



The Relation Between Cultural Orientation and Socially Desirable Responding

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Introduction

- What is Socially Desirable Responding (SDR)?
- SDR Poses:
 - Threat to validity of self-reports (Paulhus, 1991)
 - Potential for obscuring substantive cultural differences (Johnson & Van de Vijver, 2002)



How does cultural orientation relate to SDR?

- Cross-cultural psychology: Main effect relation
- Collectivists more likely to engage in:
 - deception (Triandis et al. 2002)
 - lying (Triandis & Suh 2002)
 - face-saving behavior (Ho 1976; Hu 1944; Triandis 1995)
- Deception linked to impression management (Kashy & DePaulo, 1996; Sengupta, Dahl & Gorn, 2002)



How does cultural orientation relate to SDR?

- Individualists appear less likely to engage in SDR
- Individualists are:
 - more likely to seek sincerity and authenticity (Trilling 1972).
 - more likely to value honesty (Triandis, 1995)
 - more likely to self-disclose (Bond & Smith, 1998)
 - negative correlation between Individualism score and lying ($r = -0.68$; Van Hemert, van de Vijver, Poortinga, & Georgas, 2002)



How does cultural orientation relate to SDR?

- Survey research literature: similar main effect
 - Proxies for collectivism (ethnicity, race) linked to SDR
- Compared to US Whites, higher SDR among:
 - Asian Americans (Keillor et al., 2001)
 - African Americans (Klassen et al., 1975);
 - Mexican Americans (Ross & Mirowsky, 1984)
 - Puerto Ricans (Johnson et al., 1997)



Individualism & Self-Enhancement

- > 50% of U.S. undergrads view themselves as being in the top 10% in “interpersonal sensitivity” (Myers 1987)
- Remember past performance as better than it actually was (Crary, 1966)
- Self-esteem scores positively skewed (Heine & Lehman, 1999)
- Life satisfaction based on positive self-feelings (Diener, Diener, & Diener, 1995)



Collectivism & Self-Enhancement

- Display fewer and weaker self-enhancing tendencies (e.g., Heine & Lehman, 1995, 1997; Kashima & Triandis, 1996)
- Tend to be more self-critical (Heine & Lehman, 1999; Kitayama, et al., 1997)



How does cultural orientation relate to SDR?

- Social desirability matters to everyone, but pursued differently depending on cultural orientation
- Distinct motives link individualism and collectivism to SDR



Self-Presentational Goals

Cultural orientation associated with distinct self-presentational goals.

- Collectivists: public image management
 - save face and maintain good relationships
- Individualists: self image management
 - view self as unique & self-reliant



Two Types of SDR

- Impression Management (IM)
- Self-Deceptive Enhancement (SDE)
- Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR; Paulhus 1991, 1998)



Two Types of SDR

- Impression Management (IM)

A tendency to present one's actions in the most positive manner in order to control the social images that one projects.

From BIDR-IM subscale:

- “When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening.”
- “I sometimes drive faster than the speed limit.” (R)



Two Types of SDR

- Self-Deceptive Enhancement (SDE)

A tendency to provide inflated yet honestly held self-descriptions.

From BIDR-SDE subscale:

- “My first impressions of people usually turn out to be right”
- “Many people think that I am exceptional.”



Predictions

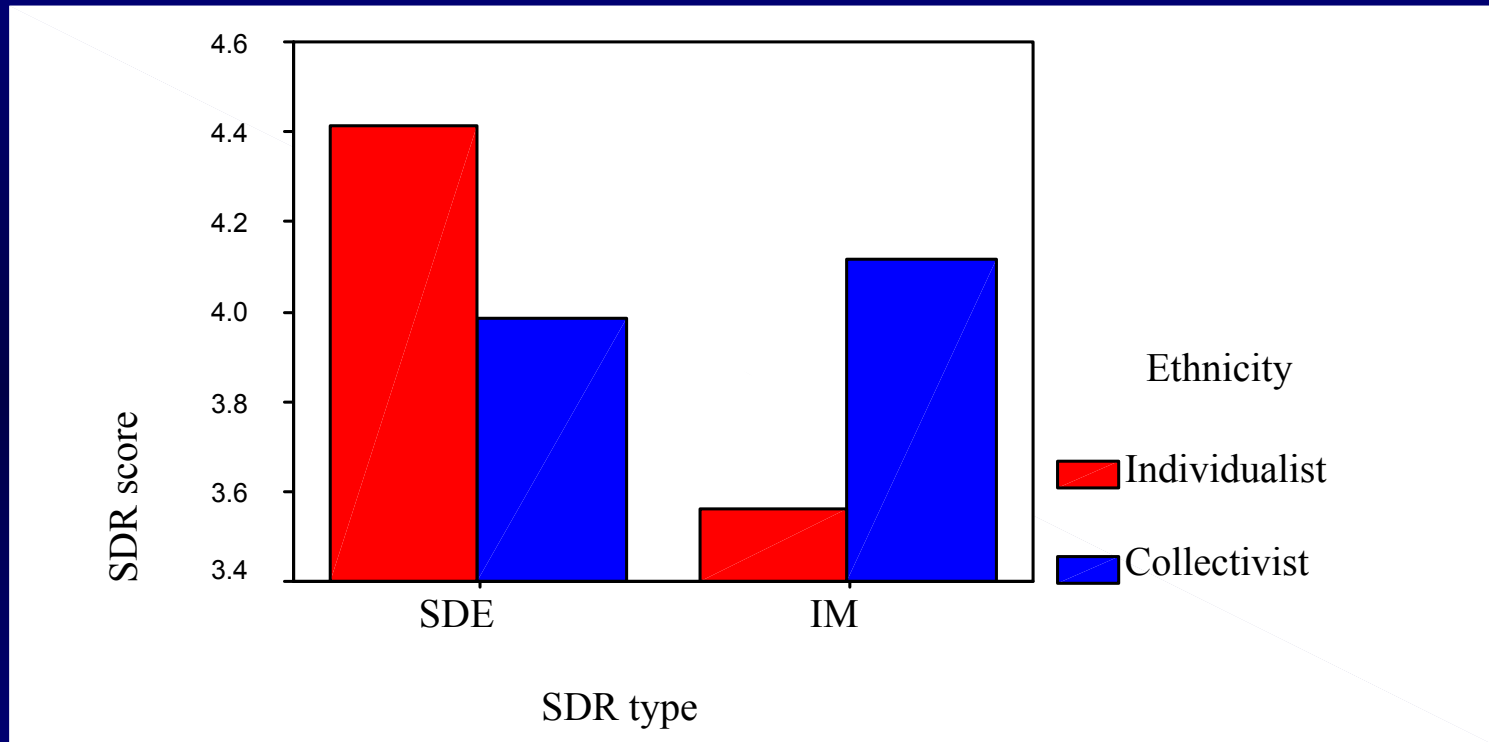
- INDIVIDUALISM → SDE
- COLLECTIVISM → IM



- Do demographic proxies of culture (ethnicity or race) predict socially desirable responding?
 - Do Asians engage in more IM?
 - Do Individualists/whites engage in more SDE?
- *Participants*: 33 undergraduate UIUC students and 32 members of a Korean-American church in Champaign
- 40-item BIDR (Paulhus 1991)
 - IM (20 items)
 - SDE (20 items)

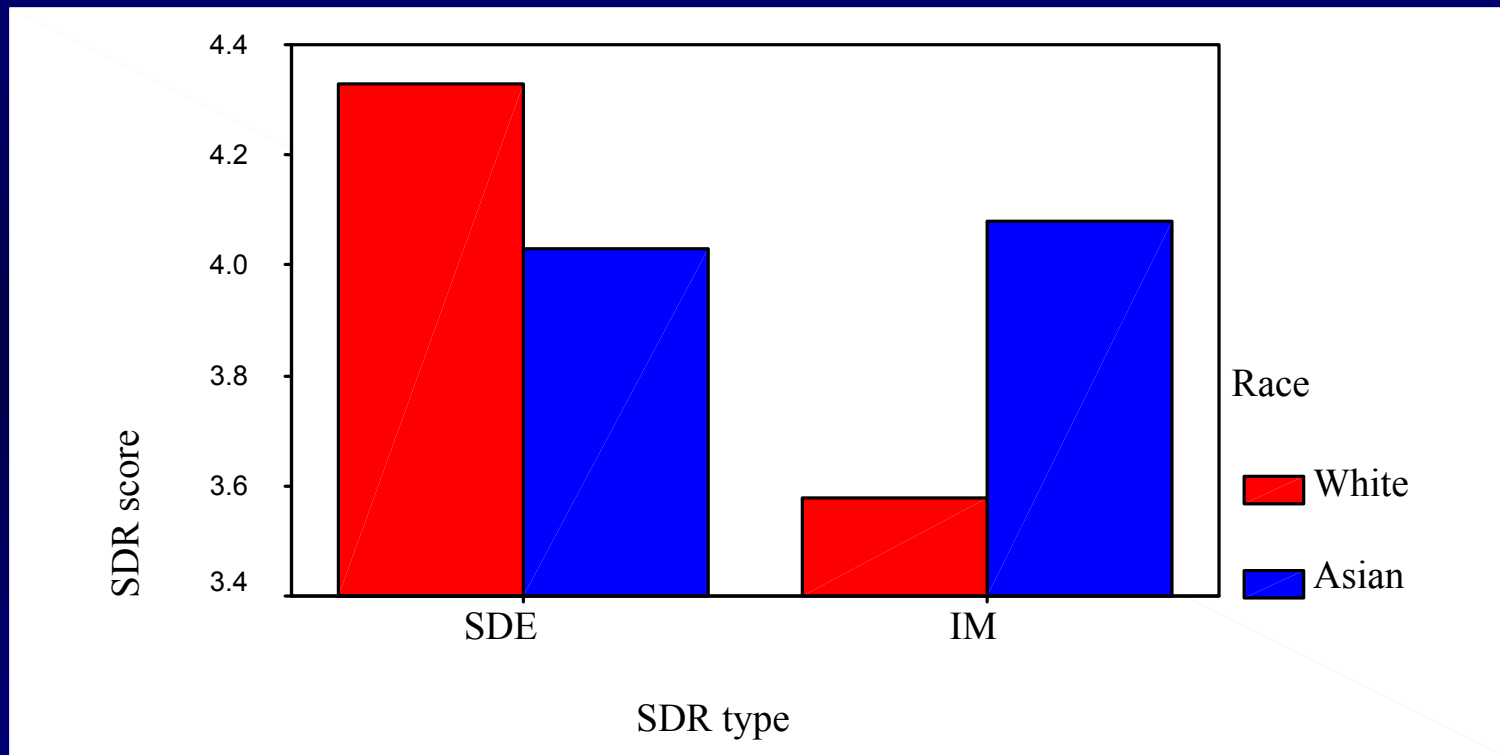


Results: Ethnicity





Results: Race





- Demographic proxies of culture (ethnicity or race) predict socially desirable responding
 - Asians engage in more Impression Management
 - Individualists/whites engage in more Self-Deceptive Enhancement



Horizontal/Vertical Distinction

- Vertical Orientation: Self in hierarchy, rank
- Horizontal Orientation: Self has same status as others
- VI, HI, VC, HC

(Triandis, 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998)



Horizontal/Vertical Distinction

- HI: self-reliance, self-direction, uniqueness
- VI: power, status, achievement, not concerned about self-direction
- HC: sociability, maintaining good relationships
- VC: fulfilling obligations, deference to higher status others, not sociability

(Nelson & Shavitt, 2002; Oishi, Schimmack, Diener, & Suh, 1998; Triandis, 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998)



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(Nelson & Shavitt, 2002; Oishi, Schimmack, Diener, & Suh, 1998; Triandis, 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998)



- Participants: 124 Chicago residents
- 16-item self-rating scale of HI, VI, HC, VC
 - 4 items each
 - Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk & Gelfand, 1995
- BIDR scale



- From HI subscale:
 - “I’d rather depend on myself than others”
- From VI subscale:
 - “It is important that I do my job better than others.”
- From HC subscale:
 - “I feel good when I cooperate with others”
- From VC subscale:
 - “It is important to me that I respect the decisions made by my groups.”



- Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk & Gelfand (1995) scale:
 - Acceptable Factor loadings (except 1 HC item)
 - α 's: HI: 0.70, VI: 0.72, HC: 0.68, VC: 0.67
- 4 regression equations:
 - $SDE = f(\text{Ind}, \text{Coll})$
 - $IM = f(\text{Ind}, \text{Coll})$
 - $SDE = f(\text{HI}, \text{VI}, \text{HC}, \text{VC})$
 - $IM = f(\text{HI}, \text{VI}, \text{HC}, \text{VC})$



Cultural Orientation	IM	SDE
Individualism	-.20	.03
Collectivism	.30**	-.05

** $p < 0.01$



Cultural Orientation	IM	SDE
Individualism	-.20	.03
Collectivism	.30**	-.05
Horizontal Individualism	.00	.28***
Vertical Individualism	-.14	-.15**
Horizontal Collectivism	.19*	.00
Vertical Collectivism	.12	-.04

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Results unchanged after including demographic variables in regression equations.



- Distinct motives link individualism and collectivism to socially desirable responding

HI → SDE (independence, self-reliance, self-direction, and uniqueness)

HC → IM (sociability, image protection, maintenance of good relationships)



HC and Impression Management

- Pathway linking HC → IM
 - Heightened willingness to answer dishonestly in order to save face and protect one's image
- Assessed propensity to answer deceptively to save face (Eysenck Lie scale)



HC and Impression Management

- *Participants*: 192 undergraduate students
- *Measures*: BIDR, Singelis et al., Eysenck Lie scale
- Eysenck Scale examples:
 - “Are all of your habits good and desirable ones?”
 - “Were you ever greedy by helping yourself to more than your fair share of anything?” (1=Yes, 2=No).



Cultural Orientation	IM	SDE
Individualism	-.09	.15**
Collectivism	.27**	-.01

** $p < 0.01$

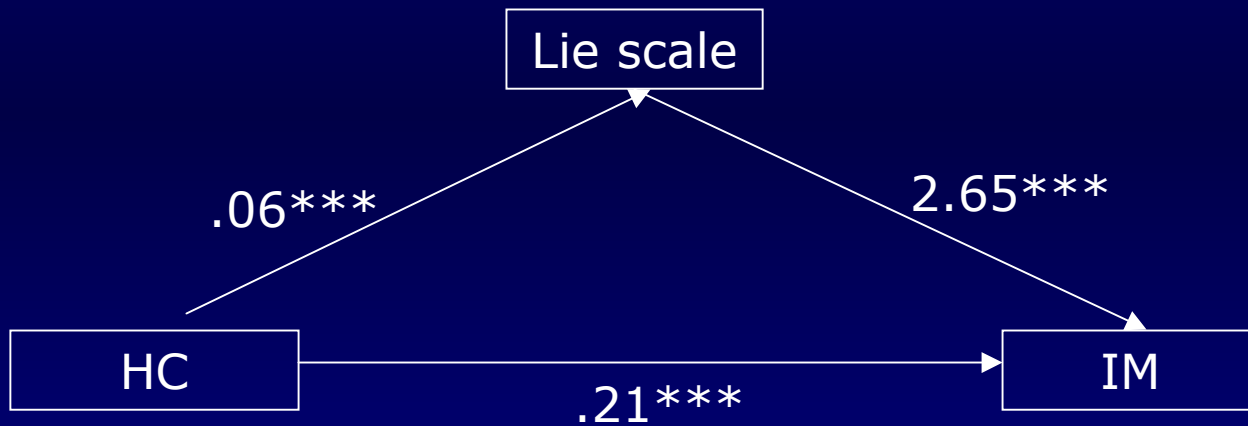


Cultural Orientation	IM	SDE
Individualism	-.09	.15**
Collectivism	.27**	-.01
Horizontal Individualism	.11	.18**
Vertical Individualism	-.09	.00
Horizontal Collectivism	.36***	-.03
Vertical Collectivism	-.07	.00

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$



Results: Mediation Analyses





HI and SDE

- Pathway linking HI → SDE
 - Desire to view self as competent to be successfully self-reliant
- Assessed propensity to hold positive beliefs about own skills/competence (Self-Competence scale)

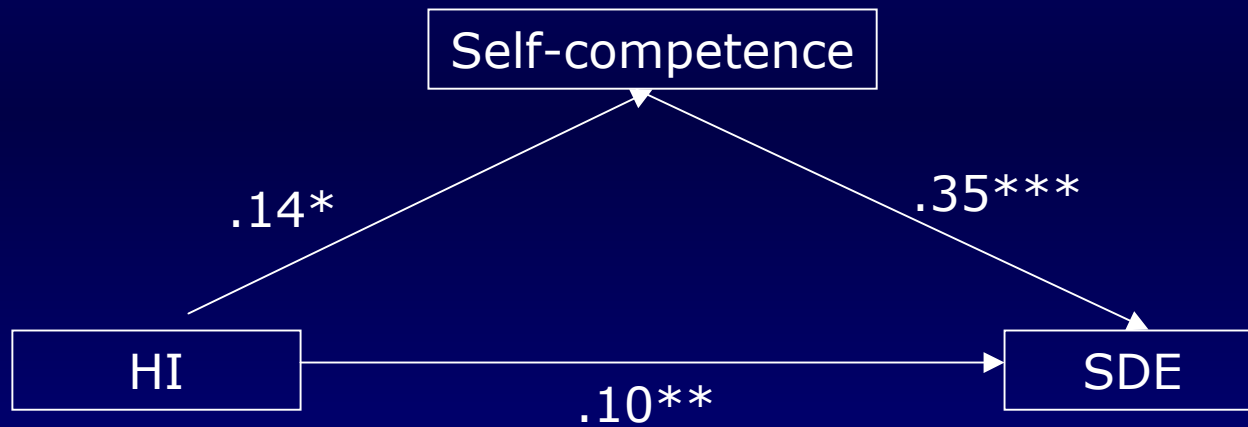
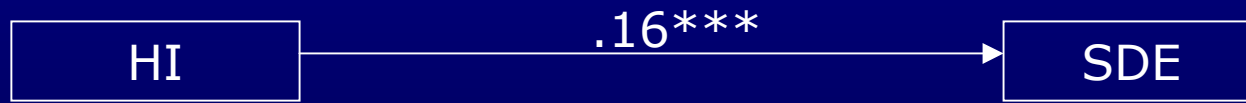


HI and SDE

- *Participants:* 175 undergraduate students
- *Measures:* BIDR, Singelis et al., 8-item self-competence scale (Tafarodi & Swann, 2001)
- Self-Competence Scale examples:
 - “I am highly effective at the things I do.”
 - “I wish I were more skillful in my activities.” (R)



Results: Mediation Analyses





- HC (not VC) predicts Impression Management
 - Mediated by tendency to dissemble.
 - Being oriented toward maintenance of sociable relations is associated with willingness to provide face-saving responses in order to manage social impressions.



- HI (not VI) predicts Self-Deceptive Enhancement
 - Mediated by high self-competence
 - Being oriented toward self-reliance and independence is associated with a tendency to believe in one's competence, in turn leading to response tendencies that maintain an inflated self-view.



Self-presentation in specific contexts

- Does cultural orientation affect responses to scenarios that elicit self-reliance versus image-protection goals?
- Are these effects mediated by tendency to engage in self-deceptive enhancement versus impression management?



- *Participants:* 76 undergraduate students
- BIDR, Singelis et al. measure of cultural orientation
- *Scenario Measure:*
 - Predicted future behavior or outcomes
 - Multiple scenarios depicting everyday situations
 - “Self-Reliance” or “Image-Protection” goals



Self-reliance scenario

- You are interviewing for an internship at a company called “XYZ.” Doing the job well would require self-reliance and independence on your part to set goals and to meet them. If you were offered the job, how confident would you be that you’d make the right decision about it?



Image-protection scenario

- You are interviewing for an internship at a company called “ABC.” The job would involve a lot of teamwork and mutual support. Doing the job well would require depending on a network of co-workers and on your ability to work collectively to set goals and to meet them. Assuming you got to know your team members reasonably well, how likely would you be to gossip about them with others at work?

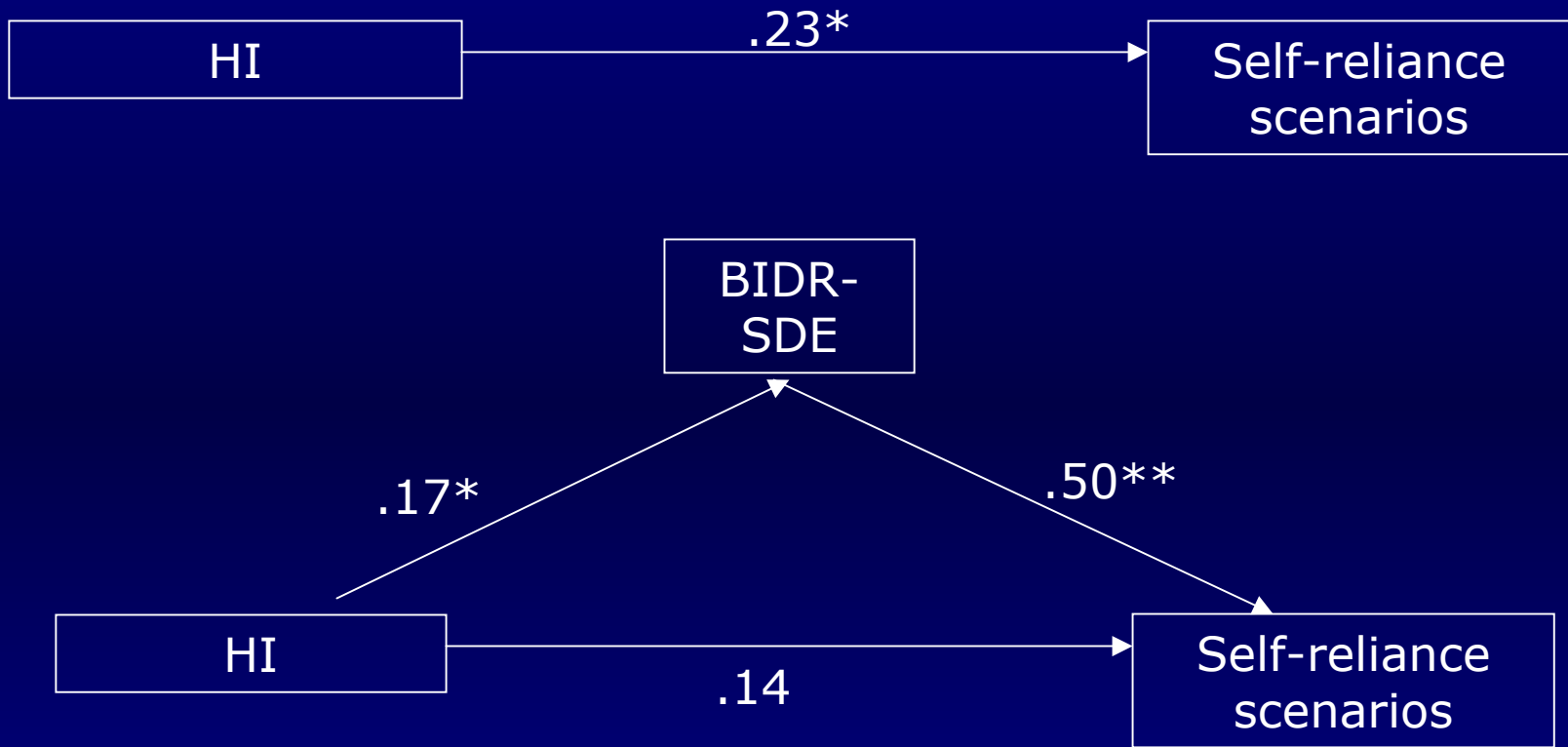


Results

- Factor analysis of scenarios revealed distinct factors for self-reliance (3 scenarios; $\alpha = 0.85$) and image protection (4 scenarios; $\alpha = 0.69$)
- Self-reliance scenario index
 - Related to Individualism but not Collectivism
 - Related to HI but not VI
- Image protection scenario index
 - Related to Collectivism but not Individualism
 - Related to HC but not VC

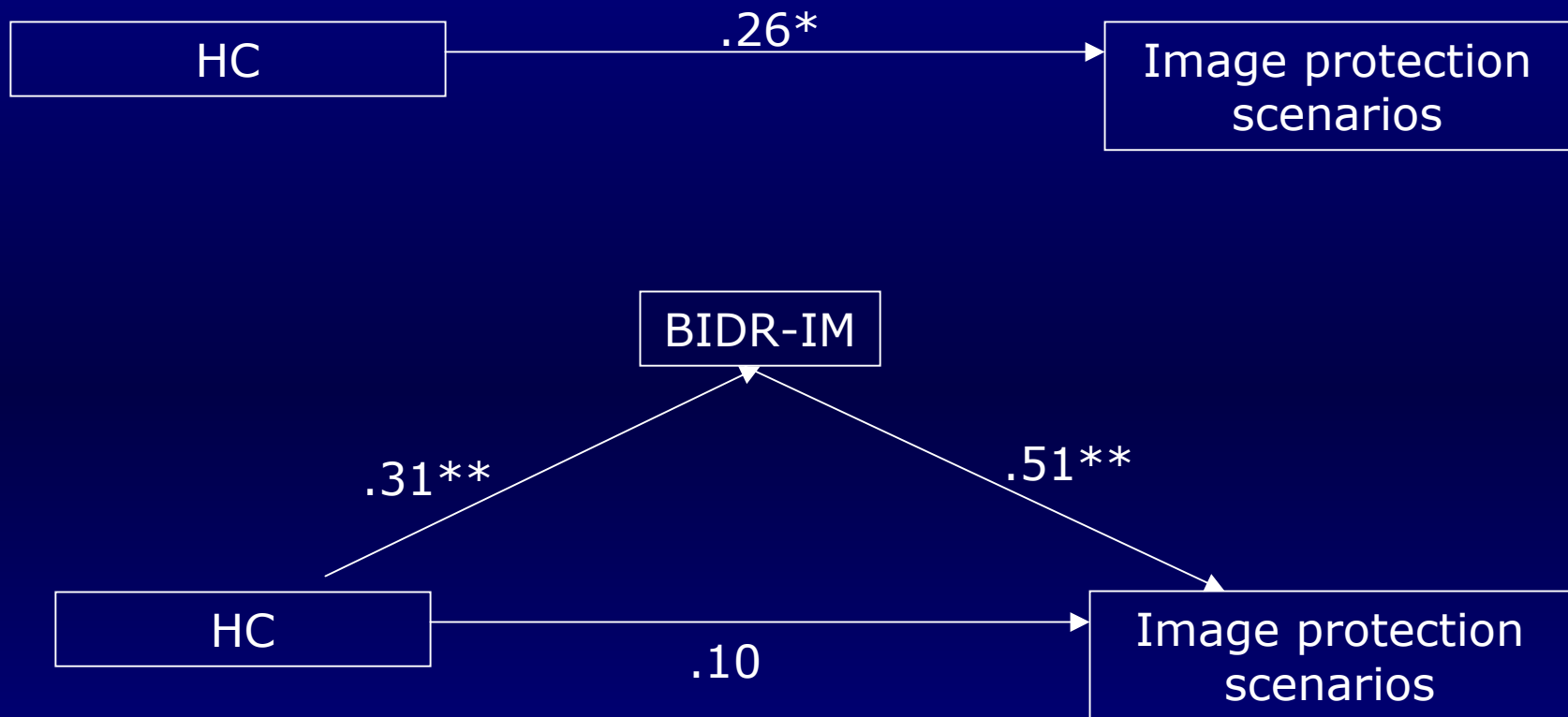


Results: Mediation Analyses





Results: Mediation Analyses





Conclusions

- Individualists and Collectivists have distinct self-presentational goals
- These goals predict specific types of Socially Desirable Responding



Conclusions

- Individualism → SDE
 - Reflects goals of self-reliance, independence (HI)
 - Belief in one's competence to be self-reliant
 - Tendency to respond in self-enhancing manner
- Collectivism → IM
 - Reflects goals of image protection & relationship maintenance (HC)
 - Willingness to dissemble to save face
 - Tendency to respond in image-protecting manner



Future Directions

- Investigate the “correction process” for social desirability across cultures
- Locus and nature of effect may be different for Collectivists vs. Individualists
- Automatic correction?
- Output editing?



Future Directions

- Examine relations cross-nationally
- Develop interventions useful for reducing SDR in survey contexts
- Broader nomological net: Motivational profiles linked to IND/COLL