, 2022). Lee (2009) further explains that the traditional emphasis on maintaining a good reputation

and bringing honor to one's family—rather than focusing on personal developmental gains—poses challenges for young people, particularly in rural areas, in accessing cutting-edge technology that could help them establish independent identities.



5.1.2 Cross-country Similarity in Close Connections between In-group Members

This paragraph encompasses three sub themes: “self-affirmation deriving from others' attention,” “the desire to contribute to the group,” and “close human relationships within the group.” Both Japanese and Taiwanese participants exhibited a shared desire to feel valued by other group members and to contribute meaningfully to the group, highlighting the significance of close relationships among group members.

The close relationships among in-group members represent a key similarity. For instance, JP-20-1 expressed her appreciation for social connections, stating, *“If you are considered to be different from the group, then you will lose the social connections within the group, so I do not want to be different.”* Similarly, TW-20-1 emphasized the importance of bonds with close friends and family, mentioning, *“I do not think I can do whatever I want or say whatever I want just because those people are close to me. It is the opposite. I should consider my closest people as the most important, because they consider me as the most important person.”*

Examples of the desire to be valued by other in-group members include the following. JP-20-1 expressed that affirmation from others is significant to her, stating, *“I desire to be liked by others. I want to be liked by everybody. Since I do not get along well with my parents at home, I don't think they like me, so I fulfill my desire outside my family by behaving in ways that make me likable to others.”* Similarly, TW-20-1 noted that his self-

esteem is largely derived from the approval of those around him, explaining, *“My self-esteem mainly comes from the approval of people surrounding me.”*

This tendency also manifests in social media usage. For instance, JP-30-2 indicated that he is mindful of his posts to avoid being perceived as boring. He mentioned, *“I only post things that are rare or meaningful. I do not want to be regarded as boring by others.”*

The desire to contribute to the group encompasses fulfilling one's role within the group and being attentive to others' emotions. JP-30-2 indicated that when he posts on social media, he takes his friends' feelings into account and shares content that he believes they would appreciate. He stated, *“When I go to a restaurant that someone has recommended to me, I would post about that restaurant. For example, when you gave me a mug last time, I posted about it. When there's a background story, I do post as a way to provide feedback to my friend.”*

Similarly, TW-40-2 expressed that a significant source of his self-esteem comes from his role as a teacher, where he feels he provides valuable opportunities for his students. He revealed, *“When my students grow up participating in various competitions and experience a sense of achievement, I also feel that sense of achievement. It enhances my self-esteem.”*

This similarity aligns with the literature reviewed. In Japan, Buddhism has reinforced collectivism by internalizing a belief in morality based on interpersonal relationships (Teranishi, 2020). Ogihara (2014) notes that Japanese individuals place a high value on maintaining good relationships with others. Similarly, Confucianism, which was introduced from China, has emphasized the importance of bonds among people (Lai, 2018).

In Taiwan, Confucianism is deeply ingrained in the culture, promoting high relational interdependence among individuals (Kawabata, 2014). Kawabata (2014) asserts that relationships with others are essential for self-esteem. These relationships are referred to as *guanxi* (Luo, 1997) and form the foundation of all social networks and behaviors. Moreover,

Confucian Democracy in the 20th century reinforced Confucian moral politics, fostering a sense of selflessness for the common good (Ling and Shih, 1998).



In addition to the similarities, we identified several significant perceptual and behavioral differences in how Japanese and Taiwanese individuals feel about and react to situations related to collectivism. Specifically, the differences encompass public self-consciousness, the tendency to be active or passive in maintaining harmony, the limitations of collectivism's impact, the size of in-groups, and reactions to disharmonious situations. We will discuss our findings regarding each of these differences in the subsections below.

5.1.3 Difference in Public Self-consciousness and Being Active or Passive to Keep Harmony

Japanese participants scored higher (the number of times the codes were mentioned) than Taiwanese participants in three codes classified under the subtheme "the attitude of valuing harmony in groups in general." These codes are: "observe others and adapt one's behavior to others," "value how others see them," and "care about everyone in the group." Specifically, for the first code, Japanese scored 21 while Taiwanese scored 5; for the second code, Japanese scored 27 compared to 0 for Taiwanese; and for the third code, the scores were 4 for Japanese and 1 for Taiwanese.

These results indicate that Japanese individuals discussed their awareness of others' actions and feelings more frequently than Taiwanese individuals did, as well as their concern for how they are perceived by others and the importance they place on the feelings of everyone in the group. For example, JP-20-2 explained her approach to making friends by stating, *"Before I make friends with others, I mainly observe them first. I watch how he or she communicates with others for a few days before starting to form a relationship. By*

observing others, I can gauge their communication style and determine how close I should be with them.”

Similarly, JP-30-2 expressed his concern about others' opinions regarding his clothing, saying, *“I wear what is appropriate for the situation because I care about how others see me.”* He further emphasized his desire for group harmony, explaining, *“If someone is unhappy, then the group is not in harmony. For instance, at work, even if the tasks are difficult, they should be shared equally to achieve harmony.”* He reiterated this belief, stating, *“If someone in a group is not happy, then that group lacks harmony. Even if the work is very challenging, distributing the tasks equally fosters harmony.”*

The code of observing others and caring about how they are perceived is also evident in the broader societal context, reflecting key characteristics of public self-consciousness. This can be understood as an awareness of oneself as part of the larger society and the tendency to behave in ways that align with societal norms or common sense, while considering how others view them. In this thesis, public self-consciousness is defined as the self-awareness of being part of the whole society and the inclination to conform to the expectations and perceptions of others within that society. This characteristic aligns with the spirit of wabi-sabi, which embodies the principle of equality among all things (Davies, 2016).

Next, we will explore how Japanese and Taiwanese individuals differ in their actions to maintain group harmony. Our findings indicate that Taiwanese individuals tend to react actively, while Japanese individuals respond passively to disharmonious situations. Actively reacting involves taking the initiative to address the situation, such as mediating or persuading others, whereas passively reacting entails submitting to the circumstances, for instance, by avoiding potential conflicts or refraining from involvement.

In the subtheme of “actively taking actions toward disharmonious situations,” Taiwanese participants scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) 18, while

Japanese participants scored only 2. Taiwanese individuals often discussed their proactive approach to fostering harmony, which includes assisting others, protecting them, and showing initiative in caring for them. For example, TW-30-1 emphasized the importance of family support, stating, *“Our family bond is tight. We are in a situation where everyone helps one another.”*

Conversely, the Japanese scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) significantly higher in terms of not standing out and not being different from others. JP-20-1 articulated this mindset, stating, *“When I interact with others, I only care about not standing out or being considered strange, so I adjust myself to others. I hope I do not have any traits.”*

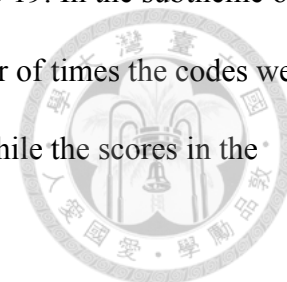
This characteristic among Japanese individuals aligns with the selflessness emphasized in Shintoism (Eaude, 2014) and Zen (Gillette, 2012). Additionally, the idea of not bothering others, which is rooted in the concept of *amae* (Doi, 1962), may also be relevant in this context.

5.1.4 Difference in Boundaries of the Impact of Collectivism

Our findings indicate that Taiwanese collectivism is often limited to specific situations, while Japanese collectivism tends to be more generalized. In the subtheme of respecting the group, Taiwanese and Japanese participants scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) 15 and 6 in the workplace category, 39 and 6 in the family category, and 7 and 1 in the friends category, with Taiwanese scores consistently higher in all categories. However, in the general category, Japan outscored Taiwan with scores of 37 to 12.

In the subtheme of the desire to contribute to the group, Taiwanese participants scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) 5 and 1 in the workplace category and 4 and 0 in the family category, again showing higher scores than their Japanese counterparts. Nevertheless, in the general category, Japanese individuals scored (the number of times the

codes were mentioned) higher than Taiwanese, with scores of 36 to 19. In the subtheme of respecting social norms, Taiwanese participants scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) higher than Japanese in the family category (4 to 0), while the scores in the general category were nearly equal at 33 to 29.



Regarding the subtheme of respecting social harmony, Taiwanese scores (the number of times the codes were mentioned) were higher in the category of close relationships (5 to 0), while Japanese scores exceeded Taiwanese scores in the general category, with scores of 142 to 200. In the subtheme of avoiding conflicts, Taiwanese and Japanese participants scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) 7 to 1 in the close people category and nearly tied in the general category at 103 to 97, reflecting a noticeable score gap in the former and minimal difference in the latter. Furthermore, four of the Taiwanese interviewees indicated that they establish boundaries regarding when to be collectivistic and when not to be, whereas none of the Japanese interviewees reported doing so. They noted that they adapt their behavior to others when it is truly necessary, but otherwise, they maintain their independence.

These findings indicate that in Taiwan, individuals tend to be exceptionally collectivistic within each group context, including family, friends, and the workplace. The related subtheme of boundaries suggests that Taiwanese individuals exhibit more individualistic tendencies toward outgroups. In contrast, in Japan, the previously mentioned characteristics of collectivism—such as respecting the group, valuing group rules, prioritizing harmony, avoiding conflict, and contributing to the group—are generalized across the culture. Consequently, we infer that Japanese individuals also display similar collectivistic attitudes toward outgroups.

Here are examples illustrating the codes of “respecting the group of close people” and “adapting oneself to close people.” TW-20-1 expressed his collectivistic mindset within his

close friends and family, stating, *“When my family or friends have opinions about me, even if they do not ask me to, I would want to take the initiative to do what they want me to do. I do not want to let them down.”* He further commented on the considerable efforts he makes for the sake of his family, revealing, *“When I started looking for a job, I felt a lot of pressure because I believed I should find a decent job that my parents could proudly share with others.”* An example of the code “not blaming people close to them” can be illustrated by TW-30-1, who remarked, *“When my close friends ask me questions that I do not feel comfortable with, I don’t blame them for that. I still feel it is okay.”* Additionally, TW-30-2 frequently mentioned the strong relationships he shares with his friends, stating, *“When I find someone I can consider a close friend, and his values align with mine, I feel comfortable chatting with him about our shared interests, which brings us closer together.”*

The following example illustrates the code “insisting on one’s opinions when necessary” within the “boundary” theme. TW-40-1 expressed that he stands firm on his opinions in situations where he believes he has the right to do so. He stated, *“When there is a conflict between me and others, I do my best to consider the perspectives of others. However, if it harms my interests and I have the right to protect them, I will firmly hold on to my opinion.”*

5.1.5 Difference in the Size of Groups

In relation to the discussion on boundaries, Japanese and Taiwanese individuals appear to differ in the size of their social groups, with Japanese individuals typically having larger in-groups and Taiwanese individuals maintaining smaller ones. Taiwanese scores (the number of times the codes were mentioned) for the code “small group size” were 13, while this code was not mentioned by Japanese participants. TW-40-1 described his belonging to a small group, stating, *“I belong to a very small group, consisting of people who share the same hobby.”*

Conversely, the code scores (the number of times the codes were mentioned) for “large group size” were 21 for Japanese participants and 12 for Taiwanese participants. While both groups acknowledged that they view the entire society as a social group, Japanese individuals scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) higher for the code “acting the same toward everyone.” For instance, JP-20-2 noted, *“Not only to close people but also to everyone, I always act the same to be a nice person and to fulfill what others want me to do.”*

The aforementioned difference can be further explained by the observation that Taiwanese individuals typically have a broader range of social groups compared to Japanese individuals, while also being more selective about whom they choose to become close with. For instance, TW-40-1 indicated that he interacts with a diverse array of people, stating, *“Although my group is small, the range of the group is quite wide. It actually extends to individuals all over the world who share the same hobby.”* Similarly, TW-30-1 highlighted his selectiveness regarding friendships, mentioning, *“When I first meet someone, I try to understand their personality, and then I decide whether or not to consider that person a friend.”*

Relatedly, we identified another distinct subtheme: *“the concept of valuing the harmony of the whole society.”* This sub theme is particularly relevant to Japanese culture and aligns with the characteristic emphasis they place on valuing every individual within the group, despite the larger group sizes. For example, JP-20-2 expressed her desire to be liked by everyone, stating, *“Not only towards those who are close to me but also towards everyone, I make every effort to meet their expectations of how I should be.”*

5.1.6 Difference in Their Reactions to Disharmonious Situations

The final difference between Japanese and Taiwanese collectivism lies in their reactions to disharmonious situations. While both cultures express a distaste for disharmony, Japanese participants scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) higher in their mindset against it, though they do not necessarily act on these feelings. In contrast, Taiwanese participants demonstrated a greater propensity for taking the initiative to resolve issues. In the subtheme “the mindset of disliking disharmony,” Taiwanese participants scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) 6 compared to the Japanese score (the number of times the codes were mentioned) of 15, whereas in the subtheme “taking actions to fix the disharmony,” Taiwan scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) 18 while Japan scored only 2. For example, JP-30-2 expressed his distaste for selfish individuals, stating, *“I do not like those who only prioritize their own benefit and personality. I would be disappointed in them.”* On the other hand, TW-20-2 conveyed his willingness to mediate for others in the group, saying, *“If someone is too individualistic in a group, I can understand his thoughts, and I am willing to explain it to the rest of the collectivistic people. I want to solve the issue in a way that everyone would agree.”*

Additionally, it is noteworthy that Japanese interviewees specifically mentioned their dislike for individuals who are perceived as different from others. JP-20-1 remarked that she does not appreciate those who stand out in a group, stating, *“Because everyone makes an effort to go along with the group, I hope the different person makes that effort too.”*

5.2 Individualism

5.2.1 Cross-country Similarity in Valuing Personal Needs and Success

From the perspective of individualism, we observed similarities between Japanese and Taiwanese individuals in terms of valuing personal success, needs, and pleasures, as well as the desire to present their true selves to others. The scores (the number of times the codes

were mentioned) for the subtheme “valuing personal profits” were comparable for both Japanese and Taiwanese in three categories: “valuing personal profits in the workplace,” “valuing personal profits within the family,” and “valuing personal profits in general.” In these categories, both scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) 6 to 6, 2 to 1, and 83 to 83, respectively. For instance, JP-20-1 expressed her commitment to self-prioritization, stating, *“I always put myself in front of anything, whenever and whatever I am doing. Other things I do not care so much about. I try my best not to harm others, but basically, I prioritize myself.”* Similarly, TW-30-2 affirmed his focus on personal goals, saying, *“I usually prioritize myself; I prioritize the achievement of my own goals. As long as my wants and needs are satisfied, I try to care about others.”*

The code “wanting to be the true self” reflects the willingness to pursue personal desires regardless of how others perceive them. The scores (the number of times the codes were mentioned) for this code were 17 for Japanese participants and 14 for Taiwanese participants. For example, JP-40-2 stated, *“If someone invites me to a party that I do not want to attend, I would simply say I do not want to go. I do not want to be forced to attend.”* Similarly, TW-20-2 expressed, *“Even when I am in a group, I try to just be myself. I do not take the initiative to start a conflict, but I am willing to discuss issues with others when I feel I am not in the wrong.”* These traits align with the literature on individualism. Hofstede (1980) notes that in societies with a high degree of individualism, people prioritize their own needs and desires. Similarly, Ogihara (2017) defines individualism as a societal pattern characterized by loosely bonded individuals who perceive themselves as independent entities, leading to more practical forms of interaction.

5.2.2 Differences in Tolerance of Uniqueness and the Boundary of Showing Off, and Differences in Respecting Those Who Are Different, and Independence in the Group

In addition to the similarities, we identified several significant cross-cultural differences within the theme of “individualism.” First, only Taiwanese participants indicated that they do not care how others perceive them and are unconcerned about being different from others, resulting in a score (the number of times the codes were mentioned) of 13 for Taiwanese and 0 for Japanese in the subtheme “being the true self regardless of others.” Second, in the subtheme “showing off with boundaries,” Taiwanese scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) 8 while Japanese scored 0. Third, all Taiwanese interviewees addressed the codes in the subtheme “respecting others’ uniqueness,” whereas no Japanese participants mentioned this aspect. Lastly, Japanese individuals scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) higher than Taiwanese in the subtheme “the independence of individuals in the group,” with distinctions observed across the categories of general groups, family, and outgroups. In each category, the scores (the number of times the codes were mentioned) were 67 to 35 for general groups, 5 to 1 for family, and 28 to 13 for outgroups.

In relation to the subtheme “being the true self regardless of others,” we observed that Taiwanese participants in their 20s and 30s particularly emphasized their uniqueness and willingness to express themselves in front of others, irrespective of external perceptions. Although both Japanese and Taiwanese exhibit a similar mindset regarding authenticity, the difference in this subtheme highlights that Taiwanese individuals actively take steps to express their true selves, whereas Japanese individuals tend to refrain from doing so. For instance, TW-20-2 expressed his disregard for others’ opinions about his appearance, stating, *"Not wearing casual or unique clothes in the workplace is just an unwritten rule. There are no official rules about dressing, and I like dressing in my own style, so I just dress the way I want."*

Furthermore, the first difference can be inferred to relate to the second difference: only Taiwanese individuals feel that it is acceptable to showcase themselves to others, provided the extent is appropriate. TW-20-1 stated, *“I think it is okay for people to appropriately brag about their abilities and have an edge over others in certain aspects.”* Here, the boundary pertains specifically to the extent and frequency of self-promotion, as well as the closeness of the relationship with the person doing the bragging. While two Japanese interviewees acknowledged their dislike for bragging, they did not address the boundaries that Taiwanese individuals described.

The third difference identified was that Taiwanese interviewees exclusively noted their respect for the value of individualistic individuals within the group, encompassing all aspects, including general groups, the workplace, friendships, and family. Additionally, half of the participants expressed an appreciation for the distinct personalities that each individual can possess. For example, TW-30-2 shared his respect for those who do not conform to group harmony. In response to the question, “How do you feel when someone is not harmonious in the group to which you belong?” he said, *“I respect the way he behaves. I do not have any opinion on him.”*

Similarly, TW-20-2 emphasized his belief in the individuality of each person, stating, *“I think everyone in the world has his or her own thoughts, and everyone is different, so there is no right or wrong. Even if someone is selfish, I am still willing to listen to him.”*

This finding regarding the respect for uniqueness aligns with the educational experiences in the two nations. Two Japanese interviewees expressed that they were taught to act collectivistically in school, while two Taiwanese participants indicated that their education promoted individualistic values. JP-30-1 described her experience in Japan, stating, *“When I was a student, my school valued the solidarity of the students as a group. In junior high and high school, everyone cooperated with each other whenever they undertook a task.”* In

contrast, TW-30-2 reflected on his educational experience, noting, *“In class, everyone was seen as an independent individual, so when I had different opinions from others and needed to decide whether to follow them, I still valued my own sense of judgment.”*

The fourth difference identified is that Japanese individuals exhibit greater independence from one another in group settings compared to their Taiwanese counterparts. For instance, JP-40-2 noted that her family members are independent from each other, stating, *“Every member in my family is already independent. Even though my children are my children, in society, they are already grown-ups; I believe we should maintain an appropriate distance from each other.”* This finding aligns with the literature on enryo (Otaki, 2015), which denotes restraint and modesty, as well as the concept of amae, which emphasizes the social expectation not to express oneself freely or impose on others (Doi, 1962).

5.2.3 Difference in Competitiveness

Another individualistic characteristic exclusive to Taiwanese individuals is their competitiveness. All Taiwanese interviewees noted their competitive relationships with others, while only two Japanese participants mentioned similar sentiments. Three Taiwanese interviewees specifically highlighted competitiveness in the workplace, whereas none of the Japanese participants did. For example, TW-30-1 described his competitive relationships with colleagues, stating, *“My relationships with my colleagues include competitiveness, so the entire interpersonal dynamic feels like a survival model.”* Additionally, two interviewees referenced competition in school, aligning with the individualistic education previously discussed.

We also found that Taiwanese individuals expressed more resentment toward others who brag than their Japanese counterparts. In the subtheme “disliking others showing off,” Taiwanese scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) 14 while Japanese scored only 3. Additionally, this competitiveness is reflected in social media usage, as Taiwanese

participants exhibited a pronounced dislike for others who excessively showcase themselves online. In the subtheme “disliking others’ social media,” the scores (the number of times the codes were mentioned) were 0 for Japanese participants and 6 for Taiwanese participants. For instance, TW-20-1 noted, *“I do not like those who brag about themselves too much. If someone always says they are better than others or brags excessively, especially if the content is not appropriate, I tend to distance myself from them. I do not want to be friends with such a person.”* Similarly, TW-20-2 expressed his frustration with overexposure on social media, stating, *“I do not like people posting five, six, seven, or more Instagram stories at once. I do not want to see it; I feel like the content of their stories is all the same.”*

The observed competitiveness among Taiwanese individuals may explain their tendency to adopt wary or aloof attitudes toward outsiders. In the subtheme “actively being alienated from outsiders,” Taiwanese scored (the number of times the codes were mentioned) 9 while Japanese participants scored 1. Furthermore, the competitiveness exhibited by Taiwanese individuals aligns with the literature on “mianzi,” a concept rooted in traditional Confucian values (Chen, 2017). Mianzi encompasses pride, honor, and dignity in interpersonal relationships, which drives individuals to compare themselves with others and present a favorable image (Goffman, 1967).

5.3 Interaction of Individualism and Collectivism

5.3.1 Similarity on the Coexistence of Individualism and Collectivism

Nine out of the 12 interviewees expressed the belief that individualism and collectivism can coexist, with Taiwanese participants referencing this coexistence more frequently (15 times) than their Japanese counterparts (7 times). For example, TW-20-2 articulated, “I think I have both an individualistic side and a collectivistic side. I am not completely

individualistic; I still align with some of my company's decisions and respect others' opinions while adjusting myself. I believe young people in Taiwan think similarly.”

This pattern appears to correlate with the Taiwanese emphasis on respecting uniqueness and the influence of individualistic education, as highlighted in our findings from the individualism section (i.e., section 5.2.2). As previously noted, Taiwanese collectivism exhibits a greater tolerance for individualistic individuals within the group, allowing for more individual expression compared to Japanese individuals, albeit within certain limitations.

On the other hand, the finding that fewer Japanese participants mentioned the coexistence of individualism and collectivism aligns with the earlier discussion regarding their perception of collectivism. In Japanese culture, there is a tendency to disapprove of uniqueness or difference among group members, reflecting a desire to avoid standing out or being perceived as individualistic.

Another finding that mirrors this pattern is the stronger desire among Japanese individuals to break free from the constraints of collectivism, coupled with a sense of helplessness regarding collectivistic pressures and education. The code “wants to be free” was mentioned 17 times by Japanese participants, compared to only 6 times by Taiwanese participants. For instance, JP-30-2 expressed, *“I envy those who can prioritize themselves over others and satisfy their own needs and wants because I cannot.”*

5.3.2 The Impact of Generation on Collectivism and Individualism

The literature suggested that generational influences might shape feelings toward collectivism and individualism. Su (2015) explained that the new wave of individualism emerged due to urbanization, economic growth, and globalization, thus we recruited interviewees from different age groups from 20s to 40s and 50s. However, in our observations, we did not find significant differences in perceptions between age groups in

Taiwan and Japan, with four participants stating that they did not perceive an age gap. For example, TW-30-2 stated, *“I do not think there is a difference between generations concerning collectivism and individualism. I believe the proportions of individualism and collectivism are the same across all generations.”* This may be because of the small sample size, but we should have also recruited participants in their 60s or more.

Nonetheless, we did observe age differences when discussing specific subjects. Participants in their 20s and 30s frequently referenced school life, whereas those in their 40s and 50s did not. Conversely, individuals in the older age group discussed workplace situations, with the context of the workplace mentioned only occasionally by participants in their 20s. Additionally, younger participants were more inclined to discuss social media than other age groups, particularly in regard to their disapproval of others’ social media usage.

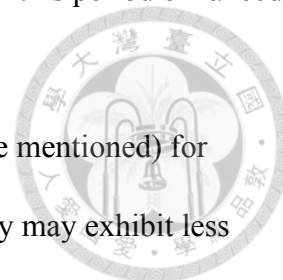
5.4 Additional Findings

Additionally, we found that the characteristic of nationalism is stronger in Japan than in Taiwan. The code “identity based on nations” was mentioned 11 times by Japanese participants compared to only 4 times by Taiwanese. For instance, JP-20-1 expressed frustration with foreigners in town for not adhering to Japan’s unwritten societal rules, stating, *“I think tourists from overseas are annoying. I classify people based on whether they act like us Japanese; we Japanese tend to read between the lines in communication. They lack the common sense that we Japanese possess.”* This perspective aligns with the larger group dynamics present in Japan.

This finding is consistent with the literature on collectivism during the World War Period. The deeply rooted sense of collectivism among the Japanese was one of the factors contributing to their inclination toward nationalism during that time (Winfield et al., 2000). The government of the era actively fostered Japanese nationalism by promoting the concept

of Shintoism, and the stable hierarchy and nationalistic education of this period enhanced cohesion and unity among the population (Winfield et al., 2000).

Conversely, the lower score (the number of times the codes were mentioned) for Taiwanese in the code “identity based on nations” suggests that they may exhibit less nationalism than the Japanese. We speculate that the smaller in-group sizes among Taiwanese individuals may stem from a weaker sense of belonging to society, a result of the aforementioned alienation from outsiders. In contrast, the small groups within Taiwanese society may contribute to more complex social dynamics, strengthening the bonds among individuals within their specific groups.



Chapter6: Summary



6.1 Conclusion

6.1.1 The Cross-Cultural Similarity in Collectivism and Individualism

In broader terms of collectivistic and individualistic trends in society, our findings align with existing literature indicating that Japanese and Taiwanese cultures share notable similarities (Minkov, 2013). Generally, both countries are still influenced by traditional collectivistic values. Individuals in both cultures place a high value on social norms and harmony, respect the groups to which they belong, and seek validation from fellow group members. Additionally, Japanese and Taiwanese participants exhibit similarities in certain aspects of individualism, such as valuing personal success, needs, wants, and happiness, while aspiring to express their true selves in front of others.

6.1.2 The Difference in Shifts toward Individualism

Despite the overall cultural alignment leaning toward collectivism, we found that Japanese and Taiwanese individuals react differently to the emerging era of individualism. A primary difference identified in this research is the scope and boundaries of collectivism between the two cultures. The definition of the group that Japanese individuals care about is significantly broader than that of their Taiwanese counterparts. The social norms and rules that the Japanese feel compelled to follow appear applicable to a much wider spectrum, with expressions of widespread public self-consciousness—indicating that they care about how they are perceived by others, including acquaintances and strangers. In contrast, the Taiwanese foster tighter in-group relationships, leading to a more defined concept of boundaries regarding when they embrace collectivism or individualism. In summary,

Japanese individuals tend to have larger in-groups, while Taiwanese individuals have smaller in-groups.

6.1.3 The Difference in Reactions toward Individualism

Moreover, we discovered that Japanese individuals react passively to individualistic behaviors within groups, whereas Taiwanese individuals respond actively. Taiwanese participants are more inclined to express their uniqueness and take initiative in mediating situations. They seem to exhibit greater competitiveness with one another while showing tolerance toward those who are different. Conversely, Japanese interviewees rarely mentioned competitiveness, instead emphasizing the importance of maintaining homogeneity within the group.

6.1.4 The Difference in Social Media Usage

We also observed that the differences identified above extend to social media usage. Specifically, Taiwanese individuals are more willing than Japanese individuals to freely express themselves on social media. Ironically, however, Taiwanese participants expressed greater dissatisfaction with others who excessively showcase themselves online. Based on these interviews, we suspect that this phenomenon may be linked to the higher competitiveness among Taiwanese individuals compared to the Japanese, as well as their active versus passive reactions to those who violate social norms.

6.2 Limitations

During the course of our research, we made every effort to maintain consistency in our interviews and analysis while minimizing bias; however, some inevitable limitations remain.

First, as we adopted a qualitative research approach, we lack specific measurable data to substantiate our findings, which results in an absence of precise data. To test the

relationships inferred from this research, future studies could utilize experimental designs to control for variables. More standardized research methodologies should be employed in future investigations. Second, the variability in responses is influenced by the nature of the interaction between the interviewer and interviewees, leading to inconsistency in the answers—a common limitation of qualitative research. Future studies should aim for greater standardization in their questioning techniques. Third, due to the small sample size and the use of convenience sampling, we acknowledge that our research may lack representativeness. Although we made efforts to recruit participants from various age groups to mitigate bias, we encountered time constraints, as in-depth interviews require significant resources and time to analyze and interpret thoroughly. Thus, increasing the sample size would enhance the reliability and accuracy of future results.

Relatedly there might have been gender and age bias because all Taiwanese were male whereas two of the Japanese were female. According to Matsumoto et al. (1998) female tend to be more collectivistic than male. Also, as explained earlier, the age range of our interviewee may have not wide enough to manifest the potential generational differences. Although in the current research Taiwanese in general were not individualistic compared to Japanese and the cross-cultural differences are still visible, further research including genders and extended age groups should be executed in the future.

Another limitation relates to a common issue in cross-cultural research: the language differences between interviews conducted with Japanese and Taiwanese participants (Malhotra et al., 1996). Malhotra et al. (1996) note that if the researcher is not fluent in the respective languages and is not familiar with the associated cultures, direct translations of certain words and phrases may lead to inaccuracies. While I am fluent in Chinese to the extent that I can pursue a graduate degree taught in the language, I am not a native speaker

and am less familiar with Taiwanese culture compared to Japanese culture. As a result, I may have unintentionally misinterpreted some phrases or expressions.

We also encountered limitations regarding unexpected responses from the interviews. One such issue pertains to how participants perceive family dynamics. Some interviewees regard family as one of the valued groups, while others view it as an extension of themselves. This variation makes it challenging to distinguish between individualistic and collectivistic attitudes in responses related to family contexts.

Additionally, we received answers that were unexpected, possibly due to the way we framed our questions. For instance, we did not identify a generational gap in perceptions of collectivism and individualism, which may be attributed to our direct inquiry about the role of generations. If we had reframed the question to ask participants to compare perceptions of individualism from 20 years ago to the present, they might have provided more insightful responses.

Furthermore, in the social media question, we should have asked more thoroughly about how the participants utilize their social media account, because some of them may additionally have a side account of Instagram. Their usage of the side accounts may have given us more insights.

Finally, several interesting topics remained under-explored due to time constraints. There were aspects we found intriguing but could not pursue further because of limitations in time and resources. For example, Taiwanese participants expressed a stronger aversion than Japanese participants to others excessively showcasing themselves on social media, which we inferred might relate to their higher competitiveness. With additional time, we could have posed further questions to explore the underlying reasons and confirm whether a relationship exists between competitiveness and negative reactions.

6.3 Contribution

6.3.1 Theoretical Contributions

The current research contributes to the literature by highlighting significant differences between Japanese and Taiwanese cultures. While classic cultural literature has primarily focused on the similarities and close relationships between the two regions, our findings reveal several key distinctions. Specifically, we found that Japanese individuals are more concerned with others' opinions and feelings than their Taiwanese counterparts.

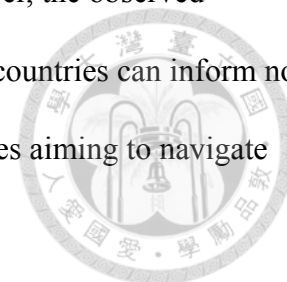
Additionally, Taiwanese participants tend to act actively in response to disharmonious situations, whereas Japanese individuals usually adopt a passive approach. Furthermore, Japanese culture places a higher value on not standing out, while Taiwanese culture emphasizes uniqueness and competition among group members. Japanese in-groups tend to be larger than those of Taiwanese, and we also noted that Japanese nationalism is stronger than that of Taiwan. These findings can serve to foster further cross-cultural research examining the nuances of Japan and Taiwan.

6.3.2 Practical contributions

First, the current research enables the general public to recognize the subtle differences between these two culturally similar societies. Despite the close relationships and similarities between Japan and Taiwan, our findings suggest that notable distinctions exist. This awareness allows individuals to better understand how to interact with people from these cultures, and it highlights how these cultural differences can influence behaviors in daily life, including social media usage.

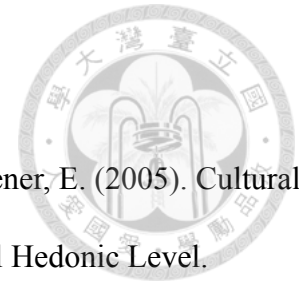
Second, the research offers insights for social media marketing strategies. For instance, companies in both Japan and Taiwan can design campaigns that cater to individuals' desires for recognition on social media. Additionally, companies marketing in Taiwan should be

cautious to avoid excessive self-promotion or overposting. Moreover, the observed differences in social media usage between these culturally similar countries can inform not just local businesses in Japan and Taiwan, but also global companies aiming to navigate these markets effectively.



Third, beyond social media marketing, the findings of this research are applicable in various business contexts, such as human resources management and product management. As business interactions between Japan and Taiwan continue to grow, understanding cross-cultural differences between the two markets becomes increasingly essential. For example, the Japanese chain restaurant Shirakiya attempted to expand into Taiwan in 1997 but withdrew within a year (Samiya, 2021). Although it re-entered the Taiwanese market in 2012, the company faced another withdrawal by 2017, largely due to its failure to adapt to Taiwanese business culture and lack of flexibility in adjusting its business model to fit the local restaurant industry (Samiya, 2021). Based on our findings, it is suggested that managers in Japan should prioritize passive relationship dynamics, while those in Taiwan must recognize the value employees place on their uniqueness. Additionally, in product management, the paper suggests that products targeting the Japanese market should avoid being overly unique, as individuals prefer not to stand out within their groups, whereas products aimed at the Taiwanese market should embrace uniqueness to satisfy individuals' desires to distinguish themselves from others.

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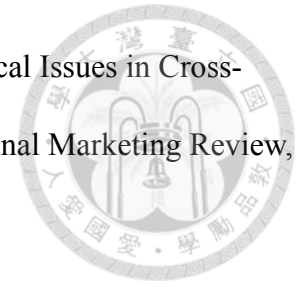
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Appendix



1. Question Pool

Questions with the mark ☆ are those that need to be asked necessarily.

First define the word individualism and collectivism, and ask the following question.

This question shows the rough direction of the coming questions by letting the interviewer know how the interviewees perceive themselves.

0. あなたは個人主義と集団主義どちらの影響をより受けていますか？ 你受那個影響比較大，群體主義還是個人主義？ ☆

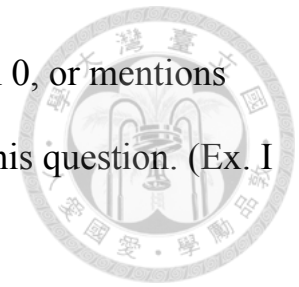
Or set greetings and casual chat at the beginning of the interview to icebreak and to know the potential direction of the next question.

Ask a question or two in order to know how the interviewees potentially value collectivism / collectivism.

1-1. 自己紹介をする時はどのように紹介しますか？ 你通常怎麼自我介紹？

1-2. 人生で最も大切にしている価値観は何ですか？ 你在你人生中最重視的價值觀是什麼？

If the interviewee says he/she is collectivistic in Question 0, or mentions something collectivistic in Question 1, then move on to this question. (Ex. I belong to~)



This question category reveals the exact factor of how interviewees regard collectivism.

Collectivism

2-1. 自分の属するグループといえば何が思い浮かびますか？你所想到的是妳屬於的群體有哪些？☆

2-2. そのグループの内部と外部にはどのようなメンバーがいますか？在那些群體內部和外部有什麼人？*1

2-3. それらのグループの大きさはどれくらいですか？那些群體有多大？*2

2-4. それらのグループはどれくらい大切だと思いますか？你覺得那些群體有多重要？

2-5. どのような時に大切（ではない）ですか？你在什麼情況覺得（不）重要？☆

2-6. グループに優劣をつけるとしたらどのようになりますか？なぜですか？你覺得哪個團體最重要、最不重要為什麼？

2-7. グループ内で他人と関わる時に気をつけていることは何ですか？你在群體內相處的時候你會注意些什麼？☆

2-8. グループ内部と外部で異なる行動を取る例はどのようなことがありますか？你在你群體內部和外部有哪些不一樣的行為？☆

2-9. グループ内で衝突があった場合どのように対応しますか？群體內部發生衝突時你會有什麼反應？☆

2-10. グループ同士で衝突があった場合どのように対応しますか？你群體與別的群體發生衝突時你會有什麼反應？☆

2-11. あなたはグループ内のコネクションの強さをどう評価しますか？
你覺得你群體的凝聚力如何？*3

2-12. あなたはグループのために何を犠牲にできますか？你為了群體犧牲什麼？

*1 Ask this if the interviewee mentions anything about insiders and outsiders of the group.

*2 Ask this if the interviewee mentions anything about the size of the group.
(This might be included in Question 2’.

*3 Ask this if the interviewee mentions anything about the bond or relationship within the group.

If the interviewee mentions something that indicates that they regard themselves as a member of the society, then move on to this question. (Ex. I am Japanese.)

This category helps reveal the range of in-groups and how interviewees react to outgroups.



2'. Recognition of society

2'-1. 社会全体を一つのグループだと捉えて行動していますか？你覺得整個社會是一種團體而為此行動嗎？

2'-2. あなたは社会全体のために何か行動をしますか？你為了社會整體採取什麼行動嗎？

If the interviewee says he/she is individualistic in Question 0, or mentions something individualistic in Question 1, then move on to this question. (Ex. I am a ~ kind of person.)

Individualism

3-1. 自分個人の目標はどれくらい大切だと思いますか？你覺得你自己本身的目標有多重要？

3-2. 自分個人の欲求はどれくらい大切だと思いますか？你覺得你自己本身的需求有多重要？3-3. どのような時に大切（ではない）ですか？なぜですか？你在什麼情況覺得（不）重要？為什麼？☆

3-4. 何のために自分を大切にしようと思いますか？你為了什麼會想要重視自己？

3-5. 自己肯定感とは何だと考えますか？對你來說自我肯定是什麼？*

3-6. どのような時に自己肯定感が上がりますか？在什麼情況你的自我肯定會提高？☆

3-7. どのような時に自己顕示欲が高まりますか？你在什麼情況會想要顯示自己的厲害/特別/獨特/不一樣？

3-8. 自己顕示欲はどのように発散しますか？你都怎麼對別人顯示自己的厲害/特別/獨特/不一樣？☆

*Might start from this question

After asking Question 2 or 3, or when interviewees start to compare their collectivistic and individualistic characters, ask this question to confirm which is more important to the interviewee. This part not only confirms the tendency of the interviewees, but also compares interviewees with the rest of the society and elucidates the specific situations where they are individualistic or collectivistic.

Which is more important, individualism or collectivism?

4-1. あなたはグループと個人のどちらを重視することが多いですか？你通常比較重視團體還是重視自己？☆

4-2. 周りの人はグループと自分個人のどちらを重視することが多いと思いますか？你覺得你身邊的人通常比較重視團體還是重視自己？☆

4-3. あなた自身と周りで重視するものに差があるのなら、なぜそのギャップがあると思いますか？如果你和你身邊的人重視的不一樣的話，你覺得為什麼會發生此差異？☆



4-4. 1の回答が逆になるのはどのような状況ですか？問1的回答在什麼情況會相反？

4-5. 2の回答が逆になるのはどのような状況ですか？問2的回答在什麼情況會相反？

4-6. 社会の中でどのような時に集団が重視されていると思いますか？你覺得在社會中團體什麼時候受重視？

4-7. 社会の中でどのような時に個人が重視されていると思いますか？你覺得在社會中個人什麼時候受重視？

After asking Question 3 or 4, or when interviewees mention their struggle between individualism and collectivism, ask this question to confirm the specific content of the conflicts. This category is aimed to reveal how people in Taiwan and Japan react differently to the new wave of individualism, which is the key research question of the current thesis.

5. Conflicts

5-1. 個人主義と集団主義の矛盾や衝突を感じることはありますか？それはどのような時ですか？你感覺過個人主義和群體主義之間的矛盾或衝突嗎？☆

5-1'. どのような時自分個人と伝統社会との衝突を感じますか？你什麼時候覺得你個人與傳統社會有衝突？ (Also ask about situations with social media and family)



5-2. そのような衝突の際にどのような行動を取りますか？在那種衝突的情況下你會採取什麼行動？ (Also ask about situations with social media and family)☆

5-3. 伝統的な集団主義の団体の中で突出している個人がいたらどのように扱われると思いますか？在傳統的集體主義的團體中如果有突出的個人、你覺得大家會怎麼想？☆

5-4. 個人主義と集団主義は共存できると思いますか？反発しあうと思いますか？理由も教えてください。你覺得個人主義和群體主義能夠共存嗎，還是互相反駁？為什麼？☆

5-5. 共存できるとしたら、どのような状況下でどちらも重要だと感じることがありますか？如果可以共存，你在什麼情況下會覺得兩個都重要？☆

5-6. 反発し合うとしたらどのような状況下で矛盾が生じると思いませんか？如果互相反駁，你覺得在什麼情況下會發生衝突？☆

5-7. どのような時に、伝統的な集団主義に比べて個人主義がより重要になってきていると感じますか？什麼情況讓你覺得，比起傳統群體注意個人主義有變得越來越重要？

5-8. なぜ5-7のようになったと思いますか？你認為什麼事情造成5-7？

5-9. 新たな風潮の利点と欠点は何だと感じますか？你覺得新風潮的優缺點在哪裏？☆

5-10. 古い風潮の利点と欠点は何だと感じますか？你覺得舊風潮的優缺點在哪裏？☆

If the interviewee says they care about harmony, or when done asking about individualism and collectivism, move on to this question. This category is to clarify how people in Taiwan and Japan regard the word harmony differently. Since both Taiwan and Japan have the high score of collectivism, it is important to know the nuanced differences of the collectivistic factor in the two cultures.

6. Harmony

6-1. 集団で和を大切にしますか？你重視和諧嗎？

6-2. なぜ和を大切にしているのですか？你為什麼重視和諧？

6-3. あなたにとって和とは？對你來說和諧是什麼？

6-4. どのように和を保っていますか？你怎樣保持和諧？

6-5. 和を保たない人をどう思いますか？你對不保持和諧的人有什麼看法？

If the interviewee says they care about face or uniqueness, or when done asking about individualism and collectivism, move on to this question. Since it can be inferred from the literature review that Taiwanese value their uniqueness and mianzi, this question category might help the interviewer highlight the cross-cultural differences between Taiwan and Japan.

7. Mianzi, uniqueness

7-1. あなたはどのくらいメンツ/独自性を大切にしますか？你有多重視面子/獨特性？☆

7-2. 例えばどのメンツ/独自性を重視しますか？請你舉例什麼樣的面子/獨特性你會重視？

7-3. どのような時にメンツ/独自性が大事ですか？你什麼時候重視面子/獨特性？☆

7-4. なぜメンツ/独自性を大切にしているのですか？你為什麼重視面子/獨特性？

7-5. あなたにとってメンツ/独自性とは？對你來說面子/獨特性是什麼？

7-6. どのようにメンツ/独自性を保っていますか？你怎樣保持面子/獨特性？

7-7. 他人のメンツ/独自性をどう保つようにしていますか？你怎麼保持別人的面子/獨特性？

7-8. あなたはメンツ/独自性を他人と比較しますか？你會跟別人比較面子/獨特性嗎？

7-9. あなたは他人と競争しますか？ 你會跟別人競爭嗎？

7-10. あなたは自慢をする人をどう思いますか？ 你對炫耀的人怎麼想？

If the interviewee says they care about not bothering others, or when done asking about individualism and collectivism, move on to this question. Since it can be inferred from the literature review that Japanese care about not bothering others, this question category might help the interviewer highlight the cross-cultural differences between Taiwan and Japan.

8. Not bothering others

8-1. あなたは他人と関係を深める際相手の距離感をどれくらい尊重しますか？ 你跟別人加深關係時會怎樣尊重對方的個人空間？

8-2. 相手に迷惑をかけないことはどれくらい大事ですか？ 你對跟別人添麻煩這件事有多重視？

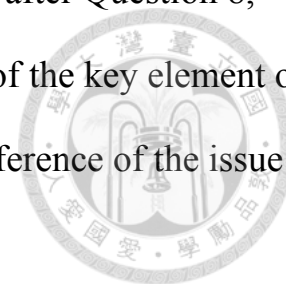
8-3. 迷惑とは具体的に何ですか？ 添麻煩的具體內容可以舉例嗎？

8-4. どのような状況で、また、なぜ、それが迷惑となりますか？ 在什麼情況，為什麼，那種事情會是添麻煩？

8-5. 他人に迷惑をかけられた時どう思いますか？ 別人對你添麻煩時你會怎麼想？

8-6. 自分が他人に迷惑をかける時どういう気持ちですか 你對別人添麻煩的時候心情如何？

If the interviewee says they care about personal space, or after Question 8, move on to this question. Because personal space is one of the key element of collectivism and individualism, and it also leads to the inference of the issue of group size, this question category is important.



9. Personal space

9-1. 対人関係における個人的空間はどのように定義できると思いますか？你覺得人際關係中的個人空間怎麼定義？

9-2. 個人的空間はあなたにとってどれくらい重要ですか？個人空間對你來說有多重要？☆

9-3. 家族、友人、同僚、赤の他人の個人的空間をそれぞれどれくらい尊重していますか？你有多重視你家人、朋友、同事以及陌生人的個人空間？☆

9-4. 相手に好意を示したい場合どれくらい相手の個人的空間に踏み入りますか？你想對一個人表示好意的時候你會不會踏入他的個人空間？

9-5. 誰と距離を縮め誰と距離を置くかは、どのように決めますか？你怎麼決定離誰近與離誰遠？

This category is added after the interview, unifying questions that do not apply to neither of the other question categories.

10. Others

10-1. Why do you adjust your opinion to the majority even before the vote?

10-2. What is the disadvantage of being different from others?

10-3. What kind of behavior of others makes you uncomfortable?

10-4. What kind of groups are unimportant to you?

10-5. Why do you not actively approach the problems of the group that is not important to you?

10-6. What kind of person is more approachable to you?

10-7. Why do you dislike discussing with others?

10-8. Do you think your answers are unique or similar to others' ?

10-9. Why do you care how others see you?

10-10. What type of person do you dislike?

10-11. How strong is your identity as a Japanese/Taiwanese?

10-12. What kind of behavior disappoints others?

10-13. What do you think of those who post luxury bags, travels or other expensive things?

10-14. Why do you avoid being disliked by others?

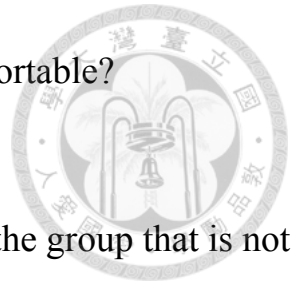
10-15. What kind of person is preferable for you?

10-16. What is the range of helping others?

10-17. What is the range of your family?

10-18. What aspect of collectivism gives you stress?

This question basically is asked at the last part of the interview. This category provides the current thesis focus on the specific example of how cross-cultural



differences appear in social media, and also gives further insights of the minute differences that other categories have revealed.



11. Social Media

11-1. What social media do you use? ☆

11-2. For what purpose do you use those social media? ☆

11-3. What kind of things do you post? ☆

11-4. What do you pay attention to when you post? ☆

11-5. What kind of post makes you uncomfortable? Why? ☆

11-6. What do you think of someone who is unique and outstanding in any social media? ☆

11-7. Why do you avoid negative posts?

11-8. How often do you post?

11-9. What do you think of those who post luxury bags, travels or other expensive things? ☆

11-10. What is the difference between posting on Instagram and saving in albums? ☆

11-11. What do you think of those who post boring things?

11-12. Why do you avoid posts regarding your private life or friends?

11-13. What do you think of those who post a lot on social media?

2. Theme book

Theme	Subtheme	Code	JP-20	JP-30	JP-40	JP-SUM	TW-20	TW-30	TW-40	TW-SUM	Number of peop
個人主義	尊重個人獨特性(一般)	#每個人都不一樣	0	0	0	0	0	3	8	5	16
		#尊重個人主義人	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	5	3
	尊重個人獨特性(工作)	#公司常有衝突	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1
		#吵架不影响交際	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	2
	尊重個人獨特性(朋友)	#朋友常有衝突	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	2
						0			7	1	9
	尊重個人獨特性(家庭)	#家人要求不高	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
		#重視事業成功	1	1	4	6	0	6	0	6	4
	注重個人價值與利益(工作)	#個人主義	2	1	13	16	9	4	8	21	9
		#重視個人目標	0	0	1	1	5	4	14	23	6
	注重個人價值與利益(一般)	#重視成就感	11	1	0	12	0	1	0	1	3
		#興趣	2	5	1	8	3	0	5	8	7
	注重個人價值與利益(家庭)	#重視內心滿足	0	4	3	7	0	0	3	3	5
		#優先自身利益	19	0	0	19	0	9	0	9	3
	注重個人價值與利益(學校)	#不想犧牲自己	2	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	2
		#做自己	3	1	13	17	4	3	7	14	8
	注重個人價值與利益(朋友)	#表達意見	0	1	2	3	3	0	1	4	4
						83				83	
	注重個人價值與利益(家庭)	#家庭裡個人主義	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	1	3
		#學校個人主義	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
	注重個人價值與利益(學校)	#個人主義教育	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
						0				3	
	注重個人價值與利益(朋友)	#朋友之間個人主義	0	1	0	1	0	6	2	8	3
		#與同事競爭	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	5	3
	個體間利益競爭(工作)	#展現特殊性	0	0	0	0	9	1	0	10	2
		#展現能力	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	2
	個體間利益競爭(一般)	#面子	0	2	0	2	4	1	3	8	6
		#跟別人比較	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2
	個體間利益競爭(學校)	#不想輸	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
		#怕丟臉	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	3	2
	個體間利益競爭(家庭)	#與同學競爭	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
		#同事不親近	0	0	4	4	1	2	2	5	5
	較疏遠的人與人關係(工作)	#家庭成員獨立	1	2	2	5	0	1	0	1	4
	較疏遠的人與人關係(家庭)	#不願意approach	5	1	2	8	0	0	8	8	5
		#尊重個人空間	0	0	4	4	0	2	5	7	5
	較疏遠的人與人關係(一般)	#不要干涉	0	0	11	11	0	3	0	3	3
		#重視個人空間	10	3	10	23	0	2	1	2	8
	較疏遠的人與人關係(他人)-	#不要讓別人用心	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	2
		#不重視交際	0	1	1	2	0	8	3	11	5
	較疏遠的人與人關係(他人)+	#不想被控制	3	0	5	8	0	0	0	0	2
		#隱藏隱私	4	0	3	7	2	1	0	3	4
	對他人不關心	#羞恥外顯	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	2
						67				35	
	對他人隨便		21	6	1	28	4	4	5	13	8
		#對他人警惕	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	5	2
	對他人警惕					1				9	
	對外界做自己(一般)	#不在乎外界眼光	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
		#不在意潛規則	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	1
	對外界做自己(Social Media)	#不在乎別人眼光	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	5	2
		#不在乎默契	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4	1
	對外界做自己(家庭)	#不避開特殊性	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
						0				13	
	對外界做自己(社會)	#願意分享自己生活	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
		#願意po親友和家人	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	對家人隨便					1				1	
	在家裡自在	#對家人隨便	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2
		#在家裡坦蕩	0	0	1	1	0	0	3	3	2
	內在自我認同					0				5	
						1				10	
	對自己選擇負責	#對自己選擇負責	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	3
		#做好自己	0	1	5	6	0	0	14	14	4
	對群體主義對精神健康不好	#做好人	3	5	0	8	2	0	9	11	7
		#群體主義對精神健康不好	0	1	1	2	3	1	0	4	5
	內在自我認同(Social Media)					16				32	
										5	4
群體主義	對群體的尊重(公司)	#記錄生活	1	0	0	0	3	0	2	5	4
		#工作時群體主義	0	0	3	3	1	1	0	2	2-2
	對群體的尊重(家庭)	#尊重公司	2	0	1	3	0	6	2	8	2-2
						6				15	
	對群體的尊重(一般)	#家庭裡群體主義	2	0	0	2	5	1	2	8	1-4
		#價值觀受父母影響	1	0	0	1	3	0	1	4	1-2
	對群體的尊重(朋友)	#優先核心家庭	0	1	0	1	0	1	8	9	1-3
		#重視家庭	0	1	1	2	0	0	3	3	2-1
	對群體的尊重(社會)	#家人第一	0	0	0	0	1	2	12	15	0-4
						6				39	
	對群體的尊重(親近人)	#群體主義	0	9	6	15	5	2	4	11	3-5
		#符合群體要求	0	0	6	6	0	0	0	0	2-0
	對群體的尊重(親近人)	#重視群體利益	0	0	4	4	0	0	1	1	2-1
		#優先群體	4	6	0	10	0	0	0	0	3-0
	對群體的尊重(親近人)	#優先別人	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	2-0
						37				12	
	對群體的尊重(親近人)	#親近朋友群體主義	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	6	0-2
		#朋友最重要	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1-1
	對群體的尊重(親近人)					1				7	
	對群體的尊重(親近人)	#重視親近人	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	0-1
		#符合親近人需求	0	0	0	0	6	1	0	7	0-2
	對群體的尊重(親近人)					0				12	
	對群體的尊重(親近人)	#符合社會	0	1	2	3	0	0	9	9	2-1
		#符合社會要求	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	1-0
	對群體的尊重(親近人)					5				9	
	對群體的尊重(親近人)	#為公司貢獻	0	0	1	1	0	2	3	5	1-2
		#給家人面子	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0-1
	對群體的尊重(親近人)	#為家人努力	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0-1
						0				4	

		#做自己會造成別人麻煩	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
						39				2	
	不要突出(Social Media)	#避開無趣發文	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	2
		#注意頻率	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	2
						4				1	
	不要不和諧(行動、一般)	#勸不和諧的人	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
		#願意仲介	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	6	2
		#願意當橋樑	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	5	3
		#願意討論	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	3	3
						1				14	
	不要不和諧(行動、朋友)	#願意當朋友的橋樑	1	0	0	1	4	0	0	4	2
	不要不和諧(心態)	#嫌棄不和諧的人	1	0	1	2	0	2	0	2	3
		#不喜歡不一樣的人	5	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	2
		#討厭自私的人	0	5	0	5	4	0	0	4	2
		#嫌棄被不和諧的人影響到	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	1
						15				6	
	討厭炫耀的人(心態)	#討厭炫耀的人	2	1	0	3	10	0	0	10	4
		#討厭周遭的人炫耀	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
		#討厭炫耀的人	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	1
						3				14	
	討厭別人social media	#討厭發自己的人	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	1
		#討厭太頻繁發的人	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	1
		#討厭發過濃訊息的人	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
						0				6	
	規範(家庭)	#家庭需要規矩	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
		#敬佩父母	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	1
		#對父親恭敬	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
						0				4	
	規範(一般, 廣)	#重視規矩	0	2	4	6	0	9	1	10	5
		#尊重多數決	2	1	1	4	0	2	4	6	5
		#重視禮貌	3	1	3	7	2	4	4	8	6
		#尊重前輩	0	2	1	3	1	1	5	7	6
						20				33	
	規範(一般, 限定)	#聚會有主題	1	4	0	5	0	0	0	0	2
		#每個人有角色	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
						6				0	
	外在自我認同(社會)	#國家自我認同(日本人自	10	1	0	11	1	3	0	4	5
		#群體自我認同	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	1
						13				4	
	外在自我認同(一般)	#想要被認同	1	3	5	9	7	2	1	10	9
Boundary	符合周圍	#重要場合符合周圍	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
		#重要場合犧牲自己意見	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
		#關鍵時刻堅持自己	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	6	3
						0				8	
	炫耀	#炫耀要適當	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	6	2
		#不要過多放閃	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
		#可以接受離自己遠的人炫	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
						0				8	
個人主義與群體	年代差別	#年輕人個人主義	0	0	2	2	2	1	1	4	6
		#上年紀比較群體主義	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	2	4
						0	1	3	4	2	3
	共存	#個人主義群體主義共存	0	0	5	5	5	2	2	9	6
		#沒有覺得世代衝突	2	0	0	2	0	2	1	3	4
		#不覺得個人主義群體主義	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	3
						2	0	5	7	5	6
群體大小	群體小	#小群體	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	1
		#依群體做不一樣形象	0	0	0	0	5	4	0	9	3
						0				13	
	群體大	#社會是群體	0	6	4	10	0	6	4	10	5
		#對每個人一樣	9	0	2	11	0	0	2	2	3
						21				12	
	交集範圍-	#篩選好友	5	5	4	14	6	7	6	19	8
		#朋友價值觀一樣	0	1	2	3	2	5	2	9	6
						17				28	
	交集範圍+	#交集範圍廣	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	5	2
		#不警惕他人	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
						0	1	0	4	6	

希望對群體有貢獻(社會)	#為社會貢獻	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	0-2
希望對群體有貢獻(一般)	#做好自己角色	0	1	5	6	0	0	4	4	2-1
	#想讓周圍開心	11	9	0	20	0	2	3	5	2-2
	#願意主動帶氣氛	5	2	0	7	0	0	0	0	2-0
	#重視自己對周遭的貢獻	2	0	1	3	2	0	8	10	2-3
					36				19	
較親近的人與人關係(公司)	#公司裡沒有衝突	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
	#工作衝突少	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1
	#跟上司親近	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
較親近的人與人關係(家庭, 心態)	#大家庭凝聚力高	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
	#小家庭凝聚力高	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
	#家人感情深厚	0	0	4	4	0	2	2	2	4
	#家人最親密	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	2
	#家裡沒有衝突	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
					5				7	
較親近的人與人關係(家庭, 行動)	#關心家人	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	3
	#保護家人	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
	#照顧家人	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
較親近的人與人關係(一般, 心態)	#重視交集	13	7	2	22	12	4	13	29	10
	#重視協調	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	4
	#喜歡大家一起做事	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	#互相幫助	0	0	1	1	0	0	7	7	2
	#喜歡人情味	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	19	1
	#親密度高	3	0	0	3	3	0	2	5	3
	#每個人參與	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1
	#重視真心	4	2	1	7	0	0	0	0	3
	#每個人要開心	3	1	0	4	0	0	1	1	
					39				66	
較親近的人與人關係(一般, 行動)	#願意approach	8	3	7	18	8	0	4	12	8
	#關心別人	0	5	0	5	0	6	8	14	5
	#幫助別人	0	0	1	1	0	0	13	13	3
	#依賴別人	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	2
	#願意表達情緒	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1
	#沒有要隱藏隱私	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	2
較親近的人與人關係(朋友)	#跟朋友親近	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
	#對朋友共鳴	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	2
較親近的人與人關係(學校)	#學校重視團結	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	#與老師親近	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1
					3				0	
較親近的人與人關係(親近人, 心態)	#關心自己人	7	2	2	11	0	0	4	4	6
	#信任自己人	2	0	0	2	2	1	1	4	5
	#偏袒自己人	2	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	2
	#對自己人坦蕩	4	1	1	6	5	4	1	10	6
	#越親近容忍度越高	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
較親近的人與人關係(親近人, 行動)	#願意幫助親近人	0	0	1	1	4	3	4	11	4
	#願意保護親近人	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	2
					1				13	
較親近的人與人關係(社會, 行動)	#幫助他人	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	2
	#關心他人	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	1
	#平等對待年輕人	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
注重群體和諧(一般, 心態)	#重視和諧	21	1	10	32	11	11	13	35	10
	#觀察周圍	15	6	0	21	3	1	1	5	7
	#重視共識	0	0	1	1	3	0	2	5	4
	#為別人著想	9	19	32	60	9	13	27	49	12
	#重視別人眼光	15	8	4	27	0	0	0	0	5
	#面子不重要	0	2	0	2	0	0	3	3	3
	#不重視獨特性	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
	#要溫柔	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	2	2
注重群體和諧(親近人, 心態)	#重視親近人眼光	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	1
注重群體和諧(社會, 心態)	#想被所有人喜歡	6	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	1
	#在乎外圍眼光	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1
	#對他人客套	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
					10				0	
注重群體和諧(一般, 行動)	#裝自己	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	1
	#符合周圍	24	14	7	45	10	7	21	38	12
	#守本分	1	3	2	6	0	0	4	4	4
					56				42	
犧牲(一般)	#犧牲自己(犧牲自己#犧牲他人)	6	11	5	22	4	6	13	23	10
	#羨慕個人主義者	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
	#想要自由	4	0	13	17	6	0	0	6	4
					40				29	
避開衝突	#個性	6	4	2	12	4	0	2	6	7
	#避開衝突	22	0	4	26	6	9	15	30	10
	#走安全路	1	2	3	6	1	3	6	10	8
	#不要得罪	0	0	3	3	0	1	1	2	3
	#不表達意見	1	0	0	1	4	0	3	7	3
	#人情味負面效果	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1
	#委婉說話	2	0	3	5	0	1	1	2	5
	#不外顯	2	5	4	11	11	4	2	15	8
	#避開負面情緒	20	10	3	33	0	9	20	29	10
					97				103	
避開衝突(親近人)	#不要讓自己人失望	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4	1
	#不會怪親近人	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	2
	#越親近越不敢提出意見	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
不要突出(一般)	#不要突出	5	3	1	9	0	0	0	0	3
	#不要不一樣	6	7	0	13	0	0	0	0	3
	#意識到自己不一樣	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	#特殊性的負面效果	6	2	0	8	0	1	0	1	4
	#符合周圍比較輕鬆	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	2
	#不要自私	0	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	1