

Behavioral Manifestations of Modesty:
A Cross-Cultural Study in Hong Kong and Shanghai

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Abstract

Modesty has been regarded as a traditional Chinese virtue. Given that Chinese people value harmony in interpersonal relationships, modesty is employed as means to avoid conflict in social interactions. In the present study, the notion of modesty is taken beyond the scope of personality style and considered across behavioral contexts. The Modesty Behavior Scale was developed to tap the behavioral manifestations of the underlying disposition. The structure of modest behavior and its nomological network were examined in two Chinese samples, Hong Kong and Shanghai, to validate the designed scale. This study explored the relations between two behavioral measures, i.e., modest behavior and individuation, and other constructs of personality, including self-esteem, self-efficacy, traditionality, modernity, independent and interdependent self-construals. Gender and cultural differences between the two regions were examined and discussed.