

Measurement Invariance of Acculturation and Enculturation Measures in East Asian Americans

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The field of Marriage and Family Therapy has attempted to engage with ethnic and racial minority clients by taking steps to be multiculturally competent and understand the unique experiences and needs each client population has. One under-researched and underserved population is Asian Americans and the current study specifically examines East Asian Americans. Previous research has established the importance of cultural values in their association with professional psychological help-seeking attitudes and behaviors for East Asian Americans. East Asian American cultural values are manifested through the processes of acculturation and enculturation. The field can test the association between acculturation or enculturation with other constructs such as help-seeking attitudes. To date, however, the field has assumed that the measurement of acculturation and enculturation processes are invariant. This means that the field assumes that different East Asian ethnic groups: Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, have the same cultural values and that the constructs of acculturation and enculturation are manifested in equivalent ways. This study addresses this assumption by investigating measurement invariance in three acculturation and enculturation measures: The Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans adapted for Asian Americans; the Asian Values Scale – Revised; and the European American Values Scale for Asian Americans – Revised. Data were collected from 138 Chinese Americans, 134 Japanese Americans, and 138 Korean Americans on the above acculturation and enculturation measures. Results revealed that all three measures were not strong invariant and thus their means cannot be compared across groups. In addition, the results revealed the factor model limitations of the measures used. The findings are discussed

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in the context of measurement and what this means for how the field can understand the experiences of East Asian Americans in terms of therapy.