Culture And Gender Differences On Aggressive Behaviours

The present study will investigate the effects of culture and gender on aggressive behaviors. The proposed study aims to extend prior research by focusing on both gender differences between males and females, as well as, cultural differences among individualistically and collectivistically reared participants. Research indicates that internalized cultural descriptions significantly influence an individual's emphasis on collectivity and individualism. Such that, individualistic cultures place emphasis on independence and autonomy, whereas collectivistic cultures define themselves on the basis of group harmony and deep concern for in-group relationships (Lykes, 1985) (Bond, 2004). Research has demonstrated that in both collectivistic and individualistic groups there is the strong establishment of differing group norms which affects the acceptance of aggressive behaviors (Bond, 2004). Social Role Theory explains that physical sex differences provide the basis for gender stereotypes, which are socialized beliefs that govern acceptable behaviors for each sex (Eagly & Wood, 2012). Research demonstrates that both females and males have the possibility to act aggressively, however males have an increased tendency to act aggressively in accordance with their prescribed gender norms (Ramirez, Andreu, & Fujihara, 2011). The current study seeks to investigate the differing levels of aggression among individualistic and collectivistic cultures, while further analyzing respective gender differences. The infancy of research on the interaction of both variables urges researchers to address outstanding information in this area. To study the variables, the study will include male and female participants of both Asian and Canadian cultures. The independent variables (gender and culture) will be analyzed by assigning participants to one of four categories. The dependent variable (levels of aggression) will be operationalized using the Aggression Questionnaire.

Objectives and Method

The sample will be composed of 60 undergraduate students of equal gender and cultural proportions (ranging in age from 18 to 23 years old) recruited from the University of Western Ontario. Participants will be included who specifically identify as either male or female, due to limited existing research on the relationship between non-binary genders and aggressive behaviors. Asian and Canadian participants will be recruited to be representative of collectivistically and individualistically defined cultures, to enable the researcher to analyze cultural differences among levels of aggression (Thanzami & Archer, 2005). Canadian and Asia cultures were specifically chosen for analysis as past research indicates a strict dichotomy between the behavioral tendencies of collectivist far east and individualistic far west samples (Hsu et al., 1981). Bonino and Fraczek (1996) indicate that adolescents from urban cities had a higher approval rate of antisocial behaviors when compared to similar participants from rural communities. In order to eliminate this possible third variable, the study will be limited to urban subjects from census recognized CMA's (Census Metropolitan Areas). Participants will be assigned to one of the four conditions in relation to the criterion variables (Canadian Female, Canadian Male, Asian Female and Asian Male). Recruitment will take place at The Weldon Library and participants will be selected through convenience sampling. The researcher will obtain participants through voluntary signup. Next, the researcher will administer the task and explain the instructions, asking participants to answer the self-report Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992). The measure contains 29 items assessing levels of aggression across

four subtypes; physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. Responses will be provided using a 5-point Likert Scale where participants will be asked to indicate the range at which the situations provided are characteristic of their natural tendencies. All items will be summed and determined based on the corresponding recording key to provide an overall aggression score. Lower scores will be representative of lower levels of aggression and vice versa. To determine possible interaction and main effects between the four group conditions, a two-way ANOVA will be used to analyze the 2x2 (gender x culture) factorial design.

Anticipated Implications

It is hypothesized that a main effect will be found for both variables, as well as an interaction effect, such that participants of male gender and collectivistic cultures will exhibit the highest aggression levels. These effects are proposed, as past research indicates a substantial relationship between the independent and dependent variables when isolated. Therefore, when combined it is anticipated that the interplay of these variables will exacerbate the effects of the independent variables.