Outline
- Cross-cultural comparisons
- Ecological-level studies
- Cultural studies
- Linkage studies
- Summarizing across the different methods of cross-cultural research
- Importance of Understanding Cross-Cultural Research Methods

Cross-Cultural Comparisons
- Studies comparing cultures on psychological variable
- Backbone of and most common type of cross-cultural study
- Phase I studies in cross-cultural psychology

Methodological concerns with Cross-cultural comparisons
- Equivalence
- Response Bias
- Interpreting and Analyzing Data

Equivalence
- Similarity in conceptual meaning and empirical method between cultures that allows comparisons to be meaningful
- Lack of equivalence = bias
Equivalence

- **Linguistic**: Semantic equivalence of research protocols across various languages
- **Measurement**: Degree to which measures in different cultures are equally valid and reliable
  - Cross-Cultural validation
- **Sampling**: Degree to which samples are representative of their culture and equivalent on noncultural demographic variables

Equivalence

- **Procedural**: Equivalence in procedures used to collect data in different cultures
- **Theoretical**: Equivalence in meaning of overall theoretical framework being tested and specific hypotheses being addressed

Response Bias

- Systematic tendency to respond in a certain way to items or scales
- Types of response bias
  - Socially desirable responding
  - Acquiescence bias
  - Extreme response bias
  - Reference group effect

Response Bias

- **Socially Desirable Responding**: tendency to give answers that make self look good
- **Acquiescence bias**: tendency to agree to items
- **Extreme response bias**: tendency to use ends of a scale
- **Reference Group Effect**: tendency to implicitly compare themselves to others in their group

Interpreting and Analyzing Data

- Effect size analysis
- Cause-effect versus correlational interpretation
- Cultural Attribution Fallacies
- Researcher bias
- Dealing with nonequivalent data

Interpreting and Analyzing Data

- **Effect size analysis**: statistical procedure to determine degree to which differences in mean values reflect meaningful differences among individuals
- **Cause-effect versus correlational interpretation**: cultural groups cannot be manipulated or randomly assigned; therefore researchers cannot make causal inference that culture caused differences in psychological variable
Interpreting and Analyzing Data

- Cultural Attribution Fallacy: attributing cause of between-group differences as cultural without empirical justification
- Researcher Bias: researchers' interpretation of data biased by researchers' cultural filters
- Dealing with nonequivalent data: all cross-cultural studies are nonequivalent
  - preclude comparison, reduce nonequivalence in data, interpret nonequivalence, ignore nonequivalence

Ecological-Level Studies

- Studies using countries or cultures as unit of analysis
- Data obtained from individuals in different cultures then averaged for each culture and these averages are used as data points for each culture
- Phase II studies in cross-cultural psychology

Identification of ecological-level dimensions important because

- they were used as theoretical framework to predict and explain cultural differences
- Researchers could examine relationship between different ecological-level data

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<th>Individual-Level Study</th>
<th>Ecological-Level Study</th>
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Cultural Studies

- Studies with rich descriptions of complex theoretical models of culture that predict and explain differences
  - Individualism versus Collectivism
  - Phase III studies in cross-cultural psychology

LINKAGE STUDIES

Linkage Studies

- Studies establishing linkages between contents of culture and psychological variables of interest
- Phase IV studies in cross-cultural psychology
- Types of linkage studies
  - Unpacking studies
  - Experiments

Unpacking Studies

- Cross-Cultural comparisons with inclusion of measurement of variable that assesses the contents of culture hypothesized to produce differences
- Culture as an unspecified variable is replaced with context variables (specific variables that explain cultural differences)
- Context variables should be measured and degree to which they account for cultural differences should be statistically tested

Unpacking Studies

Examples of context variables

- Individual-level measures of culture: operationalization of cultural dimensions on individual level
- Self-construal scales: measurement of independence and interdependence on individual level
- Personality
- Cultural practices

Experiments

- Studies in which researchers create conditions to establish cause-effect relationships
- Types of experiments in cross-cultural psychology
  - Priming
  - Behavioral
Experiments

- Priming
  - experimentally manipulates mindsets related to culture and examines whether behavior different as function of primed mindset
  - If participants behave differently, then can infer primed cultural mindset caused observed differences in behavior

- Priming Experiment (Traffimow, Trilandis, & Goto, 1991)
  “For the next two minutes, you will not need to write anything.
  - Condition 1 (private):
    Please think of what makes you different from your family and friends.”
  - Condition 2 (collective):
    Please think of what you have in common with your family and friends. What do they expect you to do?

Amount of Individually-Oriented (I-O) and Group-Oriented (G-O) Responses for Americans and Chinese in Traffimow et al. (1991)

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<td>Chinese I-O</td>
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<td>Chinese G-O</td>
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Experiments

- Behavioral Studies
  - Examines whether experimental manipulations of environment causes changes in participants' behavior

SUMMARIZING ACROSS THE DIFFERENT METHODS OF CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH

- Cross-Cultural Comparisons
  - Research Question: Are the cultures different on the psychological variable of interest?
  - Method: Participants in two or more cultures measured on psychological variable and their responses compared
  - Results: Demonstrates that people of different cultures differ on psychological variable
  - Limitations: Cannot be sure what aspect of culture, if any, produced differences
Ecological-Level Studies

- **Research Question:** 1) What are cultural dimensions that exist on ecological level? 2) How are cultural dimensions related to psychological variables on ecological level?
- **Method:** Data for cultures (averaged responses from members of culture or data associated with culture) compared
- **Results:** Demonstrates that cultural means on psychological variable related to cultural dimensions on cultural level
- **Limitations:** Cultural level findings not applicable on individual level

Cultural Studies

- **Research Question:** What aspect of culture are related to psychological processes?
- **Method:** Participants in two or more cultures measured on psychological variable and their responses compared. This is done within theoretical framework of why differences may occur
- **Results:** Demonstrates that people of different cultures differ on psychological variable
- **Limitations:** Cannot be sure cultural processes associated with theoretical framework is what accounts for differences

Linkage Studies

- **Research Question:** How are specific and measurable aspects of culture empirically related to psychological processes?
- **Method:** Specific aspects of culture measured or manipulated, then empirically related to psychological variable
- **Results:** Demonstrates that specific aspects of culture are empirically related and thus accounts for cultural differences on psychological variable
- **Limitations:** Cannot be sure what other specific aspects of culture may be better explanations of differences or that the culture is causing the differences

- Methods associated with each phase of cross-cultural research not mutually exclusive
- Limitations of linkage studies (Phase IV)
- Cross-cultural research in future should incorporate ecological-level data, cultural theories, and linkage variables, at different levels of analysis, to try to explain differences and similarities, in mental processes and behaviors

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH METHODS

CONCLUSION
• Need to examine methods of studies to determine whether results can be trusted

• Despite the difficulties of cross-cultural methods, cross-cultural research offers exciting and interesting opportunities not available with traditional research approaches