

Difference in Personality Construct Between the West and East

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Objectives: There have been lots of psychological studies on the difference between the West and East; however, it was mainly focused on the cultural and social outlook rather than the personality perspective of the individuals. The difference in personality construct between the West and East needs to be examined with objective and validated instruments.

Methods: We used Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI) and NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI) along with Sasang Personality Questionnaire (SPQ). SPQ measures the psychological traits with three subscales of behavior (SPQ-B), cognition (SPQ-C) and emotionality (SPQ-E) based on the Yin-Yang and traditional Korean medicine. We analyzed the correlation between TCI, NEO-PI and SPQ with 104 college students in Korea (age, 28.8±4.8; male/female, 52/52).

Results: The personality structure of SPQ showed distinctive features with emotionality (SPQ-E) which generally perceived as concurrent with behavior and cognition. SPQ-B/SPQ-C were correlated negatively with TCI Harm-Avoidance ($r=-0.542$ and -0.387) and NEO-PI Neuroticism ($r=-0.285$ and -0.340), however SPQ-E positively with Harm-Avoidance ($r=0.283$) and NEO-PI Neuroticism ($r=0.398$). In addition, SPQ-B/SPQ-C were correlated positively with TCI Novelty-Seeking ($r=0.355$ and 0.369) and NEO-PI Extraversion ($r=0.67$, 0.283), but SPQ-E not significant with them.

Conclusion: The disparities in personality construct might be originated from difference in the definition of emotionality; the West accentuates the emotional stability, however the East emphasizes the level of emotional activity. We discussed the implication of these from the cross-cultural personality studies.