A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POSITIONS OF COLLECTIVISM IN JAPANESE AND SRI LANKAN SOCIETIES

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Collectivism refers to one of the four dimensions of culture; the concept of self which elaborates on individualism and collectivism. The thinking patterns, behavioral patterns and believes of Japanese and Sri Lankans are different. This occurs due to their contradictory cultural practices. Hence, as Japanese learners, it is important to know the positions of collectivism in order to minimize the misunderstanding that may cause due to the ignorance of different cultural dimensions of Japan and Sri Lanka. Triandis, in 1995 stated that researches have been undertaken approaching the value systems and social systems between Japan and Sri Lanka. This includes the cross-cultural and psychological researches in which the main course is value systems. This research is carried out to find the positions and level of collectivism of Japanese and Sri Lankan Sinhala communities. Further, this shows the gap of the collectivism between Japanese and Sinhala communities. And this will show the characteristics of collectivism of each society. The societal- phycology and culture too differ along with the disparity in collectivism. People of Sri Lanka and Japan think differently when they deal with the others of the society. These differences, behaviors, thinking patterns and ideologies affect the intercultural communication to a large extend. So far, there have been no researches conducted regarding the value systems of Sri Lankan collectivism. As Japanese value systems and social systems differ from those of Sri Lanka, position of collectivism also varies apparently. Thus, there is a clear gap between Japan and Sri Lanka. To prove the above hypothesis, a questionnaire is produced to the members of Sri Lankan and Japanese communities. The main objective of this research is to make an impact on the reduction of misunderstanding caused due to the differences between the thinking patterns and behaviors practiced by the two communities. The research also attempts to strengthen the mutual understanding between the two communities by analyzing the data gathered by the questionnaires.

Key Words: Japan, Sri Lanka, collectivism, culture, values, misunderstanding.

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