



Collectivism declines with urbanization in Turkey

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Abstract

Urban living offers conveniences which reduce the need to rely on family and close friends, and may also minimize family closeness due to living separately from extended family members. Two studies tested the urbanization hypothesis, which is that residents of urban areas will be more individualistic and less collectivistic than residents of rural areas. Measures of individualism and collectivism were obtained from Turkish students residing in rural and urban areas, as well as students from the U.S (Boston). Bostonians and Istanbul residents differed primarily on vertical collectivism, which is the tendency to subordinate ones own goals to those of in-group authority figures. Within Turkey, a cline of VC scores was obtained, with Istanbul residents having the lowest VC scores, followed by urban residents outside Istanbul, followed by Turkish rural residents. Compared to residents of Van (rural Turkey), residents of Istanbul also had reduced endorsement of familialism, a type of collectivism which emphasizes family relationships. (153 words)

Keywords: collectivism, modernization, cross-cultural psychology

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Introduction

Individualism-collectivism is a well-known dimension in cross-cultural psychology (Hofstede, 1980; Hui & Triandis, 1986; Kagitçibasi, 1997; Sinha & Verma, 1987; Triandis, 1988, 1995). Members of individualistic cultures see themselves as autonomous agents motivated by their own preferences and goals (Hofstede, 1980). Interactions with others are governed by a social contract or abstract universal principles of rights and responsibilities (Waterman, 1984). Collectivistic cultures encourage strong links among members of a social group, who subordinate personal needs for the good of the group, or choose goals which don't threaten group harmony (Hui & Triandis, 1986). Individualists see themselves as more differentiated and separate from others, whereas collectivists consider themselves less differentiated from other people and emphasize the importance of harmonious interpersonal relations (Bochner, 1994). Industrialized nations such as the United States, England, and Australia are usually regarded as individualistic, while developing regions usually adhere to traditional values and are collectivistic, such as Africa, China, and areas of the Middle East.

Theorists disagree on the historical origins of individualist and collectivist values. One view is that individualism accompanies modernization (Alwin, 1989; Inkeles, 1969; Hofstede, 1980; Reykowski, 1994). Industrialized nations have equity-based judicial systems, bank accounts, insurance systems, and 24-hour convenience stores. This social and legal infrastructure allows contemporary Americans and Europeans to be maximally self-sufficient and thus able to forego developing networks of reciprocal support relations. The resulting economic self-reliance means that hedonism, concern for the self, and competition with others do not incur the social and practical costs they would in a traditional society. In contrast, members of traditional societies must rely on family and in-group for daily needs and for support during emergencies. Maintaining these reciprocal alliances pushes members of traditional societies towards collectivism. An implication of the modernization view is that collectivistic cultures will adopt individualistic values as they modernize and acquire the devices that allow individual self-

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3 sufficiency (Alwin, 1989; Reykowski, 1994; Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995). A
4 prediction of this modernization view is that persons living in urban areas will espouse more
5 individualist values than persons living in rural areas, even within the same country.
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9 An alternative to the modernization model, put forward most forcefully by Kagitçibasi
10 (1996a, 1997), is that the values which underlie cross-cultural differences in individualism and
11 collectivism predated the modern era. For example, the countries of Western Europe, especially
12 England, had individualistic traditions dating back to agrarian times (Razi, 1993). These included
13 widespread peasant mobility (low ties to the land) and low family cohesiveness, as evidenced by
14 the practice of sending children to work as servants in other people's homes. Kagitçibasi noted
15 that all humans have needs for autonomy and relatedness, although society's infrastructure and
16 technology can certainly influence these needs. She proposed that modernization will lead to a
17 blend of autonomy and relatedness, in which adherence to group norms can be reduced in favor
18 of pursuing of individual goals. She thus agrees that modernization provides freedom to assert
19 individual autonomy. However, economic self-sufficiency does not invariably lead to isolation or
20 lack of concern for close relations. Individuals will be free to search for and cultivate the strong
21 relations with family and chosen friends necessary for fulfilling human psychological needs for
22 intimacy and companionship.
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34 Individualism and collectivism are likely to interact with concepts of egalitarianism and
35 hierarchy, similar to Hofstede's (1980) notion of power distance. "Horizontal collectivism"
36 emphasizes mutual interdependence, respect, and alliances based on equality and reciprocity
37 (Singelis et al., 1995). "Vertical collectivism" emphasizes duty to social superiors, which begins
38 with obligations to older relatives and encompasses subordination to community leaders. In
39 individualist societies, different patterns emerges depending on whether equality or hierarchy is
40 more valued. "Horizontal individualism" eschews class-lines and emphasizes individuals' rights
41 to equal treatment. "Vertical individualism" emphasizes the right of individuals to possess and
42 pursue wealth and status. The social democracies like Sweden and Australia, with high taxes,
43 welfare programs and socialized medicine, are thought to practice horizontal individualism
44 (Nelson & Shavitt, 2002; Triandis, 1995). In western countries which emphasize competition and
45 wealth accumulation, such as the United States, vertical individualism may be more salient and
46 more acceptable (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998).
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Are collectivist countries becoming more individualist?

Despite theorists' strong intuitions that countries differ in individualism-collectivism, the dominant finding in a recent comprehensive meta-analysis of multiple studies was that between-country differences are small in size (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). This may mean that countries are becoming more similar due to technological modernization and homogenization through global marketing, migration, and travel (Inkeles, 1969).

Study 1: Three areas in Turkey varying in urban density

We tested the urbanization hypothesis by measuring individualism-collectivism among college students residing in rural areas in the central Anatolian region (Nigde) and eastern Turkey (Van), and to students residing in urban areas along Turkey's western coast (the cities of Izmir and Edirne and Istanbul). Nigde and Van, with populations of 877,524 and 348,081, were chosen as our rural sample following prior work by Kagitçibasi (1982), who classified these as rural areas in her study of the value of children. Kagitçibasi confirmed (personal communication with the first author, 2008) that these areas would also be considered rural today. In contrast, Izmir and Edirne are cities located in densely populated areas; Izmir, population, 3,370,866 is on the Mediterranean coast while Edirne, population 402,606, is on the European continent and shares a border with Bulgaria. Istanbul is a large, cosmopolitan city whose residents have a strong sense of their proximity to Europe. This international city may foster individualism in its residents and attract migrants from the rest of Turkey who are comfortable with an individualistic life-style. We also sampled students living in Boston to test our assumptions that college students in Istanbul differ little from those in Boston. Prior writers have urged cross-cultural psychologists examine individualism-collectivism in samples within a country, rather than just comparing between nations (Cukur, De Guzman, & Carlo, 2004; Kagitçibasi, 1997; Oyserman, et al., 2002), and the current research fills this gap.

Gender was included as a predictor variable, given current controversies on the influence of gender. Triandis (1995) reported that females are frequently more collectivist than males, but Kashima et al. (1995) did not find this. Using an attitudinal scale with a unidimensional construct of individualism and collectivism, Shafiro, Himelein, and Best (2003) found American women to be more collectivistic than women from a modernizing region, the Ukraine, which has been believed to be collectivistic.

Method

Participants. Four groups of students were recruited 121 Americans (students at Boston University, 87 females, 34 males), 219 students from Istanbul (Istanbul University and Mimar Sinan University, 135 females, 84 males), 318 students from western urban cities (209 females, 109 males), and 381 students from the two rural areas (146 females and 235 males). Groups comprised convenience samples; students volunteered to answer questionnaires in exchange for psychology course credit; all students who wished to participate were included. For the western urban sample, we recruited students from Ege University in Izmir and Trakya University in Edirne. For the eastern rural sample, we recruited students from Van Yuzuncu Yil University and Nigde University. When recruiting participants, we specified that individuals had to be native to the area, because Turks who have grown up in Istanbul may attend university in rural areas because admissions standards are less stringent. More females were available to participate in the study in all geographical regions except the rural east of Turkey, where our sample of males was larger. In the rural areas, males attend university at far higher rates than females, and thus males outnumber females even in college classes such as psychology that typically attract female students. Most students were in their first two years of college (age 18-20). Mean education across all groups was similar (13.0-13.5 years of education). The proportion of American students of various ethnicities was approximately 78% Anglo-American, followed in numerosity by Americans of Asian, Hispanic, and African descent).

Materials. We administered the 17 Cultural Orientation Scenarios from Triandis et al. (1988; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998)¹. Participants were instructed to circle the response they considered the best choice. An example, with response choices labeled, is:

In your opinion, in an ideal society national budgets will be determined so that:

Horizontal Individualism (HI) People can feel unique and self-actualized.

Horizontal Collectivism (HC) All people have adequate incomes to meet basic needs.

Vertical Individualism (VI) Some people will be rewarded for making brilliant contributions.

Vertical Collectivism (VC) There will be maximum stability, law and order.

¹ We used the 16 scenarios listed in Triandis et al., 1988 plus one additional (different) scenario listed as an example in Triandis and Gelfand (1998). The Turkish translation of the two scales in this paper can be obtained from the first author.

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3 The scenarios were translated into Turkish by the first author and back-translated by a native
4 speaker of Turkish; only minor adjustments in the original translation were needed.
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8 Results and Discussion

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10 *Data analysis.* The scenarios were scored to yield 4 percentages corresponding to the
11 percent of the scenarios for which respondents endorsed the HI, HC, VI, or VC choice. Mean
12 scores were similar for Izmir and Edirne (the urban west) and also for Van and Nigde (the rural
13 east part of Turkey), and these cities were pooled to be the Urban West and Rural East, resulting
14 in 4 geographical regions to be compared (see Table 1). Each of the four subscales of the
15 scenarios were separately analyzed with a 4 way ANOVA, with age, years of education, and
16 gender entered as covariates (see Baron, 1996, for discussion of using parametric tests on
17 ipsative scales). Pairwise comparisons were tested with the post-hoc Scheffe test. Table 1 lists
18 the scores for the 4 subscales for each of the geographical/cultural region, and F values and
19 statistical significance for the ANOVA conducted on each subscale. Age and education were
20 never significant and thus are statistics for these covariates are omitted. Gender effects are noted
21 when significant but discussion is withheld until the General Discussion.
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32 The strongest difference in responses between the four geographical regions concerned
33 responses to vertical collectivism (VC). Boston residents made the fewest VC choices, with
34 increasingly more VC choices made by Istanbul residents, residents of the Turkish urban west,
35 and the Turkish rural dwellers. Indeed, VC choices were sufficiently high for the rural dwellers
36 that they showed a different order of frequency of choices ($HI > HC > VC > VI$). Horizontal
37 individualism is the response option whose percentage increased to compensate for decrease in
38 VC with increasing urbanization. This suggests that the values of residents of denser urban areas
39 have shifted slightly from respecting the desires of authority figures to valuing independence
40 with equality.
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49 Study 2: Familialism and vertical collectivism in Urban vs. Rural Turkey

50 Collectivism encompasses beliefs and attitudes in which the line between self and members
51 of one's in-group are blurred, such that individuals value harmony within the in-group, share
52 material possessions and defeats and triumphs with in-group members as if they were one's own,
53 and subordinate individual goals to goals of the group. Familialism is a specific type of
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collectivism in which the primary in-group is the family (Lay et al., 1998; Oyserman et al., 2002). Our own observations of Turkish culture provide examples of familialism such as the following: Turks prefer to borrow money from a family member than from a bank; they are uncomfortable placing elderly in nursing homes, and feel teenage and young-adult students should be financially supported by parents (if possible) rather than taking an after-school job (see discussion in Caldwell-Harris & Aycicegi, 2006). Familialism may be the key in-group structure operative in Latin American and Mediterranean cultures (Freeberg & Stein, 1996; Triandis, 1995), and theorists have suggested that familialism is central to Turkish collectivism (Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Kagitçibasi, 1982, 1997), more so than duty to abstract authority figures and belief in hierarchy, as in East Asian societies.

This raises the question of whether familialism, like vertical collectivism, will decline with urbanization. Kagitçibasi (1996b) has suggested that growing individualism is not a necessary outcome of modernization, and that formerly collectivist cultures may retain interdependence with modernization. On this view, familialism may be a component of collectivism which does not decrease with urbanization, because individuals in family-centric societies such as Turkey will retain their strong sense of family unity, even though their endorsement of values related to vertical collectivism is reduced when living in densely population urban areas. On the other hand, as we described in the introduction, the conveniences of urban area decreases the need to depend on family, and urban dwelling is also associated with an increase in solo-living (Baranwal & Ram, 1985). The urbanization hypothesis thus predicts that familialism will be less valued by urban than rural residents.

To further investigate familialism as a specific type of collectivism, in Study 2 we administered the Family Allocentrism Scale developed by Lay et al. (1998), together with the Cultural Orientation Scenarios.

Method

Participants. Participants were recruited from Boston (113 females, 33 males, Boston University), Istanbul (87 females, 50 males, Istanbul University), and Van, one of the rural cities used in Study 1 (46 females and 99 males, Van Yznc Yil University). When recruiting participants in Istanbul and Van, we specified that individuals had to be native to that area. This step, omitted in Study 1, is important because students from urban areas may apply to a rural-

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3 area university because of lower admissions standards; students from rural areas may choose to
4 enroll at an urban university in order to experience urban life. More males were available to
5 participate in Van, because in rural areas males attend university at higher rates than females,
6 and thus males outnumber females even in college classes such as psychology that typically
7 attract female students. The majority of students were in their first year of study (ages ranged
8 from 17-26). Mean educational level of the total sample was 13.1 (SD = 0.4). Mean age of the
9 total sample was 19.2 (SD = 1.6).

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16 *Materials.* The Family Allocentrism Scale (Lay et al., 1998) contains 21 questions such as "I
17 would feel ashamed if I told my parents 'no' when they asked me to do something" and "When I
18 am not staying at my parents' house, I am not accountable to them" (reversed scored).
19 Respondents rate their agreement from Strongly Disagree to Strongly agree on a 5-point Likert
20 scale.
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26 The scale was translated into Turkish by the first author, with back translation by a native
27 Turkish speaking colleague. As part of assessing the internal reliability of the Turkish
28 translation, we administered it to students at Istanbul University (227 female, 203 male). The
29 Cronbach alpha was .81, indicating acceptable internal reliability. Cronbach alpha scores for the
30 English version (American participants) was .84. A small group of American students (N=18)
31 took the scale twice, separated by 2 weeks, resulting in a test-retest correlation of $r=.91$.
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37 The correlation in scores between the English and Turkish versions was $r=.83$, as determined
38 by administering the two scales to 19 Turkish-English bilingual students one month apart
39 (bilingual test-takers grew up in Istanbul and attended English-language high schools).
40 Respondent's item data for the English and Turkish versions were subjected to separate factor
41 analyses. Both data sets yielded a single factor, consistent with the report of the test-developers
42 (Lay et al., 1998). We conclude that the Turkish translation has adequate reliability and
43 measurement equivalence.
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50 Results and Discussion

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52 Analysis of the scenarios was conducted as in Study 1. A similar pattern regarding vertical
53 collectivism was obtained, with students from the rural part of Turkey (Van) having higher VC
54 choices than those from Istanbul (see Table 2). Familialism was also higher for students in Van
55 than for students in Istanbul, confirming the predictions of the urbanization hypothesis.
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3 Familialism scores for Istanbul students did not differ from Boston students. Familialism was
4 negatively correlated with HI and positively correlated with VC, especially for Istanbul
5 students². This is consistent with inferences from Study 1 that HI and VC are the values that
6 change with urbanization.
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10 11 12 General Discussion

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14 In prior work, researchers found weaker differences than expected in cross-cultural studies
15 of individualism and collectivism (Oyserman et al., 2002; Shafiro et al., 2003; Takano &
16 Osaka, 1999). This may reflect recent modernization. Theorists have proposed that cultures
17 traditionally viewed as collectivist adopt individualist values as their populations become more
18 educated and more urban (Alwin, 1989; Reykowski, 1994; Singelis et al., 1995). The current
19 paper supported the urbanization hypothesis, although the unexpected result was that the most
20 reliable difference across groups was not an increase in individualism, but a decrease in
21 collectivism: familialism and vertical collectivism (VC) were greater in rural areas. We observed
22 a continuum in VC responding across four geographical regions, with Boston < Istanbul < Urban
23 Western Turkey < Rural Mid and Eastern Turkey. Additionally, endorsements of familialism
24 was reduced in Istanbul compared to Van (Eastern Turkey, a rural area). Are differences in
25 modernization among the four regions the cause of the changes in VC choices? Theorists have
26 noted that individualism is likely to increase with education, urban residence,
27 globalization/mass-marketing and immigration (Alwin, 1989; Reykowski, 1994; Singelis et al.,
28 1995). Our finding is broadly consistent with this if the claim is rephrased as a "decrease in
29 vertical collectivism" rather than an increase in individualism. We will consider education,
30 urbanization, and globalization in turn as explanations for the decrease in vertical collectivism.
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44 *Education.* Students' concerns about examinations and job prospects can take priority over
45 traditional issues of duty and obligation towards family. In Poland, higher education is correlated
46 with individualist orientations and decreased emphasis on interdependence with community
47 members, although it is noteworthy that in Poland, valuing social harmony remains high across
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54 ² A pilot study, available from the authors, used scenarios that have been revised for their
55 relevance to Turkish culture and found higher correlations between VC and familialism
56 correlations, $r=.39$ and $r=.37$ for Istanbul and Van, respectively.
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3 education levels (Reykowski, 1994). We agree that education is likely to decrease traditional
4 values, but education is probably not the primary explanation for the observed variation in
5 vertical collectivism in our groups. All respondents had similar levels of education, being in their
6 first years of university. Of course, our groups almost certainly possess unmeasured differences
7 in educational aspirations between urban and rural residents, and differences in parents'
8 educations.
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14 *Urbanization.* The large cities of Izmir and Edirne were selected to be compared to the rural
15 east (Nigde and Van) precisely because of differences in urbanization. We noted in the
16 introduction that city dwelling permits one to depend on banks and convenience stores rather
17 than family and neighbors, thus permitting an individualistic orientation. To explain why city
18 dwelling causes a decrease in vertical collectivism, one must appeal to factors about city living
19 which decrease the importance of hierarchy and of deferring to superiors. Possibilities include
20 the greater tendency to live separately or farther away from parents and grandparents, and the
21 need to make individual choices about career, friends and day-to-day living. Alternatively, lower
22 religiosity accompanying urban living could be responsible for decreased VC responding (Cukur
23 et al., 2004).
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33 *Globalization.* The fewer VC choices in Istanbul compared to the urban western cities must
34 be due to a factor other than residing in a densely populated urban area. We suggest it is
35 Istanbul's greater interaction with communities of North America and Europe, via international
36 corporations, foreign investment, western-style marketing, foreign visitors and tourists. The
37 exact mechanisms for how these forces decrease vertical collectivism remains to be elucidated,
38 but presumably they include media messages, proximity to western migrants and tourists, and
39 desire to live in a cosmopolitan center (either the participants' own decision to live or their
40 families' decision).
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48 *Gender.* Male and female respondents did not differ in familialism (see Table 2) either
49 within or between cultures. However, there were gender differences on the Cultural Orientation
50 Scenarios. Females made more HI choices in both studies across all geographical regions, and
51 made more VC choices in study 1 outside of Boston and Istanbul, where the genders made a
52 similar number of VC choices. Despite the greater HI choices, the ordinal ranking of choices did
53 not differ for genders within a geographical group. The results fail to support suggestions in the
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3 literature that females are less individualist than males (Triandis, 1995) and that U.S. females are
4 be less individualistic than comparably educated females in developing countries (e.g., Shafiro et
5 al., 2003). We thus conclude that males and females differ not in overall level of individualism
6 or collectivism, but may differ weakly in their HI, HC and VC choices, at least when measured
7 using the Cultural Orientation Scenarios.
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10 11 **Future Work**

12 Residents of Istanbul were more individualistic and less collectivistic than other urban Turks
13 (Table 1). It would be useful to determine the extent to which urban density is correlated with
14 reduced familialism and reduced endorsement of vertical collectivism. Haidt and Hersh (2001)
15 have reported that belief in the moral soundness of hierarchies and valuing in-group members
16 over strangers is a component of many religious traditions and, within the U.S., is part of
17 conservative political beliefs. Indeed, in the U.S., size of city is one of the best predictors of
18 having liberal vs. conservative political values (Haidt & Hersh, 2001). Our U.S. college student
19 sample came from one of the most liberal cities in the country, in one of the densest urban
20 regions (the urban Northeast). It would be useful to investigate the extent to which endorsement
21 of vertical collectivism varies across the U.S. and Europe according to the same or different
22 factors governing variation of VC and familialism across Turkey.
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Tables

Table 1: Cultural Orientation Scenarios in three regions in Turkey and Boston (Study 1)

	BOSTON (N=121)		ISTANBUL (N=219)		TURK.URBAN (N=318)		TURK RURAL (N=381)	CITY F(1,195)	GENDER F(1,195)
HI	.45	=	.43	>	.39	>	.35	9.4**	females higher, F=27**
HC	.28	=	.23	=	.25	=	.25	14.8 **	females lower, F=44** except no difference for Boston
VI	.19	=	.19	=	.18	=	.18	1.9	no differences
VC	.07	<	.15	<	.18	<	.22	57.3**	f females higher, F=41** except no dif for Istanbul, Boston

Table notes. HI, HC, VI, VC values are percent of choices and thus sum to 100%. ** p < .001

Table 2: Cultural Orientation Scenarios and Familialism in Boston, Istanbul and Van (Study 2)

	BOSTON (N=146)		ISTANBUL (N=137)		VAN (N=145)	CITY F(2,423)	GENDER F(1,423)
HI	.43	=	.43	>	.37	7.0**	10.8** female higher
HC	.30	>	.25	=	.25	9.6**	2.4 no differences
VI	.18	=	.20	>	.17	4.5*	5.6+ female lower
VC	.09	<	.12	<	.20	61.1**	.16 no differences
FAMIL.	71.3	=	71.1	<	80.4	32.4**	.72 no differences

Table notes. HI, HC, VI, VC values are percent of choices and thus sum to 100%. + p < .02, * p < .01, ** p < .001,

Tables (continued)

Table 3: Correlations between Familialism and Cultural Orientation Scenarios in Study 2

	VAN (N=145) FAMILIALISM	ISTANBUL (N=137) FAMILIALISM	BOSTON (N=156) FAMILIALISM
HI	-.22*	-.27*	-.16*
HC	.11	.03	.05
VI	-.12	.01	.00
VC	.22*	.32*	.24*

Table notes. * $p < .05$

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