Low mobility sustains hierarchy? An investigation of relational mobility and hierarchy-related beliefs

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In general, research classifies 3 types of mobility.
Relational
The ease to which an individual can move in and out of relationships.
(e.g., Schug et al. 2009; 2010)

Job
The ease to which an individual can move in and out of jobs.
(Chen et al., 2009)

Residential
The ease to which an individual can move in and out of residential addresses.
(e.g., Oishi et al. 2007)
Existing Literature

- **Rewarding/Punishing:** Low mobility individuals reward & punish others equally but high mobility individuals reward more than they punish (Wang & Leung, 2010).

- **Self-disclosure behavior:** High mobility individuals tend to engage more in self-disclosure with close others than low mobility individuals (Schug et al., 2010).

- **Changing the self:** Low mobility individuals are more motivated to change their personality to fit with the expected job and environment (Chen et al., 2009).

- **Well-being:** High residential mobility introverted kids tend to have lower well-being later in adult life. Extroverts do not show this pattern (Oishi & Schimmack, 2010).
Contribution

Extending mobility studies into group related beliefs of individuals to potentially understand group-level outcomes:

- Hierarchy & Power Relations
- Group collectivism

Mobility

- Perceived Mobility of the self
- Focusing on Relational Mobility
Hypothesis

Overall, we theorize:

There is a negative relationship between Hierarchy & Mobility.
  • Hierarchy help stabilize and maintain groups
  • Cost of group instability is higher for low mobility individuals

** These are assumptions we held for this project. Currently, we are conducting studies to test these assumptions.

Hypothesis Tested:
Low Mobility will be related to higher endorsement of and greater sensitivity to hierarchy, and higher endorsement of collectivistic beliefs.
Indirect Evidence for Hypothesis

1. Collectivism + Hierarchy

Overall, there is a positive relationship between Collectivism and Hierarchy.

Hofstede (2001), Schwartz (1994), and Gouveia and Ross (2000)

2. Collectivism + Mobility

Low mobility communities tend to show more collectivistic behaviors (e.g., pro-community actions towards in-group members, loyalty to home baseball team).

Oishi & Colleagues (2007)
Overview of studies

Diverse Methodologies to test the hypothesis:

- Study 1A & B: Correlational Studies using measurement scales
- Study 2: Reaction Time study; Embodiment perspective
- Study 3: Scenario-based study
We recruited 56 undergraduate students (34 females; \( M \) age = 21.41, \( SD = 1.68 \))

- **Relational Mobility Scale** (Yuki et al., 2007)
  - “There are few opportunities for me to form new relationships.” (\( \alpha = .841 \))

- **Hierarchy Scale** (CPQ: Maznevski et al., 2002)
  - “Organizations work best with clear and formal hierarchy.” (\( \alpha = .804 \))

- **Interpersonal Hierarchy Expectation Scale** (Mast, 2005)
  - “If people work together on a task, one person is always taking over the lead.” (\( \alpha = .791 \))
Study 1A | Methods & Measures

- Horizontal-Vertical Collectivism-Individualism scale [HV-CI] (Singelis et al., 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998)
  - **Horizontal-Collectivism [HC]:** “If a co-worker gets a prize, I would feel proud.” (α = .864)
  - **Horizontal-Individualism [HI]:** “What happens to me is my own doing.” (α = .756)
  - **Vertical-Collectivism [VC]:** “I usually sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group.” (α = .837)
  - **Vertical-Individualism [VI]:** “It is important that I do my job better than others.” (α = .872)
Study 1A | Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vertical-Collectivism</th>
<th>Vertical-Individualism</th>
<th>Horizontal-Collectivism</th>
<th>Horizontal-Individualism</th>
<th>Horizontal (Overall)</th>
<th>Vertical (Overall)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relational Mobility</td>
<td>-.335 **</td>
<td>-.198</td>
<td>.230 *</td>
<td>.240 *</td>
<td>.289 **</td>
<td>-.316 **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** - Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed) or .05 level (2-tailed)
* - Correlation is marginally significant

- Overall, high mobility is related to less vertical and more horizontal (more equality) social structural endorsement.

- This is true for both collectivistic and individualistic horizontal beliefs.

- Verticality (hierarchy) is only true for collectivism: Hierarchy endorsed serves group goals.
# Study 1A | Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relational Mobility</th>
<th>Interpersonal Hierarchy Expectation</th>
<th>Hierarchy Scale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.324 **</td>
<td>-.348 **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** *Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed) or .05 level (2-tailed)*

- As expected, there is a negative relationship between Relational Mobility and hierarchy beliefs.
We recruited 69 undergraduate students (43 females; M age = 21.67, SD = 1.62) for this study.

- **Relational Mobility Scale** (Yuki et al., 2007)
- **Horizontal-Vertical Collectivism-Individualism scale [HV-CI]** (Singelis et al., 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998)
- **Collectivism Scale** (Kashima et al., 1995)
  - “I would act as a member of my group rather than alone as an individual.” (alpha = .702)
- **Humanitarianism-Egalitarianism Scale** (Katz & Hass, 1998)
  - “There should be equality for everyone – because we are all human beings.” (alpha = .893)
## Study 1B | Results

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Horizontal-Individualism</th>
<th>Vertical-Individualism</th>
<th>Horizontal-Collectivism</th>
<th>Vertical-Collectivism</th>
<th>Horizontal (Overall)</th>
<th>Vertical (Overall)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relational Mobility</td>
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<td>-.068</td>
<td>.244 *</td>
<td>-.237 *</td>
<td>.336 **</td>
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** - Correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed)
** - Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relational Mobility</th>
<th>Collectivism</th>
<th>Humanitarian-Egalitarianism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.343 **</td>
<td>.255 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** - Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed)
* - Correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed)

- Supporting previous literature, high mobility individuals endorsed less collectivistic beliefs.
- High (vs. low) mobility individuals also emphasized more on egalitarianism.
We recruited 87 undergraduate students (57 females; M age = 21.46, SD = 1.70) for this study.

- Scale: Relational Mobility Scale

- DirectRT task
  - 2 (Condition (between): Identify Powerful vs. Powerless) X 2 (Position (within): Top vs. Bottom) design
  - 36 word pairs: each presented 6 times with different orientations (E.g., Master – Slave; Teacher – Pupil)
  - 4 Practice Trials
  - 2 sets of 72 Trials with a 30 second break in the middle
  - RT above 2SD as outliers
Boss

Worker
Worker

Boss
Boss

Worker
Study 2 | Results

Repeated Measures ANOVA

- Condition X Position X Relational Mobility interaction:
  - $F = 5.488, \ p = .022$

- Position X Relational Mobility interaction:
  - Identify Powerful condition: $F = .195, \ p = .661 \text{ (n.s.)}$
  - Identify Powerless condition: $F = 8.270, \ p = .006$

- For individuals high at mobility (+1 $SD$):
  - No Position main effect ($F = .394, \ p = .534$)

- For individuals low at mobility (-1 $SD$):
  - Position main effect ($F = 11.705, \ p = .001$)

- High mobility individuals were fast in identifying Powerless labels regardless of positioning. But low mobility individuals were affected by the positioning. They were slowest when Powerless are at the top, a mis-match they had to reconcile.
Study 3 | Methods & Measures

Organizational Setting + Individual characteristic

We recruited 82 undergraduate students (51 females; M age = 21.49, SD = 1.88) for this study.

- Scales:
  - Relational Mobility Scale
    - “I will speak up in the group with ideas for new projects or changes in procedures.” (alpha = .847)

- Scenario about managers & Preference rating
Imagine that you are working in a company that has just undergone major changes. It is now using more advanced technology to manufacture and sell different products in new areas. As a result, your department also changed dramatically. It is smaller now, with fewer employees and managers.

There are new reporting structures quite different from what you have been used to. Your own work has been influenced directly. What you do each day is very different from what you used to do and in fact continues to change as the company moves forward. Some employees are excited about the changes being made.

Others are not as satisfied. Overall, it is still too early to tell whether these changes will ultimately place the company in a better position than it was before the changes started. As a result of the changes you will have a new manager in your department.
This new manager could potentially be either MANAGER 1 or MANAGER 2.

**MANAGER 1 (high tolerance for voice from employees):**

As decisions about the changes are made, this new manager will repeatedly consult with you and others about what changes are being considered and whether you think they are good ideas. After listening to your ideas and considering other opinions, this manager will make the final decision.

**MANAGER 2 (low tolerance for voice from employees):**

As decisions about the changes are made, this new manager will not consult with you or others about what changes are being considered and whether you think they are good ideas. This manager will make the decisions and then announce them.

Rate how much you prefer for each manager.
**Study 3 | Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Individual Active Voice level</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relational Mobility</td>
<td>.247 *</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*- Correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed)*
Study 3 | Results

Rating for Manager 2 (low voice):
- Active Voice X Relational Mobility interaction:
  - $\beta = .301$, $t = 1.074$, $p = .286$ (n.s.)

Rating for Manager 1 (high voice):
- Active Voice X Relational Mobility interaction:
  - $\beta = -.385$, $t = -1.768$, $p = .081$
- For individuals high in mobility:
  - No Active voice main effect: $\beta = -1.420$, $t = -1.282$, $p = .203$
- For individuals low in mobility
  - Active voice main effect: $\beta = 2.132$, $t = 2.313$, $p = .023$
- Only low mobility individuals with high active voice appreciated the high-voice manager the most.
Summary

Study 1A&B: Low (vs. high) mobility individuals tend to be more in favor of hierarchy (group goals), expect hierarchy, more collectivistic, and less egalitarian.

Study 2: Low mobility individuals were slower in identifying Powerless social labels if labels were not in their expected position i.e., they were at the top position.

Study 3: Individuals are active receptors to agents of change. Among low mobility individuals, those who personally endorse high active voice preferred the manager who welcomes inputs from subordinates.

- Individual characteristics (e.g., personal tendency to give active voice) play a role in whether individuals respond favorably to change-initiating agent.
Discussion

• Individual’s perception of mobility is an important factor to consider.

• Perceived mobility of self is related to beliefs about in-group hierarchy or equality.

• Individual characteristics play a role in determining people’s receptiveness to agents of change.

• Individuals can be active agents participating in the relatively stable socio-cultural system.
Ongoing studies

• Career Study: Do low/high mobility individuals actively place themselves in hierarchy enhancing/attenuating environments?

• Group Maintenance Study: Do low mobility individuals value hierarchy because of group maintenance? We seek to manipulate group stability.

• Group Stability Study: Is group stability extremely important for low mobility individuals? Do group instability affect low and high mobility individuals differently? We seek to manipulate group stability.
Q & A
Today’s presentation
### Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

**Measure:** MEASURE_1  
**Transformed Variable:** Average

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