

IB DP Psychology
Higher level
Paper 3 – resource booklet

The sources in this examination have been collated to assess the claim that culture influences the effectiveness of strategies for improving interpersonal relationships

Source 2

A study was conducted to investigate whether self-disclosure improves relationship satisfaction in two cultural groups.

60 romantic couples from an individualistic culture and 60 romantic couples from a collectivist culture completed a guided self-disclosure task once per week for four weeks. Relationship satisfaction was measured using a standardised questionnaire with scores ranging from 0 to 100, where higher scores indicate greater satisfaction. Mean satisfaction scores were calculated for each cultural group after the intervention.

The table shows mean relationship satisfaction scores after the self-disclosure task in relation to culture.

Table 1: Mean relationship satisfaction scores after self-disclosure intervention.

Culture	Mean score	Standard deviation
Individualistic culture	78.4	9.2
Collectivist culture	64.1	10.1

Source 3

Focus group interviews with adults from four cultural backgrounds explored how culture influences perceptions of what makes communication “effective” in relationships. Participants discussed conflict resolution, emotional expression, and relationship maintenance.

A thematic analysis of the interview transcripts identified the following themes:

- Participants from individualistic cultures emphasised open emotional expression and honesty
- Participants from collectivist cultures prioritised harmony, emotional restraint, and indirect communication
- Some participants reported that strategies learned from Western relationship advice were “uncomfortable” or “disruptive”
- Bicultural participants described adapting strategies depending on cultural context

Source 4

A correlational study examined the relationship between cultural orientation and preferred conflict-resolution strategies in interpersonal relationships. Participants completed an Individualism–Collectivism Scale (scores ranging from 0 to 100, with higher scores indicating a more individualistic orientation) and a conflict-resolution preference scale measuring preference for direct confrontation.

Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated to examine the relationship between individualism–collectivism scores and preference for direct communication during conflict. The results are shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Correlation between cultural orientation and conflict-resolution preference

Variables correlated	Correlation with self-esteem
Individualism–Collectivism score and preference for direct confrontation	0.61

Source 5

A longitudinal intervention study examined whether cultural competence training improves relationship satisfaction among clients from different cultural backgrounds. Relationship counsellors received training focused on adapting communication strategies, such as self-disclosure and emotional expression, to clients' cultural norms.

Client relationship satisfaction was measured using a standardised questionnaire both before the training and again three months after the training. Mean satisfaction scores were calculated for clients from individualistic and collectivist cultural backgrounds.

Table 3 shows relationship satisfaction scores before and after cultural competence training.

Table 3: Mean relationship satisfaction scores before and after cultural competence training

Client cultural background	Before training	After training
Individualistic	70	76
Collectivist	62	75