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## **Culture, Emotion, and Well-being: Good Feelings in Japan and the United States**

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We tested the hypothesis that “good feelings”—the central element of subjective well-being—are associated with interdependence and interpersonal engagement of the self in Japan, but with independence and interpersonal disengagement of the self in the United States. Japanese and American college students (total  $N = 913$ ) reported how frequently they experienced various emotional states in daily life. In support of the hypothesis, the reported frequency of general positive emotions (e.g. calm, elated) was most closely associated with the reported frequency of interpersonally engaged positive emotions (e.g. friendly feelings) in Japan, but with the reported frequency of interpersonally disengaged positive emotions (e.g. pride) in the United States. Further, for Americans the reported frequency of experience was considerably higher for positive emotions than for negative emotions, but for Japanese it was higher for engaged emotions than for disengaged emotions. Implications for cultural constructions of emotion in general and subjective well-being in particular are discussed.

### **INTRODUCTION**

To say that good feelings are good feelings for everybody would seem self-evident and innocuous. Like many other apparent tautologies, however, this one may conceal a more complex and variable reality. In fact, how and when good feelings are experienced may differ from one culture to another

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(e.g. Ellsworth, 1994; Suh, Diener, Oishi, & Triandis, 1998; Wierzbicka, 1994). In the current research we look into this issue by drawing a comparison between Japanese and Americans.

Our theoretical focus is on an analysis of cross-culturally divergent modes of constructing the self. Markus and Kitayama (1991a, b; Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997) have suggested that one important difference among cultural groups can be found in how two social orientations of independence and interdependence are incorporated into the collective definition and construction of the self (see also e.g. Shweder & Bourne, 1984; Triandis, 1989). The current paper explores the idea that emotional experiences have the corresponding social functions and are to some extent significant cultural artefacts (Kitayama & Markus, 1994; Kitayama & Masuda, 1994; Levy, 1984; Lutz, 1988; Parkinson, 1995; Shweder & LeVine, 1984; Solomon, 1976; White, 1994). We anticipate that social orientation or function can be revealed as an important component of all emotional experience across many cultural contexts. Specifically, by comparing Japanese and American college students' reports of frequency of positive and negative emotions that vary in social function, we seek to show how the culturally shared views of self are reflected in each culture's ways of "feeling good".

## Dominant Mode of Being and Cultural Adaptation

In North America, particularly in the American middle class, there is a strong culturally shared belief in independence of the self from others. The self is made meaningful primarily by a set of internal attributes, such as abilities, talents, or personality traits, and the major cultural task is to discover, actualise, and confirm these internal attributes of the self. Markus and Kitayama have called this the *independent* view of self. In contrast, many non-Western cultures do not value such strict separation or independence of the self. This is especially the case in many Asian cultures, including Japan—the focus of the present study (see e.g. Kondo, 1990; Lebra, 1976; Rosenberger, 1992, for detailed descriptions of the Japanese self). These cultures believe, instead, in the fundamental connectedness or interdependence among those within an ingroup. According to this culturally held idea the self is made meaningful in reference to the relationship of which the self is part. The major cultural task is to fit in, adjust to the relationship, to become a member, while constraining, taming, or otherwise conditioning internal desires or wishes so as to facilitate the ever-important

interpersonal harmony and unity. This alternative view of the self is referred to as the *interdependent* view of self.<sup>1</sup>

These views of self and attendant social orientations—independence and interdependence—are reflected in each culture's habitual, and thus subjectively "natural" or "authentic" ways of acting and interacting, or simply in its predominant mode of being or *selfways* (Kitayama & Markus, 1999; Markus, Mullaly, & Kitayama, 1997). For example, in the United States the culturally sanctioned view of the self as independent is highlighted in the numerous everyday episodes that emphasise socially *disengaging* behaviour, such as asserting and protecting one's own rights, acting on the basis of one's own attitudes or judgements, and separating or distinguishing the self from the context. Likewise, the Japanese view of the self as interdependent is reflected in a corresponding set of recurrent everyday episodes that emphasise not socially disengaging behaviour, but instead socially *engaging* behaviour. These include taking one's proper place, perfecting one's own roles, empathising with others and acting on the basis of these others' expectations and needs, and blurring the distinction between self and others in the social context.

Although these culturally prescribed patterns of social interaction—disengagement in the United States and engagement in Japan—may be quite normative, natural, and thus relatively invisible, acting in accordance with such patterns may have a variety of positive, adaptive consequences. By acting in accordance with the predominant mode of being of a cultural group or its selfway, one should be able to fully participate in social relationships and, thus, to be a legitimate member of the cultural community, which in turn should conduce to a state of well-being where one tends to feel "generally good". Specifically, it may be predicted that in North America acting in accordance with the culturally scripted patterns of interpersonal disengagement should be associated with a frequent experience of general

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<sup>1</sup> There are, of course, other ideas about how to be a person, especially in a diverse society like the US, some of which may even directly contradict the individualist or independent view, and many people may resist the dominant cultural frame in a variety of ways. However, the general notion of the independence and autonomy of the individual from others is still influential in shaping social behaviour because it is elaborated and given life in a broad net of social customs, practices, and institutions with a pervasive range of influence. The idea of a cultural frame that provides a behavioural foundation for individual selves allows us to explain how a set of ideas or values can remain influential even when some individuals do not actively endorse them or behave accordingly. For example, many Americans would not claim that they are independent, autonomous entities; rather, they experience themselves as interdependent, highly social, and affiliative. Yet, they are constantly exposed to the individualist idea and its related practices because they live within a society created by and based on it. Similarly, many Japanese would not think of themselves as interdependent and would actually resist it (e.g. some modern Japanese women), yet they live within a society where life is structured by interdependent social practices and episodes.

good feelings and a sense of well-being, whereas in Japan acting in accordance with the culturally scripted patterns of interpersonal engagement should be associated with a frequent experience of general good feelings and a sense of well-being. Consistent with this prediction, Kwan, Bond, and Singelis (1997) have shown that one's engagement in a harmonious relationship contributes to life satisfaction and that this association is stronger in Hong Kong than in the United States.

## Cross-cultural Variations in "Good Feelings"

The current work was designed with several concerns in mind, the most significant of which was to test the foregoing prediction. In so doing, we took advantage of the fact that there are some highly general, relatively nonspecific and unqualified positive feeling terms such as *elated*, *relaxed*, *calm*, or *happy* in both English and Japanese. These emotions and feelings typically do not have any specific targets. Further, a variety of antecedents are possible and so are consequent behavioural tendencies. By contrast, there exist many emotional states that are more specific in their antecedents and consequences and that, in particular, are more directly linked and conditional to success in tasks of either independence or interdependence (Kitayama, Markus, & Matsumoto, 1995). Thus, some positive emotions such as *pride*<sup>2</sup> and *feelings of superiority* most typically result from the satisfaction or confirmation of one's internal attributes such as goals, desires, or rights (e.g. "I met my goal", "I performed better than others"). Experiencing and expressing these emotions highlights these positive internal attributes, thereby affirming the identity of the self as a desirable entity that is independent and *disengaged* from others. By contrast, some other positive emotions, such as *communal feelings* and *feelings of respect*, most typically result from having connected the self with others in a relationship. When these feelings are experienced and expressed, certain features of an interdependent relationship (e.g. harmony, unity in the relationship) are highlighted, and the self is perceived as being embedded and assimilated within the relationship. These emotions, then, affirm the sense of the self as an entity that is connected and *engaged* with desirable others. These interpersonally engaged and disengaged feelings are

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<sup>2</sup> Pride may certainly be felt toward a group or someone else closely associated with the self and, in that case, it may more properly be classified as interpersonally engaging rather than disengaging. But our assumption was that the default, most unmarked meaning of pride involves an interpersonally disengaging appraisal that the self attained a personal success. Similar considerations apply to all other emotions employed here. These assumptions about default meanings of the emotion terms used here can be falsified by examining correlation patterns in the study reported here. As we shall see, in almost all cases our assumptions proved to be correct.

more specific in both antecedent and consequence than more general good feelings such as *elated*, *relaxed*, *calm*, and *happy*.

We hypothesised that general good feelings are associated with independence and interpersonal disengagement in the United States, or with interdependence and interpersonal engagement in Japan. It would follow that in Japan those who successfully practised the cultural task of interdependence (thereby, frequently experiencing the interpersonally engaged positive emotions, e.g. *friendly feelings*) would be most likely to experience the general positive emotions (e.g. *elated*, *calm*). But those who successfully practised the alternative task of independence (thereby, frequently experiencing the interpersonally disengaged positive emotions, e.g. *pride*) would not necessarily experience them. Thus, there should be a higher degree of association between the interpersonally *engaged* positive emotions and the general positive emotions than between the interpersonally *disengaged* positive emotions and the general positive emotions. By contrast, in the United States it would be one's success in the cultural task of independence (and thus a high frequency of experiencing the interpersonally disengaged positive emotions, e.g. *pride*), rather than one's success in the alternative task of interdependence (and thus a high frequency of experiencing the interpersonally engaged positive emotions, e.g. *friendly feelings*), that was most closely related to the general good feelings or emotions. Accordingly, there should be a higher degree of association between the interpersonally *disengaged* positive emotions and the general positive emotions than between the interpersonally *engaged* positive emotions and the general positive emotions.

In addition to testing the foregoing predictions on the cross-culturally divergent correlates of general good feelings, we had two further aims, namely: (1) to provide evidence for an interpersonal orientation dimension of emotion; and (2) to use this analysis to examine cross-cultural similarities and differences in the reported frequency of emotional experience. These issues are briefly discussed in turn.

## Interpersonal Dimension of Emotion

Like positive emotions, negative emotions can also be located on an interpersonal orientation dimension. Emotions, such as *anger* and *frustration*, typically result from a blocking of one's goals, desires, or rights (e.g. "I am treated unfairly") or a disrupting of a moral principle or worldview one believes, accepts, and even takes for granted (e.g. moral resentment concerning a terrorist attack), thus imposing a threat on the sense of the self as an independent entity. These emotions, in turn, motivate the person to eliminate the threat and thus to restore and assert the self's independence. This motivational tendency toward independence affirms the sense of the self as an independent, interpersonally *disengaged* entity. By contrast, some

other negative emotions, such as *guilt* and *feelings of indebtedness*, result most typically from one's failure to participate fully in an ongoing relationship (e.g. "I caused trouble for him") or to otherwise live up to the expectations of relevant others (e.g. "People expect me to do that, but I couldn't do it"), thus posing a threat on one's sense of the self as a fully interdependent entity. These emotions, in turn, motivate the person to eliminate the threat by restoring the harmony or unity in the relationship. This motivational tendency toward interdependence reaffirms one's sense of the self as an interdependent, interpersonally *engaged* entity.

In short, emotions are not just private or personal bodily states, they are also social phenomena (e.g. DeRivera, 1984; DeRivera, & Grinkis, 1986; Kemper, 1978; Lutz, 1988; Lutz & White, 1986; Parkinson, 1995). They may thus vary in the degree to which they either engage and connect the self in an ongoing relationship, thereby promoting the perceived interdependence of the self with others (interpersonal engagement), or to which they disengage and separate the self from the relationship, thereby promoting the perceived independence of the self from others (interpersonal *disengagement*), (cf. Block, 1957; Dittman, 1972; Lutz, 1988; Reisenzein & Hofmann, 1990). We tested this analysis by a confirmatory examination of locations for various feeling states in a multidimensional space.

## Reported Frequency of Emotional Experience

To the extent that interpersonal orientation can be verified as a reliable dimension of emotional experience it may serve, along with pleasantness, as a powerful determinant of emotional experience. The theoretical framework of Markus and Kitayama (1991a) suggests that with a cultural imperative of self as independent, social motivations are bound to be centred around the culturally sanctioned concern for discovering and confirming desirable internal attributes of the self. Such internal attributes may include, although they by no means are limited to, positive subjective feelings (Suh et al., 1998). Positivity of internal feelings, then, may serve a function of affirming the independence of the self. Furthermore, this function is likely to be served equally well by both disengaging (e.g. pride) and engaging (e.g. friendly feelings) positive emotions. To the extent that this is the case, American individuals may be expected to have a strong tendency to enhance and augment the experience of positive emotions regardless of whether the positive emotions are interpersonally disengaged or engaged. Thus, our first prediction was that American individuals would report a greater frequency of experiencing positive than negative emotions and, moreover, this should occur for both engaging and disengaging emotions.

By contrast, with a cultural imperative of self as interdependent, social motivations may tend to be anchored around the culturally authorized concern for fitting in or adjusting oneself to interpersonal context, and for maintaining mutually engaging social relationships (Kitayama & Markus, *in press*; Kwan et al., 1997). It may then be social and interpersonal engagement that affirms the interdependence of the self. Furthermore, this function of engagement is likely to be served equally well by both positive (e.g. friendly feelings) and negative (e.g. guilt) engaging emotions. To the extent that this is the case, Japanese individuals may be expected to have a strong tendency to enhance and augment the experience of engaging emotions regardless of whether these emotions are positive or negative. Thus, our second prediction was that Japanese individuals would report a greater frequency of experiencing interpersonally engaging emotions than disengaging emotions and, moreover, this should be the case for both positive and negative emotions.

## METHOD

### Respondents and Procedure

A total of 630 Japanese undergraduates at Hiroshima University (317 men and 292 women; the remaining 21 persons did not report their gender) and 283 American undergraduates at the University of Oregon (96 men and 185 women; the remaining two did not report their gender) participated in the study. All the Japanese respondents were native Japanese speakers. A questionnaire was administered in large introductory psychology classes. The American respondents, all Caucasian and native speakers of English, were also recruited from introductory psychology classes. They fulfilled part of their course requirements. The American respondents filled out the questionnaire in groups of 10 to 20 individuals.

### Emotion Terms

In the questionnaire, respondents reported how frequently they experienced each of 31 emotions on a 6-point rating scale, ranging from “never” (1) to “always” (6). The marker terms for the scale (e.g. never, always) were carefully chosen to be equivalent in the two cultures. Emotion terms used in the present study are listed in Table 1. The 31 emotions included in the Japanese questionnaire were selected first. Those in the American questionnaire were subsequently developed from the Japanese list.



TABLE 1  
Emotions used in the Present Study

<i>Japan</i>	<i>United States</i>
<i>Interpersonally disengaged, positive emotions</i>	
<b>Yuetsukan (superior)</b>	<b>Superior</b>
<b>Hokori (proud)</b>	<b>Proud</b>
<b>Tukeagari ('top of the world')</b>	<b>Top of the world</b>
	<b>Feel good about the self</b>
Nameru ("lick") <sup>a</sup>	
<i>Interpersonally disengaged, negative emotions</i>	
<b>Ikari (anger)</b>	<b>Angry</b>
<b>Yokkyufuman (frustration)</b>	<b>Frustrated</b>
<b>Futekusare (sulky feelings)</b>	<b>Sulky feelings</b>
Sune ("weak" sulky feelings) <sup>b</sup>	Jealous
Higami (jealousy) <sup>c</sup>	Ill feelings to another
Shitto (jealousy)	Moody
<i>Interpersonally engaged, positive emotions</i>	
<b>Fureai (close)</b>	<b>Close</b>
<b>Shitashimi (friendly feelings)</b>	<b>Friendly feelings</b>
<b>Sonkei (respect)</b>	<b>Respect</b>
	<b>Feel happy for another</b>
<i>Interpersonally engaged, negative emotions</i>	
<b>Oime (indebted)</b>	<b>Indebted</b>
<b>Haji (ashamed)</b>	<b>Ashamed</b>
<b>Tumi (guilty)</b>	<b>Guilty</b>
	<b>Sad for another</b>
	<b>Sorry for another</b>
Kigane (afraid of troubling/angering another)	Afraid of troubling another
Kanashii (sad)	Afraid of angering another
Wadakamari (feel constraint)	Feel constraint
	Feel awkward
<i>General positive emotions</i>	
<b>Otituku (calm)</b>	<b>Calm</b>
<b>Ukiuki (elated)</b>	<b>Elated</b>
<b>Kiraku (relaxed)</b>	<b>Relaxed</b>
<b>Shiawase (happy)<sup>d</sup></b>	
<i>Amae-related emotions</i>	
<b>Amae (feel like babied)</b>	<b>Feel like being babied</b>
<b>Tanomi (feel like relying on other)</b>	<b>Feel like relying on another</b>
<b>Sugari (feel like leaning on other)</b>	<b>Feel like leaning on another</b>
Amai (superficially optimistic)	
Amanjiru (feel resigned)	

TABLE 1  
Emotions used in the Present Study

<i>Japan</i>	<i>United States</i>
<i>Other negative/ambivalent emotions or quasi-emotions</i>	
Taikutu (bored)	Bored
Nemui (sleepy)	Sleepy
Koufun (excited) <sup>e</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> One *nameru* (licks) another person when he/she takes the person very lightly because of overconfidence. Unlike the other three in this category, *nameru* therefore seemed to emphasise the behavioural manifestation of the overconfidence rather than good feelings themselves associated with one's personal achievement.

<sup>b</sup> Although both *futekusare* and *sune* can best be glossed as "sulky feelings", there seemed to exist one subtle difference. Whereas *futekusare* is quite explicitly disengaged in social connotation, *sune* implies that the person is sulking because of his/her *amae*, namely, an expectation that the partner of the interaction will empathetically understand his/her complaint. *Sune* therefore did not seem overtly disengaged.

<sup>c</sup> *Higami* and *shitto* can both be glossed as *jealousy*. The social connotation of jealousy was not entirely clear on a priori basis.

<sup>d</sup> *Happy* was not included in the general positive emotion category of the American stimulus list because *happy for another* was included in the socially engaged positive emotion category of the American list.

<sup>e</sup> *Excited* was found in a pilot study to be relatively neutral in pleasantness in Japan. Its designation was therefore unclear. This emotion was inadvertently omitted from the American list.

*The Japanese Set.* To prepare the Japanese list, the following steps were taken. First, based on an analysis of the meaning of various emotion terms, 12 emotions that could clearly be designated into one of the four theoretical categories (i.e. positive/negative  $\times$  interpersonally engaged/disengaged) were chosen. In Table 1 these emotions are printed in a bold font under each emotion type. Further, six more emotions whose designation seemed plausible (but not certain a priori), were added (printed in a regular font). Second, in order to test our hypotheses about the nature of general good feelings or moods, we included several general positive emotions (*calm*, *elated*, *relaxed*, and *happy*). Third, three *amae*-related emotions [e.g. *amae* (babied), *tanomi* (relying), and *sugari* (learning)] were added. Two additional words, *amai* (superficially optimistic), and *amanjiru* (feel resigned), share the word stem with *amae*. They were included in the list for exploratory purposes. We wanted to explore the idea, proposed by Doi (1973), that these *amae*-related emotions are central to the Japanese ethos. Finally, *bored*, *sleepy*, and *excited* were included, because these are clear markers of the activation dimension that has been obtained in many studies using multidimensional scaling of similarity

judgement data (e.g. Russell, 1980, 1991). Inclusion of these terms maximised the likelihood of the activation dimension being recovered if it were also crucial in the structure of emotional experience.

*The American Set.* The American set of 31 emotions, also given in Table 1, corresponded closely to the Japanese set. They were mostly translations of the Japanese emotions included. In two cases (*sulking* and *jealousy*), however, two distinct emotion terms in Japanese seemed best translated into a single English item. In some other cases it was difficult to find any single English term or expression that uniquely implies a Japanese indigenous emotion. In these cases, to best approximate the original meanings, we used two different translations. Three bilingual speakers fluent in both Japanese and English (two native Japanese speakers and one native English speaker) were extensively consulted in translation. Finally, to emphasise connotations of interpersonal engagement, “for another” was added to a few feelings: *sorry for another*, *happy for another*, and *sad for another*. Additional considerations in developing the American list are given in the footnotes in Table 1.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are reported in three steps. First, our analysis is framed in terms of two higher order dimensions of emotional experience (pleasantness and interpersonal orientation). Further, inclusion of both positive and negative emotions that vary in the degree of arousal or activation made it likely that this dimension would also appear. Thus, we first examined whether a dimension of interpersonal orientation would appear along with two additional dimensions of pleasantness and arousal. Second, we tested our primary hypothesis that the correlates of general positive emotions would vary according to the respective cultural imperative of either independence (in the United States) or interdependence (in Japan). Third, we examined the frequency of experiencing the four categories of emotions, defined by pleasantness (positive vs. negative) and interpersonal orientation (engaged vs. disengaged) across the two cultures (Japan and the United States).

### Structure of Emotional Experience

To determine whether the hypothesised emotion structure could be recovered in the data, we first computed correlations among the frequency ratings across respondents. The correlation matrix was submitted to a MDS analysis, separately for each cultural group. For both groups, a scree test indicated that a three-dimensional solution could adequately summar-

ise the correlation structure with the stress index close to .10 (Stress indices = .12 and .13 for Japan and the US, respectively). Further, in both cases the three dimensions combined accounted for nearly 90% of the variance, and an addition of a fourth dimension did not result in any noticeable decrease of stress.<sup>3</sup>

In both cases the first dimension was clearly interpretable as pleasantness, defined by positive emotions at one end and by negative emotions by the other end; and the second dimension was interpretable as interpersonal orientation, with interpersonally engaged emotions at one end and interpersonally disengaged emotions at the other end. As was also predicted, the third dimension could be interpreted as signifying the degree of arousal or activity. In both samples, near one of the poles of the third dimension were located relatively arousing emotions (pride, anger, shame), whereas near the other pole were found relatively passive, less arousing emotions (e.g. sleepy, relaxed, bored, calm, feeling awkward).

The space defined by the first two dimensions of our theoretical concern is given in Figures 1A (Japan) and 1B (the United States)<sup>4</sup> Japanese emotion terms are given in English glosses. Following a facet theory approach (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990), we assume that the two-dimensional space represented in these figures is filled with an infinite number of emotional states that vary in pleasantness and interpersonal orientation. From this perspective, the 31 emotions used here are specific instances, which each culture has picked up from the entire pool to represent with certain distinct linguistic labels. Thus, one should be able to divide the space into four nonoverlapping regions or facets corresponding to the four theoretical types of emotions (i.e. positive/disengaged, positive/engaged, negative/disengaged, and negative/engaged).

The locations of the emotions assigned a priori to each of the four emotion types supported this analysis. These emotions are indicated by capital letters. It is clear that they were placed in nonoverlapping regions segregated by lines radiating from the centre. Further, most of the other

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<sup>3</sup> The stress index took the values of .28, .17, .12, .09, and .07 in Japan and those of .37, .22, .13, .10, and .08 in the US for the 1-, 2-, 3-, 4-, and 5- solutions, respectively.

<sup>4</sup> The dimension of interpersonal orientation can be alternatively interpreted as that of aggression, dominance, or submissiveness—interpretations more common in the literature, insofar as interpersonally disengaged emotions (*pride* or *anger*) are bound to be relatively “dominant” and “aggressive” and interpersonally engaged emotions (*friendly feelings* or *guilt*) tend to be relatively “submissive”. It is likely that “aggression” and “dominance” pertain to some partial shade of meanings encompassed by the generally disengaged or disengaging orientation; for aggression and dominance need not be part of the interpersonally disengaged orientation, but whenever aggression and dominance are manifest, interpersonal disengagement is implicated. Similarly, it is plausible that submissiveness pertains only to part of the generally engaged or engaging interpersonal orientation.

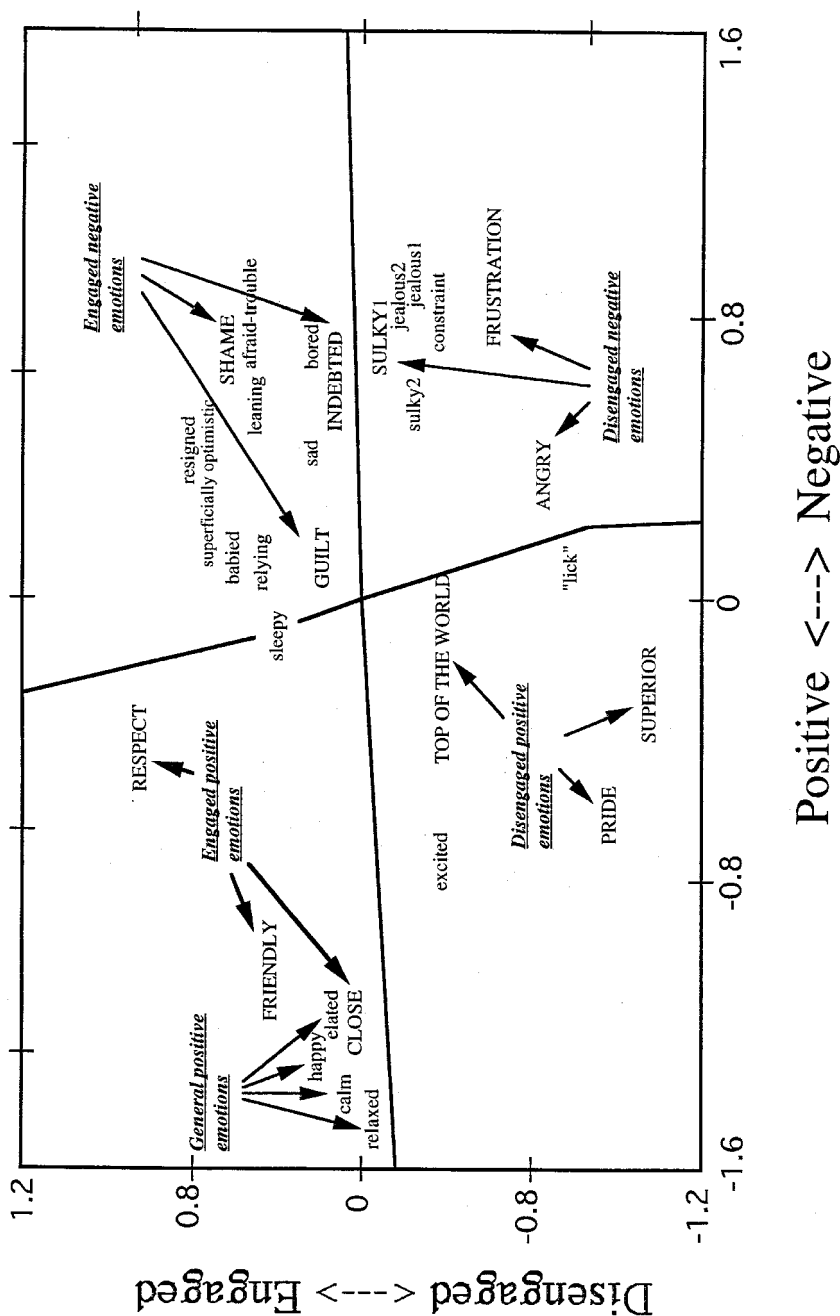


FIG. 1A. Multidimensional representations of the five types of emotions on the two dimensions of pleasantness and interpersonal orientation in Japan. Note that general positive emotions are related strongly to engaged, rather than disengaged positive emotions.

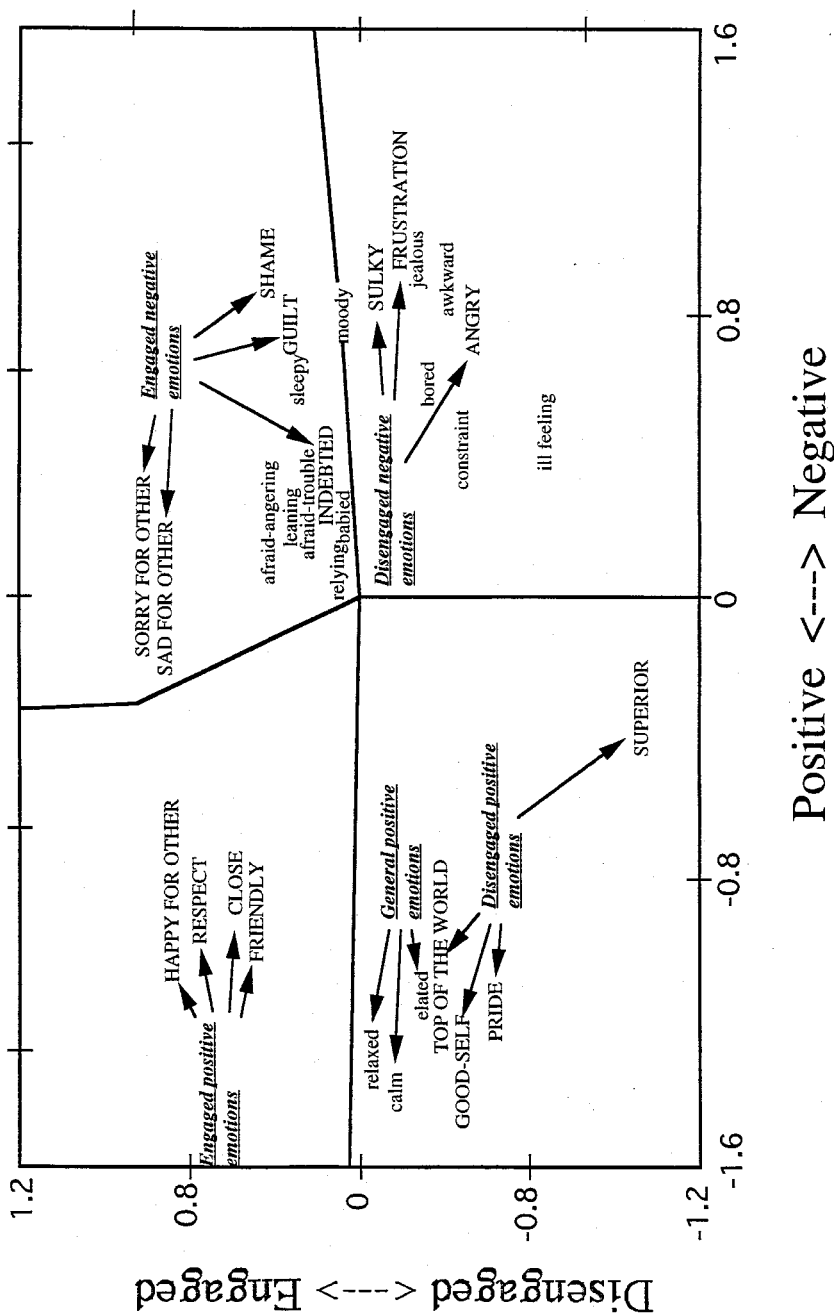


FIG. 1B. Multidimensional representations of the five types of emotions on the two dimensions of pleasantness and interpersonal orientation in the United States. Note that general positive emotions are related strongly to disengaged, rather than engaged positive emotions.

emotions whose designation had been left tentative or undetermined could be readily classified into one of the four regions. To minimise any subjective bias in this assignment, one of the pre-designated emotions closest to any given non-designated emotion was located first, and the nondesignated emotion was assigned to the region of this pre-designated emotion. No attempt was made, however, to assign a few emotions that were nearly equidistant from two or more regions (*sleepy* and “*lick*” in Japan and *moody* in America). Figures 1A and 1B show the demarcating lines thus determined. Notice that even those whose assignment had been tentative, mostly fell in the expected quadrant (the only exception in both cultures was “*feel constraint in front of others*”, which had been tentatively predicted to be interpersonally engaged/negative, but which ended up in the interpersonally disengaged/negative quadrant). Overall, our theoretical designation proved to be highly valid, and the two dimensions proved to be quite powerful in the organisation of emotional experience. In what follows we draw on this demonstrated structure of emotional experience, and describe data pertaining to the predicted cross-cultural differences in the correlates of good feelings.

## Correlates of General Positive Emotions

We predicted cross-culturally divergent associations between the general positive emotions and the two forms of positive emotions that vary in interpersonal orientation. Specifically, in Japan those who succeeded in the task of interdependence and, thus, frequently experienced interpersonally engaged positive emotions would most likely experience the general positive emotions (e.g. *calm*, *elated*). In the United States, however, those who succeeded in the task of independence and, thus, frequently experienced interpersonally disengaged positive emotions would most likely experience these general positive emotions.

As can be seen in Figs. 1A and 1B, the specific items in each of the three sets of positive emotions (disengaged, engaged, and general) cohere together in relatively nonoverlapping regions. There emerged, however, one striking difference between the Japanese data (Fig. 1A) and the American data (Fig. 1B). As predicted, in Japan all the general positive emotions are located more closely to the interpersonally engaged positive emotions than to their interpersonally disengaged counterparts. But the reverse was true in the United States.

Can this finding be observed in patterns of raw correlations? In order to examine this question, we first computed, for each respondent, mean frequency ratings for each of the three categories of positive emotions and then correlated with one another within each culture. Reliabilities were all reasonably high (Cronbach's  $\alpha > .68$ ). In Japan the correlations

of the general positive emotions was much higher with the interpersonally engaged positive emotions ( $r = .58$ ) than with the interpersonally disengaged positive emotions [ $r = .20$ ;  $t(607) = 9.14$ ,  $P < .0001$ ], with a Hotelling–Williams test); whereas in the United States the pattern was completely reversed with the correlation with the interpersonally disengaged emotions ( $r = .54$ ) higher than that with the interpersonally engaged emotions [ $r = .30$ ;  $t(280) = 3.75$ ,  $P < .001$ ]. In the Japanese data, the correlation between the general positive emotions and the disengaged emotions was fairly low although statistically significant due to the large sample size ( $P < .001$ ). In the American data the correlation between the engaged emotions and the general positive ones was somewhat more substantial ( $r = .30$ ). When comparisons were drawn across the two cultures, the association between the disengaged positive emotions and the general positive emotions was much higher in the United States than in Japan ( $z = 4.69$ ,  $P < .0001$ ), but the corresponding association for the engaged positive emotions was much higher in Japan than in the United States ( $z = 3.86$ ,  $P < .0001$ ).<sup>5</sup>

One alternative interpretation suggests itself, however. It might be the case that positive disengaging emotions (e.g. pride) are more arousing than positive engaging emotions (e.g. friendly feelings). If so, the cross-cultural difference observed above might be mediated by arousal such that Americans are more likely than Japanese to experience general good feelings when they are stimulated and aroused. Extensive value surveys conducted by Schwartz and colleagues have shown that values of individualism and independence are closely associated with emotional stimulation (Schwartz, 1992). Although we found a dimension of arousal to be orthogonal to interpersonal engagement or disengagement, this could happen even if interpersonal engagement and arousal were confounded in the positive domain as long as the two dimensions were differentiated in the negative domain.

If the foregoing analysis were correct, the cross-cultural difference observed above would take different forms for general feelings that vary in the associated levels of arousal. The American result should be evident mostly for highly arousing general good feelings, but the Japanese result should be observed largely for less arousing ones. Although the present work was not designed to test this analysis, it contained three terms that differed in their levels of arousal. Thus, one (i.e. elated) was clearly more

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<sup>5</sup> To guard against the possibility that the pattern reported above may have been caused by some specific item(s) in the three sets of positive emotions tested here, we correlated all the items in the general positive emotion group with all the items in the engaged set and all those in the disengaged set. When the distribution of the correlation coefficients in each condition was examined, there was no substantial overlap between the distribution of the correlations for the disengaged emotions and the distribution of the correlations for the engaged emotions in either Japan or the US.



arousing than the remaining two (i.e. calm, relaxed). Hence, we computed correlations between each of these general feeling terms and the two more specific types of good feelings (i.e. engaged and disengaged. Relevant correlations are summarised in Table 2 separately for males and females). As shown, for elated the correlation with the positive disengaging emotions was higher in the United States than in Japan (.60 vs. .34,  $P < .001$ ), but the correlation with the positive engaging emotions was lower in the United States than in Japan (.18 vs. .80,  $P < .0001$ ). Likewise, for the remaining two good feelings (i.e. relaxed and calm combined), the correlation with the positive disengaging emotions was higher in the United States than in Japan (.63 vs. .23,  $P < .001$ ), but the correlation with the positive engaging emotions was lower in the United States than in Japan (.33 vs. .60,  $P < .001$ ). In short, the main conclusion of the current work was obtained regardless of the levels of arousal associated with the specific terms used to designate general good feelings. Hence, it is unlikely that the current finding was an artefact generated by the supposedly strong preference of Americans for arousing experiences.

### Association between Positive and Negative Emotions

We included in our design six theoretically distinct categories of emotions (i.e. positive engaged, positive disengaged, negative engaged, negative disengaged, general positive, and amae-related). Two additional issues

TABLE 2  
Correlations between Each of the General Feeling Terms  
used in the Present Research and the Two More Specific  
Types of Good Feelings (Engaged vs. Disengaged) in  
Japan and the US

	<i>Japanese</i>		<i>American</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
<i>Correlation between the positive disengaged emotions and</i>				
Elated feelings	.39	.30	.58	.62
Relaxed feelings	.25	.06	.66	.68
Calm feelings	.15	.10	.61	.59
Happiness	.34	.27	—	—
<i>Correlation between the positive engaged emotions and</i>				
Elated feelings	.80	.81	.06	.30
Relaxed feelings	.71	.68	.33	.30
Calm feelings	.54	.46	.38	.29
Happiness	.81	.79	—	—

can be raised by carefully examining the correlations among these six sets of emotions. The first issue involves associations between positive and negative emotions in the two cultures.

As shown in Fig. 2, the correlations between positive and negative emotions were largely negative in the United States. But in Japan other than the correlations involving general good feelings, the correlations between positive and negative feelings were all positive. Correlational results are inherently difficult to interpret. Yet, this finding is consistent with the notion that there are cross-culturally divergent styles of managing emotions. Thus, as we shall see later in more detail, considerable evidence in social psychological literature has suggested that in North America individuals are often motivated to maximise positive feelings while minimising negative feelings. To the extent that individuals differ in the extent of their emphasis on positivity over negativity, there should result a correlation such as the one observed here. Thus, those who emphasise good feelings may be precisely those who de-emphasise negative feelings. By contrast, the Japanese result indicates that a comparable individual difference might be centred around an emphasis on emotionality. People who experience positive emotions are also those who experience negative

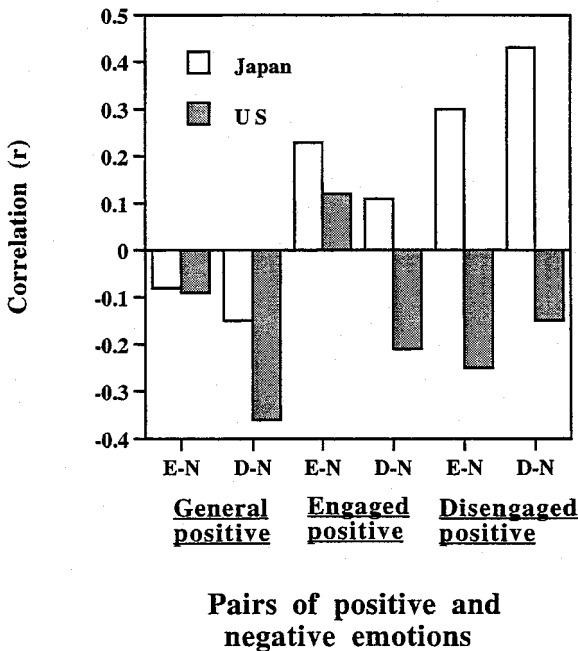


FIG. 2. Correlations between positive and negative emotions in Japan and the United States.

emotions. Perhaps, in this cultural context, instead of pursuing positivity, many Japanese may seek, with a varying degree of success, a *balance* between positivity and negativity in emotion (Kitayama & Markus, 1999).

### Centrality of Amae-related Emotions in Japan

We included several *amae*-related emotion terms to explore the possibility that these emotions are central in defining the interdependent ethos of the Japanese culture. Most relevant are the correlations between the *amae*-related emotions with the remaining five types of emotions, which are summarised in Fig. 3. These correlations were all higher in Japan than in the United States [ $z$ s = 1.99 ( $P < .05$ ), 2.13 ( $P < .05$ ), 4.76 ( $P < .0001$ ), 4.55 ( $P < .0001$ ), and 1.88 ( $P < .07$ ) for general positive, engaged positive, disengaged positive, engaged negative, and disengaged emotions, respectively]. In addition, Americans tended to report a relatively low frequency of experiencing the three *amae*-related emotions examined here [i.e. *amae* (babied), *tanomi* (relying), and *sugari* (leaning)]. Finally, in both cultures the correlations were higher for negative emotions than for positive emotions.

This pattern is consistent with Doi's (1973) proposal that *amae* is central to the Japanese ethos. That is to say, it may be the case that in Japan *amae* is experienced as an evaluatively ambivalent state of the desire or expectancy of one's dependency on another in a relationship or the other's favour on the self. This ambivalent state may then be readily transformed into

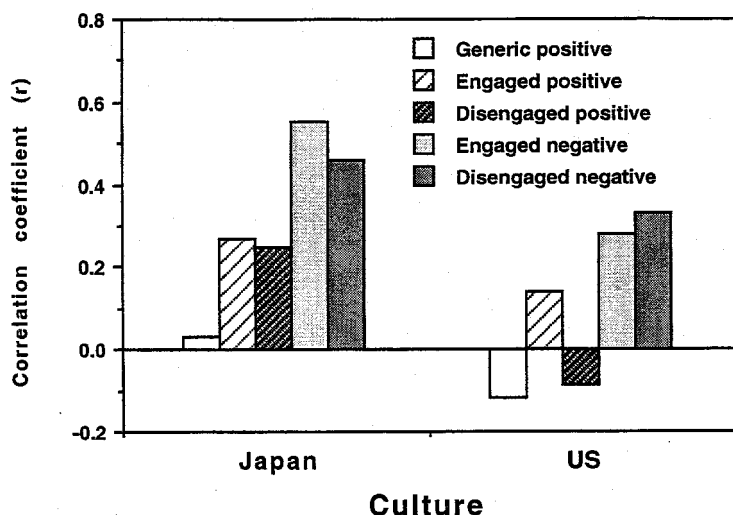


FIG. 3. Correlations of *amae*-related emotions with five types of emotions.

many other evaluatively more polarised emotional states, either positive or negative, depending on the behaviour of relevant other(s) to whom the actor feels *amae* ("dependence"). According to this analysis, *amae* in Japan signifies the state of interpersonal readiness, a general intention to engage in an interdependent relationship. With reciprocal *amae* reactions from others, the person may increase his/her interpersonal engagement with them, but given unilateral rejection by the others, he/she will immediately disengage him/herself from the relationship. The fact that correlations were especially high between *amae* and negative feelings may indicate that one's *amae* is often not reciprocated by others. As implied by Doi (1973), *amae* may then be an indispensable element in the construction of emotional interdependencies with other people. By contrast, in the United States these *amae*-related states and the entire process of emotional interdependencies among people, especially outside of immediate families, infringe directly on the cultural imperative of independence and, as a consequence, many Americans may inhibit or even dissociate these states from other emotional states.

## Frequency of Experiencing the Four Types of Emotions

Will the reported frequency of emotional experience vary as a function of the two central features of emotions (i.e. pleasantness and interpersonal orientation, in the two cultures)? We predicted that pleasantness would be more significant as a determinant of emotional experience in the United States than in Japan. But interpersonal orientation would figure more prominently in Japan than in the United States. The mean frequency ratings for the four types of emotions were computed. All the emotions that had been classified into the four emotion types were examined. Internal consistencies for the four types of emotion (both pre-designated ones and those assigned *post hoc* included) were reasonably high both in Japan (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .63, .85, .81, \text{ and } .81$ , for disengaged/positive, disengaged/negative, engaged/positive, and disengaged/negative, respectively) and in the United States ( $\alpha = .78, .75, .65, \text{ and } .74$ , respectively).

Thus, the average frequency for each category of emotions was computed for each respondent. These means were then submitted to an analysis of variance (ANOVA) with respondents as a random variable. There were two between-respondent variables (culture and gender) and two within-respondent variables (pleasantness and interpersonal orientation). To ensure that any effect observed in this first analysis was not due to idiosyncrasies of a small number of emotions, we computed mean frequencies for each emotion term separately for men and women in each culture. These means were then submitted to an ANOVA with emotions as a

random variable. There were three between-emotion variables (pleasantness, interpersonal orientation, and culture) and one within-emotion variable (gender). *F* statistics from these two analyses are denoted as *F*1 and *F*2, respectively. In what follows, only those effects that proved reliable in both analyses are reported.

The most striking finding from this analysis involved the main effects for pleasantness and culture, both of which were highly significant [*F*1(1, 886) = 323 and *F*2(1, 51) = 41.0, *P*s < .0001; *F*1(1, 886) = 111 and *F*2(1, 51) = 18.5, *P*s < .0001]. Further, these two effects significantly interacted with each other [*F*1(1, 886) = 262, and *F*2(1, 51) = 33.2, *P*s < .0001]. In support of our prediction, the reported frequency was much higher for positive emotions than for negative emotions in the United States (4.1 vs. 3.2; *P* < .0001); but this difference completely disappeared in Japan (3.3 vs. 3.3; *P* > .20). In addition, there was a significant main effect for interpersonal orientation [*F*1(1, 886) = 720 and *F*2(1, 51) = 46.8, *P*s < .0001], which in turn was qualified by an interpersonal orientation × pleasantness interaction [*F*1(1, 886) = 399 and *F*2(1, 51) = 13.8, *P*s < .0001], as well as by two additional interactions involving gender: interpersonal orientation × gender [*F*1(1, 886) = 84.0 and *F*2(1, 51) = 51.5, *P*s < .0001] and interpersonal orientation × gender × pleasantness [*F*1(1, 886) = 55.7 and *F*2(1, 51) = 18.0, *P*s < .0001]. There was a gender difference in the frequency of experiencing positive emotions. Men reported a higher frequency than did women for disengaged positive emotions (3.3 vs. 3.1; *P* < .0001), but the pattern was reversed for engaged positive emotions (4.1 vs. 3.8; *P* < .0001). No corresponding difference between the two genders was reliable for negative emotions (3.1 vs. 3.1, and 3.3 vs. 3.4 for the disengaged and the engaged negative emotions, respectively). This finding is consistent with the notion that in both cultures men are more likely than women to successfully engage in independence-related tasks, whereas women are more likely than men to successfully engage in interdependence-related tasks (Cross & Madson, 1997).

Overall, then, the frequency of experiencing the four sets of emotions examined here are importantly moderated by both culture and gender of the respondents. To perform a more fine-grained test of our predictions, a series of separate ANOVAs with two within-respondent (or between-emotions) factors (i.e. pleasantness and interpersonal orientation) were performed on the four respondent groups. The pertinent means are illustrated in Fig. 4.

Among the Japanese men, there was a significant effect of interpersonal orientation [*F*1(1, 316) = 125 and *F*2(1, 25) = 10.7, *P*s < .005], showing a greater frequency of experiencing interpersonally engaged emotions than interpersonally disengaged emotions regardless of their dominant valence. Among the Japanese women, a strong effect for interpersonal orientation

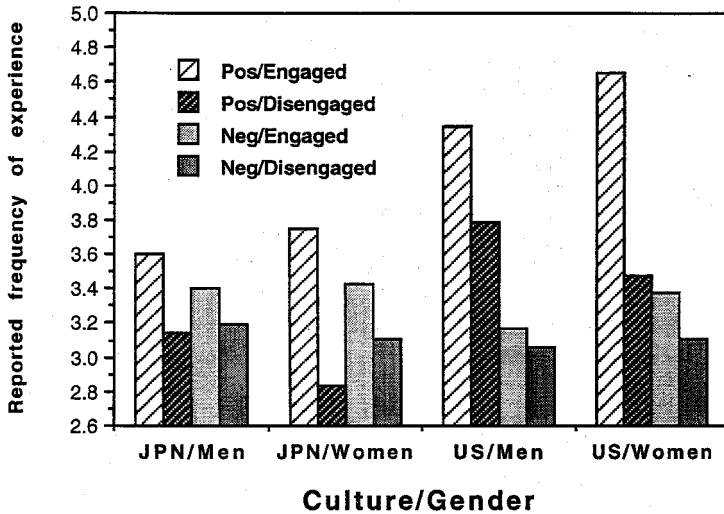


FIG. 4. Reported frequency of experiencing four types of emotions for Japanese and American men and women.

was also found [ $F(1, 291) = 476$  and  $F(2, 25) = 36.1$ ,  $P_s < .001$ ]. In general, engaged emotions were experienced more frequently than disengaged emotions. Interestingly, with pleasantness, the frequency increased for engaged emotions but it decreased for disengaged emotions, as captured by a significant pleasantness  $\times$  interpersonal orientation interaction [ $F(1, 291) = 202$  and  $F(2, 25) = 8.45$ ,  $P_s < .01$ ]. This interaction is evident in the Japanese men's data; although this effect attained statistical significance when respondents were used as a random variable [ $F(1, 316) = 33.2$ ,  $P < .001$ ], it failed to reach statistical significance when emotions were used as a random variable ( $P > .25$ ). In these two Japanese groups, then, especially predominant was the effect of interpersonal orientation, with the effect of pleasantness obtained only in its interaction with interpersonal orientation.

The strength of the effects of these two characteristics of different emotions can be assessed by computing the proportions of the variance attributed to these characteristics of the emotions when the emotions enter the ANOVA as a random variable. These proportions are summarised in Table 3. This measure,  $\eta^2$ , lends support to the foregoing observation. The interpersonal orientation, alone, accounted for a large portion of the variance for both Japanese men (29%) and women (52%). The other effects (the main effect of pleasantness and its interaction with interpersonal orientation) were relatively minor. In particular, virtually no variance was accounted for by the main effect of pleasantness.

TABLE 3  
Effect Size (Indicated by  $\eta^2$ ) Associated with Pleasantness,  
Interpersonal Orientation, and the Interaction between the Two in  
Determining the Frequency of Experiencing Emotions

	<i>Japanese</i>		<i>American</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Pleasantness (P)	.01	.00	.67	.38
Interpersonal Engagement (IE)	.29	.52	.08	.29
P $\times$ IE	.04	.12	.04	.11

By contrast, the American data showed a markedly different pattern. Among the American men, there was a strong main effect of pleasantness [ $F(1, 95) = 205$  and  $F(1, 25) = 81.9$ ,  $P_s < .0001$ ]. Thus, both the engaged and the disengaged emotions attained higher frequency ratings if they were positive than if they were negative although this effect was stronger for the engaged than for the disengaged emotions, as revealed by the significant main effect for interpersonal orientation [ $F(1, 95) = 43.1$  and  $F(1, 25) = 9.57$ ,  $P_s < .01$ ] and its interaction with pleasantness [ $F(1, 95) = 33.4$  and  $F(1, 25) = 4.52$ ,  $P_s < .05$ ]. The pattern was nearly identical for the American women, except that the increase in the frequency ratings for positive emotions was not as strong if they were interpersonally disengaged [ $F(1, 184) = 450$  and  $F(1, 25) = 45.7$ ,  $P_s < .0001$ ;  $F(1, 184) = 249$  and  $F(1, 25) = 34.8$ ,  $P_s < .0001$ ;  $F(1, 184) = 284$  and  $F(1, 25) = 13.2$ ,  $P_s < .001$ ], for the main effects of pleasantness and interpersonal orientation and the interaction between the two, respectively). The analysis of effect size (see Table 3) underscores this observation. The dominant valence of the emotions accounted for nearly 70% of the entire variation among the American men. This figure decreased for the American women, but it was still quite high (38%). The other effects (interpersonal orientation and its interaction with pleasantness) were much less than the main effect of pleasantness although they were substantial especially for the women.

Overall, Americans appear to elaborate, highlight, or emphasise positive feelings much more than negative feelings. This tendency, however, was conspicuously absent in our Japanese sample. Further, consistent with the hypothesis that interpersonal engagement is the primary motivation for interdependent selves, Japanese appear to elaborate and emphasise interpersonally engaged emotions more than disengaged emotions. Finally, the American tendency to emphasise positive feelings was especially pronounced for interpersonally engaged, rather than disengaged emotions. This might seem puzzling because Americans are assumed not to be

particularly motivated toward interdependence or interpersonal engagement. We return to this finding later.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION

### Cultural Views of the Self, Emotional Experience, and Well-being

Emotions are critical in the construction and the maintenance of the culturally authorised view of the self as either independent in the United States or as interdependent as in Japan, and these views of self provide the framework for general good feelings or subjective well-being. In support of this analysis, the present data shows that the reported frequency of general positive emotions (e.g. calm, elated) was most closely associated with the reported frequency of interpersonally engaged positive emotions (e.g. friendly feelings) in Japan, but with the reported frequency of interpersonally disengaged positive emotions (e.g. pride) in the United States.

Although the current findings are derived from only two cultural groups, they resonate with the results from a large cross-national study on self-esteem and subjective well-being. Diener and Diener (1995) found that self-esteem (analogous to disengaged positive emotions such as pride) is strongly related to subjective well-being (analogous to general positive emotions such as happy) in individualist cultures such as the United States, but only moderately so in collectivist cultures such as Japan. Further, Kwan and colleagues (Kwan et al., 1997) have recently provided evidence that in the latter cultures engagement in harmonious relationships has a relatively greater effect on life satisfaction.

Together, the growing body of studies suggests that culture influences the *associations* among different dimensions of mental life. This thesis is predicated on a considerable degree of within-culture variation among individuals. The fact that a cultural system is based on a model of the self as interdependent does not imply that everyone in this cultural system performs well and faithfully the tasks of interdependence and interpersonal engagement. On the contrary, individuals do differ considerably. Nevertheless, the cultural system ensures that a success in these tasks entails, more often than not, general good feelings and, thus by extension, life satisfaction. Likewise, individuals vary considerably in their propensity for independence and interpersonal disengagement within a cultural system based on the model of the self as independent. Yet, success in tasks of independence is associated with general good feelings and, perhaps, with life satisfaction in such cultural systems and in such systems only.



There was another striking cross-cultural difference in emotional experience. In the United States a reported frequency of emotional experience was much higher for positive emotions than for negative emotions. But the effect entirely vanished in Japan. Although predicted by our analysis, this contrast between the American and the Japanese data proved quite notable in its magnitude. Whereas in the American data nearly half of the entire variation among the 31 emotions (67% for males and 38% for females) was accounted for in terms of their valence as positive or negative, the corresponding proportion in Japan was nearly zero.

This marked cross-cultural difference may have likely derived from the hypothesised differences between Japan and the United States in the cultural views of the self. With an independent view of self (in the United States), the pleasantness of emotional experience, as an internal, subjective attribute, is perceived as pertaining directly to the inner core of the self and, as a consequence, those with this view of the self may be highly motivated to increase—highlight, emphasise, and cognitively elaborate—these subjectively positive feelings and decrease—avoid, ignore, and cognitively reinterpret—subjectively negative feelings. With an alternative view of the self as interdependent (in Japan), however, internal attributes of the self in general are considered to be much less important, less consequential, and less reliable than more social and intersubjective aspects of the self (Cousins, 1989; Fiske et al., 1998). The valence of emotional experience therefore may then be seen as something that has to be accepted as is, or otherwise, to be moderated or tamed. In either case, the valence of emotions may be relatively detached from, or less integrated with the structure of social motivations and social actions. Instead, in Japan regardless of their valence, interpersonally engaged emotions were more frequently experienced than disengaged emotions.

### **Self-enhancement and Relational Self-improvement**

The foregoing analysis is consistent with the literature on self-esteem. The American social psychological literature contains numerous indications that people, especially those with high self-esteem, are constantly striving to feel good about themselves (e.g. Greenwald, 1980; Harter, 1990; Solomon, Greenberg, Pyszczynski, 1992; Steele, 1988; Tesser, 1986; Zuckerman, 1979). In fact, the tendency to hold onto a positive view of the self is one of the most well-documented findings of psychology. This striving to increase positive evaluation of the self may explain, at least in part, numerous self-enhancing biases, in which individuals overemphasise positive, unique features of the self while selectively ignoring or discount-

ing negative features (Allison, Messick, & Goethals, 1989; Josephs, Markus, & Tafarodi, 1992; Taylor & Brown, 1988).

Recent cross-cultural investigations, however, have shown that these self-enhancing biases can rarely be demonstrated in some Asian cultures (e.g. in Japan) where interdependence defines the central cultural task. For example, Markus and Kitayama (1991b) and, more recently, Matsumoto and Kitayama (1998) found that one especially powerful form of self-enhancing bias, a false uniqueness effect (Harter, 1990; Myers, 1996; Wylie, 1979), is highly robust in an American sample, but it virtually vanishes in a Japanese sample. Comparable failures to find similar self-enhancing biases have been reported by many researchers (e.g. Heine & Lehman, 1995; Kitayama, Takagi, & Matsumoto, 1994; Takata, 1987) and, further, more recent studies have revealed that Japanese people often show highly self-critical tendencies even when responses are completely anonymous (Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, in press; Kitayama et al., 1997; Matsumoto & Kitayama, 1999; Muramoto & Yamaguchi, 1997). Kitayama and colleagues have suggested that self-critical tendencies of Japanese are part and parcel of a *relational self-improvement process* whereby individuals seek their own shortcomings *vis-à-vis* socially shared standards of excellence (self-criticism) so as to be able to *both* improve themselves by eliminating their own shortcomings *and* fit in to the pertinent social relationship from which the standards for excellence are derived.

## The Subjective vs. the Intersubjective in Constructions of Emotions

Curiously, in the present study the American tendency to emphasise positive feelings was more pronounced when these feelings were interpersonally engaged than when they were interpersonally disengaged. Indeed, it was the Americans rather than the Japanese, that reportedly experienced such engaged positive emotions as *friendly feelings*, *feelings of respect* most frequently. Further, these feelings were among the most frequently experienced by both men and women in the United States, and had a moderately positive correlation with general positive feelings (see Fig. 2).<sup>6</sup> These findings might seem somewhat inconsistent with the hypothesis that Americans have a stronger tendency toward independence and interpersonal disengagement of the self.

We speculate that the exact manner in which interpersonally engaged emotions are constructed is quite different in the respective cultures. Specifically, from an interdependent (i.e. Japanese) perspective, engaged emotions may arise in a densely knit social relationship, in which the

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<sup>6</sup> The mean ratings for each emotion are available, upon request, from the first author.

participants exchange mutually positive appraisals and behaviours (e.g. "I finally felt friendly to him after having listened closely to him in a long personal conversation", "I feel respectful to her because she is not only good in math but very much caring and kind to those, like me, who are not as good or competent"). Because of this emphasis on the *intersubjective* components in the construction of these engaged feelings, a Japanese person, *A*, may not feel "truly" friendly or respectful of another person, *B*, just because *A* makes positive judgements about *B*; some evidence of equally positive appraisals and behaviours being reciprocated by *B* may be necessary for these feelings to be experienced as such by *A*. By contrast, from an independent (i.e. American) point of view, the seemingly identical emotions of interpersonal engagement may arise mostly from one's own positive judgements about another (e.g. "I feel friendly to him because he is so kind", "I respect her because she does math so well"). Reciprocal responses from the other person may well facilitate the initial positive feelings, but will not be necessary for these feelings to be experienced as such. Because of this emphasis on one's own affective or *subjective* components in the construction of these engaged feelings, one can feel friendly or respectful "unilaterally" or "on one's own", without similar, cooperative responses being reciprocated by others.<sup>7</sup>

In short, positive interpersonally engaged emotions thus constructed in the United States, unlike in Japan, are essentially subjective feelings that happen to be directed to someone else. They are individual achievements and, accordingly, they may be experienced as indicative of the good internal self. It should come as no surprise that in the United States, interpersonally engaged positive feelings had a low, but still substantial correlation with general good feelings. We may further expect that independent selves should expend considerable effort in increasing positive feelings whether engaged or disengaged. Nevertheless, there typically exists more factual information that constrains this effort, as well as the risk of humiliating oneself, when one's own attributes are being evaluated and judged (i.e. in interpersonally disengaged positive emotions) than those of other individuals are judged (i.e. in interpersonally engaged positive

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<sup>7</sup> Additionally, whether *B* would actually reciprocate *A*'s actions and cooperate with *B* in trying to construct interpersonally engaged positive feelings depends on how *B* is perceiving *A*'s action to him/herself. Within this tightly knit interdependence, *A* may well be aware that whether he/she can feel friendly or experience positive emotions with *B* depends importantly and crucially on how *B* might think and feel about him/her. With this construction of interpersonal engagement, individuals will be highly vigilant of other individuals in a relationship and concerned keenly with how their own behaviours might be perceived and interpreted by others. It is perhaps a result of this that the second most frequent emotion for both men and women in Japan was a social fear or anxiety about consequences of one's own actions on others (i.e. *feeling afraid of causing trouble to others*).

emotions). Together, given the American, essentially subjective construction of interpersonal engagement, it may be far easier to augment and elaborate interpersonally engaged positive emotions than to emphasise interpersonally disengaged positive emotions. This might explain the greater frequency reported by the American respondents for the interpersonally engaged positive feelings than for their interpersonally disengaged counterparts.

## Social Construction of "Basic" Emotions

In the current work we were able to capture some cross-cultural differences in the correlates of good feelings by focusing on two cross-culturally common dimensions of emotion (i.e. pleasantness and interpersonal orientation). The central significance of these two dimensions in emotional processes can be further suggested by comparing the four clusters of emotions identified here (pleasantness  $\times$  interpersonal orientation) with some emotions that are considered to be basic in the contemporary emotion literature.

In their attempt to empirically document basic-level categories in lay understanding of emotion, Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, and O'Connor (1987) identified joy, love, anger, sadness, and fear as five basic-level categories under each of which many more specific emotions are subsumed. These emotions are mostly included in some other prominent lists of basic or primary emotions by Ekman (1984), Izard (1993), and Plutchik (1980), among others. Some general correspondence is obvious between Shaver et al.'s basic-level categories and the clusters of emotions we have identified. Thus, their love category (subsuming, for example, fondness and infatuation) corresponds quite closely to our categories of interpersonally engaged emotions. Their joy category (including pride, bliss, contentment, elation) appears to be an amalgam of our interpersonally disengaged positive emotions and general positive emotions. Similarly, their sadness (including guilt and shame) and anger (hostility and jealousy) categories are virtually identical to our interpersonally engaged and disengaged negative emotions, respectively. It is reasonable to suggest, then, that at least *some* of the so-called basic emotions (especially, love, joy, sadness, and anger) are critically constituted by interpersonal orientation of the self and, by implication, by the structure of *social relationships*.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The only emotion category identified by Shaver et al. that was not included in the current research was fear-related emotions. We did not employ these emotions, because our primary focus was to establish the interpersonal orientation dimension in emotional processes, and fear-related emotions were considered relatively ambiguous in this regard.

The foregoing analysis casts doubt on the currently popular, mostly biological theories of emotion that postulate unitary, neuronal programmes for the basic emotions (e.g. Ekman, 1984). The current findings, instead, lend themselves to what might be called the weak version of social constructionist theory of emotion (Kitayama & Markus, 1994; Mesquita & Frijda, 1992; Oatley, 1993; Parkinson, 1995). This position explicitly acknowledges that emotions are biologically "prepared", in that they can be decomposed into component processes, some of which are demonstrably hard-wired. At the same time, it also insists that they are crucially "configured" or "actualised" through patterns of social interactions. Emotion from this point of view is a social product or cultural elaboration enabled by a set of biologically hard-wired component processes (e.g. Averill, 1982; Briggs, 1970; Levy, 1984; Lutz, 1988; Potter, 1988; Shweder & LeVine, 1984; Solomon, 1976; see Kitayama & Markus, 1994, for a review). Accordingly, culturally shared systems of meaning or cultural frames (Holland & Quinn, 1987) shape emotional experience, and emotional experience, in turn, defines what is "intensely meaningful" (Lutz, 1988, p. 8) in a given cultural system. From this perspective, there should likely be many cross-cultural differences, as well as similarities, in emotional experience. The current research provides the initial evidence for some cross-culturally divergent correlates of general good feelings and subjective well-being.

## Concluding Remarks

Although the current work examined correlates of general good feelings, it would seem possible that the very nature of these feelings as constructed and experienced in different cultures also varies to some significant extent. And for that matter, there might also exist considerable cross-cultural variations in the exact meanings and nature of other emotions such as "friendly feelings", "shame", or "anger". It will be important to examine, in detail, a culture-specific package of subjective contents, behavioural and interpersonal antecedents and consequences, and many physiological concomitants that as a whole constitute these seemingly most basic classes of human feelings.

Such research is significant precisely because the cultural shaping of emotions and feelings serves as one extremely powerful means by which the culturally authorised view of the self as independent or interdependent attains a special status as the incontestable tenet or ultimate standard of judgement, inference, and behaviour. This cultural conditioning will ensure, for example, that it feels good, right, and fully justified to subscribe to a particular view of the self. The seemingly nonemotional, cognitive processes of judgement and inference, such as moral reasoning

(e.g. Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990; White, 1994) and decision making (e.g. Leung & Bond, 1984), may have to be grounded in the corresponding emotional conditioning if they are to produce strong convictions in the social thinker.

Because the nature of emotional conditioning does vary across cultures, the type of reasoning that can produce strong and unquestioned conviction in one group might actually not in others, resulting in miscommunications and misunderstandings across cultures (Brislin, Cushner, Cherrie, & Young, 1986). This concern is of considerable practical importance in this increasingly internationalising and globalising world. But it does equally apply to theories in social, personality, and emotion psychology, many of which draw implicitly but crucially on the Western assumption of the person as an independent entity (Farr, 1997). The current work, then, underscores the need in psychology to examine the subjective experience of people in different cultures from their own point of view and ground its theories on these culturally informed observations.

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