Original Research

Same-Same, But Not: Comparing Aspects of Cultures in South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand

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Abstract
Oftentimes nations, societies, or communities are categorized based on cultural values, such as time orientation and social self-construal. Here, time orientation is represented by the dimensions of monochronism and polychronism; and social self-construal as individualism and collectivism. In some cases, it has been argued that individualism is complementary to the traits of monochronism, and collectivism is complementary to that of polychronism. Consequently, cultural communities have often been grouped as monochronic and individualistic (MONO + INDV), or polychronic and collectivistic (POLY + COLL), with little focus being allocated to unique cultural nuances. This paper represents cross-cultural philosophy, where cultural values are compared through the strategies of philosophical conceptual analysis and interpretive philosophical reflection. Specifically, this paper accentuates that focus should be allocated to cultural nuances of POLY + COLL cultures instead of grouping such cultures under one blanket conceptualization. Attention is allocated to three POLY + COLL cultures that are similar in some aspects but different in others. The cultures that receive such attention is to be found in South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. The purpose is thus threefold. First, it introduces the categories of cultural values; second, it presents three different POLY + COLL cultures; and lastly, the three seemingly similar POLY + COLL cultures are placed in comparison—based on themes identified in the discussion—to facilitate better differentiation. As a result, it is elucidated that attention must be allocated to cultural nuances when conducting cross-cultural studies as this is identified as a gap in the knowledge-base.

Keywords
collectivism, polychronism, social self-construal, time orientation, cultural values, cross-cultural

Introduction

Two prominent cultural values that categorize cultures are time orientation and social self-construal. The former delineates how a person or cultural group will subjectively view time (Moustafa et al., 2005) and the priority on the various timeframes of past, present, and future (Mello et al., 2013; Zimbardo & Boyd, 2015). Even though a person or cultural group may hold a combination of timeframes or orientations, it is more common that they will prominently hold one (either past, present, or future) As such, the investigation of time orientation provides a better understanding of how a cultural group uses time (Brislin & Kim, 2003). An example of how time usage will differ is the order in which the person undertakes tasks, for example, sequentially—the person will conclude one task before starting the following task; concurrently—the person will conduct various tasks in the same timeframe. In addition, the focus is on the task as a scheduled occurrence (clock-time), or the focus can be on the undertaking of tasks as an event with more flexible scheduled time allocated to the completion of the tasks (event-time).

As a cultural value, time orientation is a temporal logic. More specifically, a notable temporal orientation in time-related social norms, moral judgments, and daily practices (Mazmanian et al., 2015). As a result, time orientation is a fundamental mechanism that creates the basis of social undertaking, as time orientation provides the operational foundation and structure for a society’s character (Babalola & Alokan, 2013). A person’s time orientation is embedded in attitudes

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toward others, social orientation, and sense of belonging, which all influence patterns of behavior (Güell & Yopo, 2016).

A person makes sense of the self by referring to various timeframes: past, where memories anchor the sense-of-self; present, where the self is experiential; and future, where the projected and anticipated sense-of-self motivate present behavioral patterns. Consequently, the prevalent structure for the formulation of our self-construal is provided by time orientation (May, 2016). Here, self-construal refers to how (1) a person defines the self, (2) a person makes sense of the self, and (3) a person perceives relationality between others and the self (Cross et al., 2011; Han & Humphreys, 2016). Additionally, self-construal influences perceived being-in-the-world (i.e., a person’s supposed place in the social world). This sense-of-self is normative as it shapes the idea of expected social role fulfillment as well as which actions will be socially acceptable (Janse van Rensburg, 2017). The self as socially-orientated forms a cardinal part of a person’s sense-of-self (identity), and therefore, there exists an inseparability and reciprocal relationship between the self and the social self (Janse van Rensburg, 2017). On a cultural level, the concept self-construal (as a sense-of-self) is termed social self-construal.

The cultural value of time orientation (TO) is often presented in the dichotomous category of monochronism (MONO) versus polychronism (POLY). Similarly, the cultural value of social self-construal (SSC) is presented by the category of individualism (INDV) versus collectivism (COLL). Oftentimes, the cultures under investigation will be grouped as monochronic and individualistic (MONO + INDV), or as polychron and collectivistic (POLY + COLL).

A plethora of academic literature represents the categories of TO and SSC. More specific to the context of this paper, it must be noted that although polychronism (as a qualitative TO) and collectivism (as interdependent SSC) are thoroughly represented in academic literature, context-specific groupings of cultures that present as POLY + COLL are not.

Although various cultures can be identified as POLY + COLL, limited action is taken to differentiate better these seemingly similar cultures from each other. For this paper, TO categories of MONO versus POLY will be briefly introduced, and the SSC categories of INDV versus COLL. To differentiate better between POLY + COLL cultures that are seemingly the same, aspects of three unique cultures will be presented as found in South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. This presentation will be broadly based on the cultural values of TO and SSC of the POLY + COLL cultures. Thereafter, a brief comparison will be made using aspects of the three POLY + COLL cultures, viz. unit of measure; sense-of-self; needs of the group; presence; spontaneous versus demand sharing; harmonious relationships; status; as well as time orientation.

Noteworthy, the aforementioned is grounded in comparative philosophy (specifically, cross-cultural philosophy). I present and compare cultural values from three POLY + COLL cultures through the strategies of conceptual analysis and interpretive philosophical reflection.

**Categories of Cultural Values**

In monochronism (MONO), the person quantifies temporality. Here, temporality becomes industrious—divided into pieces (viz. seconds, minutes, hours, days, etc.), thus making time more manageable. In MONO, time is tangible and commodified; time can be wasted if not utilized optimally (Terblanché-Greeff et al., 2018). Optimally, there will be structured time usage, with the completion of activities or tasks being in succession (Hall, 1959; Nardon & Steers, 2009). The monochron’s approach to work, planning, and implementation will be focused but oftentimes impatient, linear, and single-minded (Nardon & Steers, 2009). As a result, value is placed on punctuality and the adherence to schedules (clock-time), and monochrons might have a future-orientated time perspective.

In a dichotomous manner, the person will approach time more qualitatively in polychronism (POLY; Terblanché-Greeff et al., 2018). This qualitative approach leads to the cognizance that time is “imbued with meaning, rather than being an abstract entity” (Adjaye, 2002, p. 218). In POLY, the person will often conduct multiple tasks concurrently, and these tasks are marked by high levels of group participation (Hall & Hall, 1987; Nardon & Steers, 2009). For the polychron, the utilization of time is less structured, and a patient, interactive, and non-linear approach will be taken to work, planning, and implementation (Nardon & Steers, 2009). Value is allocated to time usage that produces meaningful relationships (event-time), and the polychron might hold a past- and present time perspective.

The second categorical groupings to be discussed is individualism (INDV) versus collectivism (COLL). In the former, the main unit of measurement is the autonomous person (Terblanché-Greeff, 2016). INDV is person-centered, and to better individuate, a person has a responsibility to strive for non-relational autonomy (McKnightly, 2015; Morrison, 2010; Nardon & Steers, 2009; Terblanché-Greeff, 2019). The motivation for actions and behavior are based on personal goals and needs (Medina et al., 2019). Here, personal goals and needs receive priority and are attained through individual performance, competition, as well as the utilization of traits like self-sufficiency and independence (McKnightly, 2015; Morrison, 2010; Triandis et al., 1988). Attention is allocated to the task at hand, with less focus on the various persons involved in the task (Triandis et al., 1988). In the quest for personal freedom, the individual’s rights will take priority over social harmony (Nardon & Steers, 2009). Lastly, the individualist can freely enter or exit groups (Moustafa et al., 2005), and the person can “exist outside a community without loss of identity” (Terblanché-Greeff, 2019, p.100).
Conversely, COLL is group-centered; attention is allocated to group membership and identity based on relatedness (Nardon & Steers, 2009). The motivation for behavior is founded on the group’s betterment and growth. Here, attributes such as interdependence, duty to the group, sharing, and cooperation are highly valued (McKnightly, 2015; Milojevic, 2005; Morrison, 2010). As a result, the group’s roles and obligations are oftentimes shared to achieve collective goals (McKnightly, 2015). The collectivist will focus on the other individuals and relationships involved in the task, with less focus allocated to the task or activity at hand (Triandis et al., 1988). Here, priority is allocated to the preservation of social harmony over the human rights of the individual (Matondo, 2012; Nardon & Steers, 2009). In COLL, a person identifies with various cohesive groups (Moustafa et al., 2005), and social self-construal and identity are influenced when the collectivist exits a group (Nardon & Steers, 2009).

Often in cross-cultural research, MONO versus POLY is considered one of the facets of the social self-construal cultural value of INDV versus COLL (Maleki & de Jong, 2014). For example, in polychronic cultures, the person will conduct tasks concurrently, and attention is allocated to the creation as well as maintenance of quality interpersonal relationships. This primary focus on relationality is also a pertinent aspect found in collectivistic cultures, which might infer that polychronic cultures tend to be collectivistic (Adair et al., 2009; Fulmer et al., 2014; Terblanché-Greeff et al., 2018). Therefore, polychronic cultures are often described as collectivistic, and these cultures are habitually grouped as POLY + COLL.

**Unique POLY + COLL Cultures**

By placing groups (e.g., nations) in box-shaped categories, the researcher ignores the important intra-societal cultural diversity that might manifest (Minkov et al., 2017). In doing so, it becomes easier for the researcher to gloss over the qualitative nuances and subtle differences of cultures when pigeonholing groups into seemingly dichotical categories of cultural values (Sinha & Tripathi, 1994). The cultural values of groups are often inattentively clustered as MONO + INDV and POLY + COLL based on assumptions. Here, unique manifestations of the cultural value groupings often do not receive adequate attention or are ignored. As examples of culturally unique POLY + COLL presentations, three cultures will be discussed based on their social self-construal and time orientation, viz. Afro-polychronism is prevalent in South Africa, the Aborigines culture in Australia, and the Māori culture in New Zealand.

**Afro-Polychronism in South Africa**

South Africa (also known as the Rainbow Nation) is a melting pot of cultures. A variety of African cultural groups might be described as POLY + COLL, and an example would be the Tswana culture prevalent in the North West province, South Africa. Research conducted in Setswana communities (exhibiting Tswana culture) led to the formulation of the neologism, Afro-polychronism (cf. Terblanché-Greeff, 2016, 2018). Afro-polychronism (as an amalgamated cultural value) is not prevalent in only one specific African culture and might apply to more cultures in South Africa. Nonetheless, Afro-polychronism does describe a phenomenon (based on TO and SSC) found in the aforementioned Tswana culture.

More specifically, Afro-polychronism encapsulates context-specific social self-construal and time orientation as a way to differentiate uniquely African cultural values from other POLY + COLL cultures (Terblanché-Greeff et al., 2018). The motivation for the neologism stems from the fact that polychronism (as a time orientation category) and collectivism (as a social self-construal category) only partially describe the African time orientation and ignore the more nuanced collectivistic value of ubuntu (cf. Metz, 2011; Mokgoro, 1998; Mphahlele, 2002; Radebe & Phooko, 2017; Thsoose, 2009).

Afro-polychronism is collectivistic as illustrated by the popular maxim descriptive of ubuntu: “A person is a Person through others.” To better explain the maxim, the term person refers to the individual, whereas Person refers to the personhood an individual should strive for through the process of interacting with others (viz. humans, non-humans, and nature) in order to become fully human (Terblanché-Greeff, 2019). Ubuntu cannot be attained in isolation, and harmonious relationships with others are of cardinal importance. Supportively, ubuntu “advocates a profound sense of interdependence and emphasizes [sic] that our true human potential [i.e., of becoming a Person] can only be realized in partnership with others” (Ngcoya, 2009, p. 1).

**Ubuntu** is a form of moderate collectivism as the individual does not lose their own identity based on group membership (Metz, 2011, 2016, 2019). Instead, there is a form of relational autonomy whereby the interaction with others will bring about personal growth.

According to Thaddeus Metz (2011, 2016, 2019), ubuntu cultural value based on two forms of harmonious interaction: (1) identity, which refers to a shared way of life which is achieved through coordination and a sense of belonging; and (2) solidarity, which refers to caring for others and their quality of life through the offering of aid and exhibiting sympathetic altruism. Although identity and solidarity are distinct concepts, harmonious relationships with others must be based on both (Metz, 2011).

Regarding the collectivistic traits of ubuntu, the person identifies as “I in We”; as being a part of and related to a group. Here, belonging creates a sense of identity when the collectivists perceive themselves as inextricably related to others (Beets, 2012; Mnayaka & Motlhabi, 2005). Through interaction with others, the individual grows and brings
personal fulfilment to their identity (Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005; Mokgoro, 1998; Shutte, 2001). Therefore, social status and identity are related to the individual’s sense of duty to others (Beets, 2012; Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005).

Additionally, solidarity is developed when members of a group combine their efforts in service of said group (Poovan et al., 2006). Here, individuals are inextricably linked to one another through respect and an ethic of care (Schreiber & Tomm-Bonde, 2015). Through ubuntu, there is an expression of commitment to the group’s good-will, paired with a need for a life that is unavoidably bound up in the group (Nkondo, 2007). Ubuntu is “anti-egoistic, as it discourages people from seeking their own good without regard for, or to the detriment of, other persons and the community” (Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005, p. 224).

Afro-polychronism is decidedly relational, and this focus on relationships influences time usage and vice versa. African time orientation is uniquely qualitative-collectivistic as importance is allocated to an event based on the resulting relationships instead of focusing on schedules or timed appointments. The value allocated to events is based on the relationality of collectivistic ubuntu, where quality relationships that can enrich social bonds are cardinal. More specifically, the social self-construal (i.e., collectivism in ubuntu) and time orientation (i.e., African polychronicity) found in Afro-polychronism are intertwined due to the importance of the collective group and how temporality is used to build quality social relationships.

Ubuntu is marked by moderate collectivism, where the focus is allocated to group participation and the development and facilitation of qualitative and meaningful relationships between individuals. Therefore, punctuality, clock-time, and adherence to schedules are of less importance, as prevalent in polychronism. Instead, the focus is on increasing the levels of social capital as it will create a sense of belonging, which can contribute to collectivism.

Furthermore, the time orientation found in Afro-polychronism is represented by a unified timeframe constituted by the past and present, with limited focus being allocated to the future. Here, the view of the future is near-sighted as it can only be constituted by events 6 to 24 months from the present (cf. Dissel, 2007). Temporality is qualitative, and time is valued based on shared experiences in the unified timeframe of past and present. Past experiences provide wisdom in the present, and shared past experiences can contribute to a sense of belonging cardinal in collectivism.

To recapitulate, Afro-polychronism is an amalgamated concept, where ubuntu (and the themes of harmony, identity, and solidarity) are inseparable from qualitative polychronic African time. Afro-polychronism connotes qualitative time that is, by nature, social. Here, event-time is utilized, tasks are conducted concurrently, and the time perspective is delineated by a unified timeframe (past-present). Time is used in such a manner as to develop and grow harmonious relationships, as prevalent in ubuntu. This focus on being-with-others is indicative of the moderate collectivistic nature of Afropolychronism, where the unit of measure is the in-group.

### Australian Aboriginals Culture

There are roughly 1,000 remote Aboriginal communities in Australia, and these indigenous communities are characterized by diverse geographic locations and lifestyles (Bulloch & Fogarty, 2016). Nonetheless, for this paper, reference will be made to the broader Australian Aboriginal culture as presented in academic literature.

Noteworthy, limited sources are available on the cultural values (of time orientation and social self-construal) of the Australian Aboriginals. Unless indicated otherwise in this section, information on this culture is based on the work of Heil and Macdonald (2008) titled “Tomorrow comes when tomorrow comes”: Managing Aboriginal health within an ontology of life-as-contingent. Additionally, all other references in this section support the aforementioned text.

In Aboriginal culture, the self is perceived as social, that is, the self is developed by active contact and socializing with significant others. Aboriginals are collectivistic, and the kin-oriented world into which a person is born will influence all interaction. Nonetheless, the sense-of-self is still predominantly autonomous. However, this kind of autonomy is constituted by relatedness as opposed to separateness as per individualism. Heil and Macdonald (2008, p. 304) explain that:

> [t]he implication of this ontological perspective is, first, that being in relationship is the primary measure of ‘being well’, whether understood as personal (physical/mental) or social well-being. . . The measure of one’s life is counted in terms of the strength of social networks. . . and the resources of knowledge and opportunity these open up. It is thus social relatedness in which time and other resources are primarily invested.

For these social relationships to exist, the person must be physically present and recognized by others as being present, that is, the individual must “be there” as part of the social “body.” Only if the person is present can social demands be met through what is referred to as demand sharing, which is the obligation to share material possession with significant others when they demand it (cf. Peterson, 1993). Demand sharing highlights the importance and immediacy of the social sphere through which the self is constituted (Peterson, 2013).

The individual will rarely spontaneously offer to share material possessions; however, based on kin-relatedness, the other may make demands should the need arise. Through demand sharing, the person creates social credit with others (Peterson, 2013). On the other hand, refusal to meet the demands of the kin-other can severely damage or even sever social relationships (Peterson, 1993, 2013). Lack of sharing might indicate a lack of respect for the relationship, and
being greedy and non-social, which creates the risk of being socially isolated (Peterson, 2013).

Aborigines hold an implicit awareness that life is contingent; therefore, this ontology of life-as-contingent influences time usage and time orientation (Taylor et al., 2017). Here, a level of flexibility is required to take advantage of opportunities as they present and meet social demands as they arise unexpectedly during the day (Janca & Bullen, 2003). The self-as-social uses time strategically and acknowledges that life-as-contingent is the social norm that influences behavior and that the "demands of sociality [that are] critical to the constitution of the self have to be negotiated as they present themselves" (Heil & Macdonald, 2008, p. 315).

Life-as-contingent requires the person to be continuously responsive—representing a constant level of anticipation. However, life is not perceived as unstable, unordered, or chaotic; instead, contingencies are always present, and the person must be able to re-prioritize as needed. The ever-present level of contingency means that time is perceived as a-linear and dynamic.

As time usage is flexible, the focus is allocated to event-time and not necessarily to clock-time where tasks and events are structured and planned for (Taylor et al., 2017). The Aborigines (as a social self) also hold a strong present time perspective, as they work with contingencies in the here and now instead of against contingencies, that is, the present is seen as precarious (Janca & Bullen, 2003). More specifically, the past and present timeframes are considered intertwined and labeled as "being the time" (Janca & Bullen, 2003). Here, the future is of less importance (Janca & Bullen, 2003).

Limited focus on the future does not mean that the Aborigines totally ignore the future and therefore do not plan for future events; however, plans will have to change based on arising contingencies. The aforementioned is not seen as undisciplined behavior or lack of time management skills. Time is seen as a "resource through which to negotiate and maximize the socialities [sic] out of which the continuing time and not necessarily to clock-time where tasks and events will derive" (Heil & Macdonald, 2008, p. 318).

It becomes apparent that the Australian Aborigines are uniquely POLY + COLL. The self-as-social develops through interaction where the person is physically present. This collectivism requires that demand sharing be adhered to, making life characteristically contingent. Therefore, time usage is more flexible to use opportunities as it arises to build social credit with kin-other. Here, the focus is on the precarious present timeframe.

**Māori Culture in New Zealand**

New Zealand is considered bi-cultural. Here, the two dominant cultures are Pākehā (European New Zealanders) and Māori (indigenous natives). The Māori culture is uniquely POLY + COLL as sociocentricity—the subsequent self-construal—and a unique past-present perspective interlink with time orientation (Lo & Houkamau, 2012). Sociocentricity (cf. Love et al., 2004) is similar to the commonly used concept of collectivism. Here, the self is defined based on the important relationships a person will hold with their whānau (i.e., extended family based on genealogy) and relatedness will influence the sense-of-self (Berryman et al., 2017; Haar et al., 2012; Houkamau, 2010; Houkamau & Sibley, 2010). As part of sociocentricity as collectivism, interdependence is emphasized, and harmonious relationships are crucial; subsequently, behavioral norms are determined by whānau (Elkington, 2017; Houkamau & Sibley 2010; Lo & Houkamau, 2012). Priority is allocated to collective needs and goals, which indicates strong collectivism amongst the Māori people (Haar et al., 2012; Houkamau & Sibley 2010; Lo & Houkamau, 2012).

Another important concept pertaining to sociocentrism is whānaungatanga (i.e., belonging, support, and sustenance based on familial connections), which is considered one of the most pertinent Māori cultural values (Gagné, 2013; Le Grice et al., 2017; Lo & Houkamau, 2012; Ritchie, 1992). Whānaungatanga—as the attainment and maintenance of relationships—is the process through which individuals collectively socialize and engage in enhancing relationships (Edwards, 2009; O’Carroll, 2013). More specifically, whānaungatanga refers to various aspects, such as values, intentions, processes, and protocols that influence relatedness between Māori whānau (Lo & Houkamau, 2012; Ritchie, 1992).

Three concepts relevant to whānau and the subsequent whānaungatanga are aroha, manaakitanga, and mana. Aroha is defined as unconditional, altruistic love, as well as compassion, generosity, and kindness (Gagné, 2013; O’Carroll, 2013). Supportively, aroha is the “generosity of spirit which puts others before self, and its refusal to impose limits or conditions” (Metge, 2014, p. 80). Exhibiting aroha toward others is essential for whānau well-being and whānaungatanga (Elkington, 2017; Lo & Houkamau, 2012; O’Carroll, 2013). More specifically, it is a friendly manner of interacting and communicating with others, and without aroha, the relationships will not endure (O’Carroll, 2013).

Whānau also provides manaakitanga, which means “befriending holistically and demonstrating extreme kindness with the utmost respect” (Gagné, 2013, p. 152). Supportively, manaakitanga is a cultural obligation and commands the expression of holistic caring and sharing (Berryman et al., 2017). More specifically, manaakitanga alludes to the fostering and nurturing of relationships by treating others (living, dead, and non-human) with respect and care (Brannelly et al., 2013; Mead, 2003). Without manaakitanga, relationships will weaken and suffer (O’Carroll, 2013).

Manaakitanga—as a practice—is linked to the mana (status) of the whānau (extended family); here, manaakitanga serves to establish relationships, and demarcate boundaries between individuals and the group (Gagné, 2013). Therefore, manaakitanga can be used to create feelings of exclusion from the whānau (Gagné, 2013).
Mana refers to integrity and social standing—a status or prestige earned by maintaining positive relationships based on mutual respect with other individuals (Barlow, 1991, as cited in Lo & Houkamau, 2012). Additionally, mana can be acquired through direct contact with the supernatural, inheritance from ancestors, and through human achievement (Gagné, 2013). Mana is reflective of the individual’s perseverance to uphold whānaungatanga (Lo & Houkamau, 2012). Mana as status can be attributed to the individual and the group, as every strand of mana will affect the mana of the larger group or whānau-manā is indivisible and unitary (Gagné, 2013).

In Māori culture, there is no clear differentiation between the integrity (mana), growth, and well-being of the individual and that of the whānau (extended family; Lo & Houkamau, 2012). Consequently, having compassion (aroha) and caring for others (manaakitanga) are considered efficient ways to use time, such that temporality is woven into the socio-cultural fabric (Lo & Houkamau, 2012).

Sociocentricity—as collectivism—calls for the maintenance of quality relationships, which makes the use of event-time more practical (Lo & Houkamau, 2012). Additionally, sociocentricity requires “interpreting sequences of events in terms of how they influence social relationships, and negotiating how long events should take with another party (as opposed to more individualist, clock-driven agenda)” (Lo & Houkamau, 2012, p. 112). Time usage is flexible with less focus on punctuality, as addressing the needs of others are essential in social-, cultural-, and situational contexts to maintain healthy relationships with others (Durie, 2002; Lo & Houkamau, 2012).

The Māori holds an interesting time perspective, whereby the past and present are intertwined; here, the past is not considered a precursor to the present (Lo & Houkamau, 2012). The person uses past events and relationships as a reference for present behavior and judgments (Lo & Houkamau, 2012). Great importance is allocated to the past as shared history and memories create a sense of belonging, which is vital for whānau and whānaungatanga (Lo & Houkamau, 2012).

From the preceding, it is apparent that the Māori culture is uniquely POLY+COLL. Sociocentricity (as collectivism) is characteristic of this culture and greatly influences behavior through whānau and whānaungatanga. Harmonious relationships are of utmost importance. Furthermore, event-time and elastic punctuality are the preferred ways to utilize time. The past is used as reference for the present, and these two timeframes are intertwined.

In this section, I discussed three cultures that are all categorized (or pigeon-holed) as POLY+COLL. However, these cultures can be differentiated based on unique aspects of the cultural values of time orientation and social self-construal. The prevalence of these unique cultural values highlights the need to investigate such presentations further and to elucidate more nuanced cultural values.

Comparing the POLY+COLL Cultures

Although all three presented cultures can be categorized as POLY+COLL, it is useful to focus on some unique cultural nuances. It is not surprising that some similarities will present under the guise of different labels, and it will be of value to investigate the nuanced similarities and differences that can be explicated to ultimately differentiate these POLY+COLL. Based on the preceding discussion, attention will be allocated to the following themes: unit of measure, sense-of-self, needs of the group, presence, spontaneous versus demand sharing, harmonious relationships, status, and time orientation.

Unit of Measure

Although all three discussed cultures are collectivistically orientated, there are some unique differences to consider. The Aborigines are highly kin-orientated. The group into which the individual is born into will influence all interaction. The same can be said for the Māori where the in-group consist of the whānau (i.e., extended family based on genealogy). The aforementioned might indicate extreme collectivism as the individual will be born into the in-group. In contrast, Afro-polychronism is only moderately collectivistic, and the in-group can include anyone; the focus is not predominantly on familial relations but on qualitative harmonious relationships in general. As such, the unit of measure is the in-group, which can be constituted by various individuals—compared to the other two cultures—where the unit of measure is kin-group orientated.

Sense-of-Self

All three cultures have a sense-of-self based on social relationality. For the Aborigines, the self is developed by active social contact with significant others. For the Māori, the self is developed based on kin-relatedness and their whānau. In Afro-polychronism, the self is developed by harmonious relationships that can be achieved through interactions that are marked by identity and solidarity.

In both the Aborigines culture and Afro-polychronism, the sense-of-self is predominately autonomous based on relatedness. The aforementioned is illustrated by the idea that in Afro-polychronism, “the person does not lose individual identity [by being part of the group]; instead, [identity] is exemplified by communion. Through the interaction with unique others, a person can subjectively grow . . .” (Terblanché-Greeff, 2019, p. 98). In the Māori culture, the sense-of-self is not based on relational autonomy but on interdependence and relatedness as described through the practice of whānaungatanga. Here, the mana (social status based on integrity) of the person and the whānau will also influence the individual’s sense-of-self.
**Needs of the Group**

In the Māori culture, the needs of the group will take precedence over the needs or goals of the individual (as per *manaakitanga*). Similarly, in the Aborigines culture, the demands from others might take precedence over personal needs, based on the concept of demand sharing. The aforementioned is indicative of high levels of collectivism. As Afro-polychronism is a form of moderate collectivism, the individual’s needs are considered in relation to the group’s needs and goals.

**Presence**

In Aboriginal culture, the self develops through active social interaction. The person has to be physically present and recognized as being present by others. This differs from Afro-polychronism, where the person does not have to be physically present for the self to develop. Instead, the self develops when the individual is part of the in-group, regardless of the person’s level of presence in the group. Interestingly, the in-group can be constituted by present individuals as well as predecessors and successors.

**Spontaneous Versus Demand Sharing**

This physical need to be present is further highlighted by the concept of demand sharing as prevalent in the Aborigines culture. Here, a person is often requested to share resources should the demand be posed by others. This on-demand sharing increases social capital and builds quality relationships. However, social isolation might occur should a person refrain from sharing on demand.

In Afro-polychronism, there might exhibit some levels of demand sharing, but in general, the group will live in solidarity, where the members care about the quality of life of others. As such, sharing might be spontaneous and is not dependent on demand from the recipient. The refusal to live in solidarity can influence the harmony of the relationship. Furthermore, lack of solidarity will indicate a lack of harmonious relationships or communion; this will, in turn, influence the person becoming a Person in the process of attaining *ubuntu*.

Similarly, the Māori exhibit spontaneous sharing through *manaakitanga* “as the act of providing hospitality and [it] encompasses values such as generosity and kindness, and responsibility to look after people” (Brannelly et al., 2013, p. 413). Through hospitality and consequential generosity, the practice of *manaakitanga* has the potential to transform and elevate the *mana* (integrity or status) of all involved (Durie, 2001; Spiller et al., 2011).

**Harmonious Relationships**

The focus on compassion is prominent in Afro-polychronism and the Māori culture. Here, compassion entails the expression of generosity out of concern for others, which is marked by the willingness to sacrifice self-interest to help others (Muchiri, 2011). In Afro-polychronism, compassion is exhibited as it pertains to solidarity which refers to the caring of others and their quality of life. Solidarity is important for the functioning of the group. In the Māori culture, compassion is exhibited through the value of *aroha*, which refers to a sense of selflessness where the other is always put before the self, as well as unconditional, altruistic love. Here, the *whānau* provides *aroha* and compassion is important for the wellbeing of the extended family. In both cases, the show of compassion will lead to harmonious relationships prominent in these two POLY + COLL cultures.

**Status**

In the Māori culture, *mana* (as integrity and social standing) is the prestige or status earned by engaging and maintaining qualitative relationships with others based on mutual respect. To some degree, this is similar to the attainment of *ubuntu* (as social status based on Personhood). Here, attaining *ubuntu* reflects the individual’s perseverance to uphold harmonious relationships through identity and solidarity. It must be noted that *mana* can also be attained through inheritance and direct contact with the supernatural, which is not the case for *ubuntu*—which can only be obtained through interactions with others.

**Time Orientation**

All three cultures are decidedly polychronic. However, a unique cultural manifestation is the Aborigines idea that describes life-as-contingent. Here, time is used flexibly, as it is acknowledged that unexpected social demands might arise during the day. This is on par with polychronism, whereby time usage is flexible to incorporate and address social demands successfully. As life is contingent in Aboriginal culture, it comes as no surprise that the main time perspective will be on the present—*here* and *now*. The past and the present are considered intertwined, with no clear demarcation between the timeframes. The future is not ignored, but it is acknowledged that plans might have to change as contingencies arise. This flexible manner of time usage is not perceived as mismanagement, as it is crucial to address social demands as they present.

Time usage in Afro-polychronism is also flexible, as the person will meet social obligations as it arises during the day. This aspect of Afro-polychronism is decidedly polychronic, where focus is placed on building and maintaining qualitative harmonious relationships. In Afro-polychronism, life can also be perceived as being contingent. The aforementioned is illustrated by the maxim, “Westerners have a watch, Africans have time.” Here, time can be made and used as the person sees fit, and the individual is not a slave to time (Mbriti, 1969).

In Afro-polychronism, the focus is on the past and the present as a unified timeframe. An Afro-polychron sees the far future as unpredictable and as less important. Afro-polychrons
can plan for the future (up to 24 months from the present), but this idea of the future is near-sighted. Lack of punctuality is not seen as undisciplined time usage; instead, it is understood that time must be utilized in such a manner as to develop qualitative harmonious relationships.

For the Māori, time is also used flexibly. The use of event-time is most appropriate when practicing manaakitanga (sharing and caring) as part of whānaungatanga, where the focus is on the development and maintenance of quality relationships. Much like the Aborigines culture and Afro-polychronism, the Māori holds a time perspective whereby the past and present are intertwined. Here, the past is used as reference for present judgments and behavior. When individuals have a shared past, a sense of belonging is created, which is important for whānau (the extended family) and whānaungatanga (the building and maintenance of relationships).

**Conclusion**

In cross-cultural studies, such as cross-cultural philosophy, cultures are often differentiated based on cultural values, such as time orientation and social self-construal. Additionally, these cultures might be categorized based on the cultural value groupings as MONO + INDV or POLY + COLL. Examples of the latter cultures are Afro-polychronism, the Australian Aborigines culture, and the Māori culture. However, these cultures are pigeon-holed based on generic characteristics and are assumed to be very similar, if not the same. Although all three cultures have some traits in common, it is argued that it is of value to investigate unique cultural nuances so that POLY + COLL cultures can be differentiated instead of pigeon-holed.

With this in mind, the three cultures were described based on their TO and SSC. Thereafter similarities and differences were presented to elucidate better that these cultures might be alike in some aspects but for different reasons. Concepts like ubuntu, demand sharing, life-as-contingent, whānau, whānaungatanga, aroha, manaakitanga, and mana were introduced to illustrate cultural nuances.

From the descriptions of the three POLY + COLL cultures, eight themes emerged and were used to make comparisons: unit of measure, sense-of-self, needs of the group, presence, spontaneous versus demand sharing, harmonious relationships, status, and time orientation. Here, it becomes clear that these cultures might, on face value, seem similar, but various nuanced differences are present. With this paper, I hope to elucidate the gap in the knowledge-base and the need to investigate further cultures based on unique traits instead of grouping cultures together under seemingly universal labels such as POLY + COLL.

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