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Self-construal, affective valence of the encounter, and quality of social interactions: Within and cross-culture examination

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Abstract

In two samples, one from Greece and another from Germany, we examined relationships between self-construal, emotional experience, and the quality of social interactions. In Greece, a more collectivistic culture, the negative affect people experienced in social interactions was more weakly related to the quality of social interactions for those higher in interdependent self-construal than it was for those lower in interdependent self-construal. In Germany, a more independent culture, a contrasting pattern was observed such that the positive affect people experienced in social interaction was more strongly related to the quality of social interactions for those higher in independent self-construal than it was for those lower in independent self-construal. These findings suggest that positive and negative affect in social encounters can have different effects for persons with independent and interdependent cultural orientations within different cultural settings.

Keywords: culture, self-construal, emotion, social interaction, social relationships

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The affective tone of social encounters is an important antecedent to well-being and life satisfaction (e.g., Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004). Not all social interactions are equally pleasant and not everyone reacts in the same way to the affective tone of an interaction. Even though there is evidence that the impact of social relationships on well-being is contingent on peoples' cultural orientations and the cultural norms and values relevant to the social context

within which relationships exist (Kim, Sherman, & Taylor, 2008), research on the influence of culture on the quality of actual social interactions remains scarce (for exceptions see Kafetsios & Nezlek, 2012; Nezlek, Kafetsios, & Smith, 2008; Oishi, Akimoto, Richards, & Suh, 2013). In particular, little is known about how culturally-dependent self-construal and affective context interact to predict persons' experience in day to day social encounters.

The present study focuses on the role the affective context plays in determining the quality of social interactions for persons with different self-construal. Even though research interest on cultural dimensions of emotion is strong (e.g., Mesquita, Boiger, & De Leersnyder, 2016; Oishi, 2002), much of this research has neglected the relational context within which emotion is communicated and shared. Typically, emotion has been approached as an intra-individual construct. Nevertheless, emotion can also serve important functions in peoples' day to day relationships, functions that can range from influencing the cognitions and perceptions during dyadic encounters (Forgas, 2001) to regulating affiliation and distance from others (Fischer & Manstead, 2008). The functional consequences of emotion, particularly consequences within peoples' relationships, have not received much attention from a cultural perspective.

A critical assumption of the present study was that individuals who differ in self-construal also differ in the ways they express and experience emotion, particularly within the context of their social relationships. Self-construal refers to an individual's culturally contingent thoughts, feelings, and actions that are concerned with one's understanding of the self as connected with others (interdependence) or distinct from others (independence, Cross et al., 2011; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Individualistic, typically Western, cultures nurture an

independent construal of the self that emphasizes personal autonomy, individual needs, and self-fulfillment. By contrast, collectivistic cultures favor an interdependent self-construal that emphasizes relationships with others and interpersonal obligations, particularly obligations to in-group members. Importantly, the effects of interdependence on emotion are not restricted to chronic effects of culture but can also be found when persons are primed with the relevant self-construal (Nisbett & Miyamoto, 2005); that is, this effect can also be observed as a function of individual variation in levels of self-construal.

Cultures differ in terms of the norms that regulate the display and experience of positive and negative emotions (Mesquita & Leu, 2007). At the person level, individualistic values and independent self-construal have consistently been associated with more intense and more frequent positive emotion, whereas interdependent views of the self have been associated with less positive emotion (Scollon et al., 2004; Van Hemert et al., 2007). Within interpersonal relationships this effect is especially pronounced when individual and cultural level independence and interdependence coincide. For example, in their day to day relationships, persons who were higher on independent self-construal in the UK, a culture that overall promotes independent norms of relating, reported more positive emotions than individuals who were lower on independent self-construal (Nezlek et al., 2008).

Culture-level norms in emotion expression suggest that independent cultures typically promote the pursuit of positive emotions, whereas in interdependent cultures positive and negative emotions have a more dialectic relationship with, and effect on social outcomes (Uchida & Kitayama, 2009). In interdependent cultures negative emotion displays are often discouraged,

especially those of emotions that may threaten interpersonal harmony (e.g., antagonistic emotions, Biehl et al., 1997; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Norms of social suppression which are dominant in more interdependent cultures (Matsumoto et al., 2008) may be responsible in part for the weaker positive emotions, stronger negative emotions, and lower felt understanding in social interactions in more interdependent cultures (Kafetsios & Nezlek, 2012) and for persons with more interdependent self-construal (Oishi et al., 2013).

The co-occurrence of suppression, which is a negative state, with closeness in social relationships, may lead to negative states and emotions being associated with positive social relational outcomes in interdependent cultural settings. Recent research supports these expectations; namely, that in interdependent cultures and for people with more interdependent views of the self, negative emotional states can be associated with positive relationship outcomes. For example, in India, an interdependent culture, within-couple emotional synchrony of negative emotions was associated with higher relationship satisfaction (Randall, Cockery, Duggi, Kamble, & Butler, 2011). For persons higher on interdependence, greater suppression of negative emotions when giving in or sacrificing something in a relationship was associated with an increase in personal well-being and relationship quality (Le & Impett, 2013). Finally, in several studies of leader-follower interaction in Greece (an interdependent culture), the suppression of emotion was associated with positive emotion outcomes (e.g., Kafetsios, Nezlek, & Vassilakou, 2012). Taken together, this research suggests that the experience of more negative states and emotions that is associated with suppression in interdependent cultures and for persons with higher interdependent self-construal may be associated with relational closeness and hence more positive relational outcomes.

The present study

The present study was guided by the expectation that relationships between the affect people experienced in social interactions and their evaluations of social interactions would vary as a joint function of the normative construal in a culture and individuals' self-construal. Specifically, we expected that in a more collectivistic culture such as Greece, the negative relationship between interaction quality and the negative affect people experienced in an interaction would be weaker for people higher in interdependence than for those lower in interdependence. In contrast, in an independent culture (Germany), where norms of suppressing emotion are not operating, the positive relationships between overall quality of social interaction and the positive affect people experienced in social interaction would be stronger for people who were higher in independent self-construal than it would be for those lower in independent self-construal.

To provide the data to examine these possibilities we conducted an event sampling study of naturally occurring social interactions in Germany and in Greece. Most studies on the effects of culture on emotion have been conducted comparing participants from Asian and North American cultural backgrounds, who tend to span the extremes in self-construal. Nevertheless, Eastern vs. Western groups also differ in many other ways, most notably in cultural and philosophical traditions and in their understanding of the world and of emotions (Averill & Sundararajan, 2006). In contrast, Greek and German participants share the Greco-Roman origins of Western culture, and these common origins likely are associated with differences that are fewer and smaller than those that distinguish the Eastern and Western cultures that have been the

focus of much of the research on self-construal. Therefore, situating the study in Germany and Greece allowed us to compare cultures that differed in terms of individual self-construal but did not differ in terms of various underlying philosophical traditions thereby extending previous research.

Moreover, the present study is one of the first to consider the social functions of emotion in naturally occurring social interactions. Event sampling studies are known for their external validity (Bolger, Davis, & Rafaeli, 2003) and for allowing a more fine grained study of social interactions than summary retrospective self-reports (Reis & Gosling, 2010). See Nezlek (2012) for a discussion of the advantages of social interaction diary studies over other methods in terms of studying social contact.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 91 Greek (21 men, 1 gender unknown, $M_{\text{age}} = 22.69$, $SD = 4.94$, age range : 18 to 48) and 87 German participants (18 men, $M_{\text{age}} = 25.9$, $SD = 5.34$, age range: 18 to 42). Participants were recruited from two universities in southern Greece and northern Germany. In Greece, students participated for extra course credit and non-student participants were given a book of their choice. In Germany participants were recruited via the participant database at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, PESA. They received either course credit or a small gift such as a book, a wellness product, or chocolates of a value equivalent to 10€ and a

8GB USB-stick. Due to missing data (participants who failed to return or returned incomplete diary records), 16 participants were excluded from the Greek sample and 6 participants were excluded from the German sample. There were no differences in current levels of Socio-Economic Status (SES) in the two samples ($\chi^2(1, 3) = 4.73, p = .19$) as measured by a 5-point categorical scale (1 = low, 5 = highest SES).

Procedure

On arrival at the laboratory, participants were informed about the aims of the study and they were told that their anonymity was guaranteed. After providing informed consent, they completed a series of individual difference measures, and they were told how to use the social interaction diary form which they kept for 10 days and then returned to the researchers.

Individual self-construal

We measured individual self-construal using the revised version of the Self-Construal Scale (Kwan, Bond, & Singelis, 1997). The scale has two orthogonal dimensions measuring the strength of independent and interdependent self-construal. Each subscale contains 15 items and responses were made on a seven point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The independent self-construal subscale contains items that assess uniqueness in social behavior and related cognitions and emotions (e.g., 'I do my own thing, regardless of what others think'). The interdependent self-construal subscale includes items that assess connectedness in social behavior, specifically emotions, cognitions, and behaviors with regard to in-groups (e.g., 'It is important to me to respect decisions made by the group').

In the German sample, the two subscales had adequate reliability (independence $\alpha = .70$, interdependence $\alpha = .65$). For the independent self-construal scale, the mean was 4.57 ($SD = .70$), and for the interdependent scale the mean was 4.29 ($SD = .65$). In the German sample the correlation between the two subscales was $-.14$. In the Greek sample the two subscales also had adequate reliability ($\alpha = .67$ independent, $.70$ interdependent). For the independent self-construal scale, the mean was 4.68 ($SD = .71$), and for the interdependent scale the mean was 4.71 ($SD = .73$). In the Greek sample, the correlation between the two subscales was $.14$.

Social interaction diary

Participants were told that this part of the study was about emotion in everyday social interactions. Following Wheeler and Nezlek (1977), participants were instructed to use a variant of the Rochester Interaction Record to describe every social interaction they had that lasted 10 minutes or longer. An interaction was defined as any encounter in which the participants attended to one another and adjusted their behavior in response to one another. They were asked to complete the forms as soon as possible after an interaction.

For each interaction, participants used 7-point scales (1 not at all to 7 very much) to rate their general satisfaction with the interaction and the degree to which they felt understood, and accepted. We refer to these as measures of interaction outcomes because they represent a summary judgment of how the interaction affected participants. Participants also used 7-point scales to describe the positive and negative emotions they felt during the interaction (separately). All scales were labeled such that 1 represented the lowest or weakest rating and 7 represented the highest or strongest rating.¹

For each interaction, participants also described the relationship they had with the other person who was present. They used a 6-point scale reflecting ordinal scaled levels of intimacy ranging from acquaintance to family member. This scale was based on Reis, Clark, and Holmes' (2004) proposal that the different types of relationships in a person's social network can be arranged into a hierarchy of perceived intimacy. When there was more than one other person, we told participants to answer the question in terms of the most important or salient person in the interaction. We included this measure primarily as means of controlling for differences among interactions in how close people were to the primary co-interactant.²

In Greece, participants described 1128 interactions in total ($M = 2.13$, $SD = 1.15$ per day). These were distributed as follows: acquaintances (17.5%), friends (19.1%), good friends (15.7%), best friends (19.8%), partners (15.1%), and family members (12.4%). In Germany, participants described 2407 interactions in total ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.41$ per day). These were distributed as follows: acquaintances (24.3%), friends (15.3%), good friends (20.2%), best friends (7.5%), and partners (17.2%) as well as family members (15.5%). The analyses described below did not include interactions with family members. We excluded interactions with family members for two reasons. First, interactions with parents or siblings may involve a qualitatively different affective context. In Greece (as in other collectivistic societies) relationships with parents involve traditionally more hierarchically structured interactions and are potentially not comparable between groups (Realo, Allik, & Vadi, 1997). In addition, the category 'family member' was quite heterogeneous and could include parents, grandparents, and so forth. Such heterogeneity would reduce the clarity of our inference. Moreover, the other categories represented co-interactants who were more or less peers. The final sample thus included 982

interactions in Greece (88% of the original) and 2071 interactions in Germany (84% of the original).

Results³

We conceptualized the data as a two level hierarchically nested data structure with interactions nested within persons, and we analyzed these data using the program HLM (Raudenbush et al., 2011) following guidelines offered by Nezlek (2003, 2012). First, we ran unconditional models (no predictors at either level of analysis) that estimated the means and variances (within- and between-persons) of the measures of social interaction. Summaries of these analyses are presented in Table 1. Inspection of the means suggests that overall, and consistent with previous research, social interactions were perceived as positive rather than negative.⁴

To examine how relationships between participants' affect in interaction and the outcomes of their interactions varied as a joint function of individual and cultural levels of self-construal, we included positive and negative affect (PosAff and NegAff) as level 1 predictors of our three outcome measures: satisfaction, feeling understood, and feeling accepted. To control for individual differences in mean levels of positive and negative affect, the PosAff and NegAff predictors were entered group-mean centered. To control for differences in outcomes as a function of the type of relationship participants had with their co-interactants, we entered the relationship type group mean centered. This measure (Rel) was coded 1 to 5, with 1 representing

the least intimate relationship (acquaintances) and 5 representing the most intimate (partners).

All predictors were modeled as randomly varying. The level 1 model is below.

$$\text{Level 1: } y_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} (\text{PosAff}) + \beta_{2j} (\text{NegAff}) + \beta_{3j} (\text{Rel}) + r_{ij}.$$

Each of the level 1 coefficients (the intercept and the three slopes) were then modeled at level 2 with the following “zero intercept” model. In this model, countries were represented by two dummy codes (DE for Germany and GR for Greece). Independent and interdependent self-construal scores were standardized within each country, and these standard scores were then multiplied by the dummy-codes for each country (e.g., DE-Indep was the coefficient for independent self-construal in German). To control for sex differences, a contrast code representing sex was created (-1 = women).

All these level 2 predictors were entered uncentered, and the overall intercept was dropped. A separate set of level 2 coefficients for each country model was estimated for each of the level 1 coefficients including an intercept for the coefficient and slopes for independent and interdependent self-construal (controlled for sex). For a description of this technique see Nezlek (2012, pp. 73-79). The basic form of this model is illustrated below for the analysis of the level 1 intercept. The three slopes from level 1 were modeled with the same predictors.

$$\begin{aligned} \beta_{0j} = & \gamma_{01} (\text{GR}) + \gamma_{02} (\text{DE}) + \gamma_{03} (\text{DE-Indep}) + \gamma_{04} (\text{DE-Inter}) \\ & + \gamma_{05} (\text{GR-Indep}) + \gamma_{06} (\text{GR-Inter}) + \gamma_{07} (\text{Sex}) + \mu_{0j} \end{aligned}$$

A summary of the results of these analyses is presented in Table 2. Our hypotheses concerned the relationships between affect and interaction outcomes which we predicted would vary as a function of the congruence between individual level self-construal and cultural norms. For Germany, this match was represented by the third coefficient in the analyses of the PosAff slope in the model above (DE-Indep), whereas for Greece, this match was represented by the sixth coefficient in the analyses of the NegAff slope in the model above (GR-Inter). We had no clear expectations regarding how coefficients would vary as a function of “mismatched” individual and cultural construal (i.e., Interdependence in Germany and Independence in Greece), and so we examined these coefficients (DE-Inter) and (GR-Indep) on an exploratory basis. Moreover, we had no clear expectations for how matching construal would be related to slopes for NegAff in Germany and for PosAff in Greece, and we examined these slopes on an exploratory basis.

Independent self-construal in Germany

As hypothesized, for the German sample, the slopes for PosAff were moderated by independent self-construal (DE-Indep). As shown in Table 2, the DE-Indep coefficient was a significant predictor of the PosAff slope for all three outcomes: satisfaction, $t = 2.78$, $p < .01$, feeling understood, $t = 1.96$, $p = .05$, and feeling accepted $t = 3.15$, $p < .01$. Moreover, these moderating relationships were the same for all three outcome measures. The intercepts for the PosAff slopes were all positive, and the moderating coefficients were positive. As hypothesized, this meant that PosAff slopes were more positive for Germans who were higher in independent self-construal than they were for Germans who were lower in independent self-construal.

Predicted values for the PosAff slope for German participants +/- 1SD on independent self-construal are presented in Table 3.

Although not a focus of our hypotheses, we also examined slopes for NegAff and the moderating relationship of interdependent self-construal (the DE-Inter coefficient) in the German sample. The DE-Inter coefficient was a marginally significant predictor of the NegAff slope in all three analyses: satisfaction, $t = 1.79, p = .08$, feeling understood $t = 1.79, p = .08$, feeling accepted $t = 1.62, p = .10$. The intercepts for the NegAff slopes were all negative, and the moderating coefficients were positive. Consistent with the results for the PosAff slopes, this meant that NegAff slopes were less negative for Germans who were higher in independent self-construal than they were for Germans who were lower in independent self-construal. We should note also that neither the PosAff nor the NegAff slope was moderated by interdependent self-construal in the German sample (DE-Inter, all $ts < 1$).

Interdependent self-construal in Greece

As hypothesized, for the Greek sample, the slopes for NegAff were moderated by interdependent self-construal (GR-Inter). As shown in Table 2, the GR-Inter coefficient was a significant predictor of the NegAff slope for all three outcomes: satisfaction, $t = 2.07, p < .05$, feeling understood $t = 2.27, p < .05$, and for feeling accepted $t = 2.77, p < .01$. Moreover, these moderating relationships were the same for all three outcome measures. The intercepts for the NegAff slopes were all negative, and the moderating coefficients were positive. As hypothesized, this meant that NegAff slopes were less negative for Greeks who were higher in interdependent self-construal than they were for Greeks who were lower in interdependent self-

construal. Predicted values for the NegAff slope for Greek participants +/- 1SD on independent self-construal are presented in Table 3.

Although not a focus of our hypotheses, we also examined slopes for PosAff and the moderating relationship of independent self-construal (the GR-Inter coefficient) in the Greek sample. The GR-Inter coefficient was a marginally significant predictor of the PosAff slope only for feeling understood ($t = 1.89, p = .06$). The coefficients indicated that the PosAff slope for feeling understood was more positive for Greeks who were higher in interdependent self-construal than they were for Greeks who were lower in interdependent self-construal. For the Greek sample, slopes for affect were not moderated by independent self-construal (all t s < 1 for independent self-construal, except for the NegAff slope for feeling understood, $t = 1.15$).

Discussion

How we relate to others and the quality of our social relationships are important aspects of our everyday life that also help to determine our well-being. Moreover, cultural orientations and the cultural norms regarding how emotions are enacted in peoples' relationships may influence how people experience social interactions and may influence the quality of their relationships across cultures (Oishi et al., 2003). The present study is the first, to our knowledge, to consider such cultural differences within an interpersonal context. In a cross-cultural, ten-day event sampling study we found that in a more collectivistic culture (Greece), negative emotions in a social interaction were associated less strongly with interaction outcomes (satisfaction, feeling accepted and understood) for individuals higher in interdependence than for those lower

in interdependence. In contrast, in Germany, a more individualistic culture, independent self-construal was associated with greater satisfaction, perceived acceptance and understanding in more affectively positive social interactions. The results highlight the significance of situational factors, the social functions of emotion in social interactions in particular (Fischer & Manstead, 2008), for understanding social relationships outcomes in different cultural settings.

Our results from Greece, a collectivistic culture at the cultural level (Hofstede, 2001), suggest that the influence of negative emotions on interaction outcomes is weaker for people with a stronger interdependent self-construal than it is for people with a weaker interdependent self-construal. This can be explained in terms of the central function of negative emotion in collectivistic cultures of sustaining harmony in peoples' relationships, a function that may also exist for persons with high levels of interdependent self-construal. For example, in more interdependent cultures the suppression of emotion is more frequent and intense than it is in less interdependent cultures (Matsumoto et al., 2008).

Also, expressions of sadness, a negative emotion with an affiliative relational function, are better recognized in Greece than in an independent culture such as Germany (Hess, Blaison, & Kafetsios, 2016) likely due to its greater prevalence in social interaction (Calvo, Gutiérrez-García, Fernández-Martín, & Nummenmaa, 2014). Consistent with this possibility, negative emotions in social relationships have been found to be more prevalent in Greece than in the UK (e.g., Kafetsios & Nezlek, 2012). In this regard, the relationships we found in our Greek sample complement research indicating that negative emotions can be associated with more positive relational outcomes in interdependent cultures (Randall et al., 2011) and for individuals with

higher interdependent self-construal (Le & Impett, 2013). The present study extends this research into the realm of social relationships.

In contrast, in independent cultures, positive emotions are more prevalent because they are associated with the central cultural goal of self-expression. Moreover, the greater prevalence of positive emotions has been found at the dispositional level (e.g., Van Hemert et al., 2007) and within social interactions (e.g., Kafetsios & Nezlek, 2012), particularly for individuals with more independent cultural orientations (Nezlek et al., 2008). Therefore, in independent cultures such as Germany, cultural scripts for social and personal relationships emphasize the expression and importance of positive emotions, and this is what we found in the present study

There are additional aspects of our study that are noteworthy. The use of an event sampling methodology allowed us to study the processes that naturally occur in peoples' relationships in different cultural contexts. This type of study provides an important complement to research that has used retrospective self-reports that often ask people to retrospect over long or unspecified periods of time. Multiple methods are needed because differences between cultural groups can vary as a function of the methods (and by extension, the constructs) used to examine such differences. For example, using an event sampling technique similar to the one used in the present study, Kafetsios and Nezlek (2012) found that a Greek sample (more collectivist) reported less social support in their daily interactions than a British sample (more individualist). In contrast, there were no differences in social support on a dispositional measure.

The present research provides a more nuanced theoretical picture that complements recent discussions about the fit between emotions and culture (De Leersnyder, Mesquita, Kim, Eom, & Choi, 2014). Extending previous research about this fit (e.g., Nezlek et al., 2008) the present research demonstrates that individual level self-construal is an important moderator of how emotions fit within cultures. Moreover, it highlights the social interaction as an important level of analysis in cross-cultural research. Further research is needed however that examines the relative importance of emotions experienced in social interactions (vs. emotions that occur outside of a social context) for well-being.

The present results are particularly important in terms of understanding how affect and self-construal may influence well-being. Feeling understood and validated are central aspects of personal relationships that are associated with well-being (Reis, Clark, & Holmes, 2004). The present results suggest that relationships between affect and interaction outcomes that include the aspects of personal relationships Reis et al. described (i.e., feeling understood and feeling accepted) can vary meaningfully as a function of joint function of individual and cultural self-construal. Assuming this is the case, the present results suggest that it may be worthwhile to examine the interaction of affect, individual level self construal, and cultural norms regarding self-construal in studies of well-being, at least that part of well-being that is related to the social interactions that occur within personal relationships.

Limitation and conclusions

To maximize the comparability of the samples in the two countries, we used student samples that were of approximately the same age and station in life. This decision brings with it limitations in terms of generalizability. Nevertheless, it provided some advantages especially in terms of demonstrating the pervasiveness of more interdependent norms in a younger age Greek sample. Moreover, the research involved only two cultures and future studies should include other cultures. A specific advantage of our study is that an interdependent culture outside of Asia was studied. There have been several calls for including information from interdependent cultural settings from non-Asian cultures (Kim et al., 2008).

The results suggest that a combination of higher level contextual (national culture-prevalent norms), personal (interdependent or independent self-construal) and situational (negative or positive affect) characteristics combine to influence perceived interaction quality. As such the findings support multilevel models of cultural orientation effects (see Miyamoto, 2013) that highlight specific proximal-level processes at the individual and social interaction level through which distal-level societal factors (culture prevalent norms) influence relationships outcomes. The results also contribute to research on emotion. Affect is an important facet of social interaction and the studies suggest that positive and negative affect can sometimes serve both affiliative and distancing functions (Fischer & Manstead, 2008) depending on individual and culture-level scripts.

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Footnotes

1. We also collected other interaction level measures that primarily concerned perceptions of how the other person(s) present in the interaction felt. These measures were not germane to our hypotheses, and we do not present or discuss them. A full description of these measures is available from the authors.
2. The full study protocol and social interaction diary questions are available at <https://osf.io/wqnnx/>
3. Data are openly available and can be accessed at <https://osf.io/wqnnx/>
4. The no-intercept model we used did not provide separate estimates for the variances for each country. Unconditional analyses of the measures done for each country separately did not find pronounced or meaningful differences in either the within- or between-person variances for the variables in Table 1.

Table 1 *Multilevel descriptive statistics*

	Mean		Variance	
	GR	DE	Within	Between
Satisfaction	5.31	5.37	1.79	.40
Felt understood	5.24	5.40	1.67	.42
Felt accepted	5.51	5.70	1.26	.49
Positive emotions	5.34	4.83	1.72	.38
Negative emotions	2.10	2.49	1.75	.57

Note: In this table and the tables below columns headed GR contain coefficients for Greece, and columns headed DE contain coefficients for Germany

Table 2 Trait level self-construal and country as moderators of slopes between interaction outcomes and affect, controlled for nature of relationship with co-interactants

	DE	GR	DExIndep	DExInter	GRxIndep	GRxInter	Sex
Satisfaction							
Intercept	5.24 (.08) ***	5.29 (.11) ***	.025 (.08)	.01 (.08)	.14 (.07)	.06 (.07)	-.13 (.08)
Rel	.06 (.02) **	.04 (.03)	-.08 (.02) **	-.01 (.02)	-.01 (.03)	-.01 (.03)	-.01 (.02)
PosAff	.41 (.03) ***	.62 (.04) ***	.07 (.03) **	.03 (.03)	.01 (.05)	-.00 (.04)	-.02 (.03)
NegAff	-.25 (.04) **	-.19 (.04) ***	.06 (.03)^a	.03 (.03)	.01 (.05)	.07 (.03) *	-.04 (.03)
Understanding							
Intercept	5.17 (.09) ***	5.31 (.12) ***	.08 (.08)	.10 (.08)	.13 (.09)	.03 (.08)	-.14 (.09)

Rel	.04 (.03)	.14 (.03) ***	-.04 (.03)	-.00 (.03)	.05 (.04)	-.04 (.03)	-.03 (.02)
PosAff	.46 (.04) ***	.41 (.04) ***	.06 (.03) *	.03 (.04)	-.05 (.05)	.08 (.04) ^a	-.01 (.03)
NegAff	-.20 (.04)***	-.16 (.03)***	.05 (.03) ^b	.03 (.03)	-.03 (.03)	.07 (.03) *	-.05 (.02)

Table 2 (continued)

Acceptance							
Intercept	5.40 (.09) ***	5.57 (.12) ***	.01 (.08)	.03 (.08)	.08 (.08)	.12 (.08)	-.20 (.09) *
Rel	.18 (.03) ***	.15 (.03) ***	-.04 (.03)	-.01 (.02)	.04 (.03)	-.01 (.03)	-.02 (.02)
PosAff	.35 (.04) ***	.32 (.03) ***	.09 (.03) **	.01 (.03)	-.01 (.04)	.01 (.04)	.01 (.03)
NegAff	-.18 (.03) ***	-.17 (.04) ***	.06 (.03) ^b	.02 (.03)	-.02 (.03)	.08 (.03) **	-.07 (.03) *

Note: SE of fixed effects in parentheses. Coefficients in **bold** are described in results section. * p

< .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001, ^a p = .06, ^b p = < .10

Table 3 *Predicted values illustrating moderating relationships of individual level construal on affect slopes*

Outcome	Germany positive affect slope		Greece negative affect slope	
	Independent self-construal	High	Interdependent self-construal	High
Satisfaction	.34	.48	-.26	-.12
Felt understood	.40	.52	-.23	-.09
Felt accepted	.26	.44	-.25	-.09