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We Are Not All the Same: The Influence of Personal Cultural Orientations on Vulnerable Consumers' Financial Well-Being

Lixun Su, Emily C. Tanner, Natalie A. Marquart, and Dan Zhao

Abstract

Addressing vulnerability worldwide is the goal of many organizations (e.g., nongovernmental organizations, nonprofit service providers, policy makers) and scholars, yet vulnerable consumers sometimes reject help that could ameliorate their vulnerability, especially when offered services that conflict with their personal cultural orientations. This article utilizes secondary data collected in the United States and primary data collected in the United States and China to explore how two personal cultural orientations—idiocentrism (i.e., individualism at the individual level) and allocentrism (i.e., collectivism at the individual level)—influence one's perceived financial vulnerability and behavior. The results demonstrate that idiocentrism (vs. allocentrism) decreases (vs. increases) perceived financial vulnerability through other personal cultural orientations (i.e., long-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity). Finally, perceived financial vulnerability leads to consumers engaging in financial behaviors that negatively affect financial well-being. The results contribute to the literature by deepening understanding of the formulation mechanism and consequences of perceived financial vulnerability from the perspective of personal cultural orientations. In addition, the results indicate that personal cultural orientations can be changed by idiocentrism/allocentrism and thus can be treated as endogenous variables in international marketing research.

Keywords

perceived financial vulnerability, personal cultural orientations, idiocentrism, allocentrism

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Globally, over 10 million nongovernmental organizations (Global Leadership Bulletin 2015) work to address vulnerabilities and improve well-being. Mitigating vulnerability is highly challenging and often requires substantial behavioral changes. Those trying to aid vulnerable populations start with an implicit assumption that an at-risk person recognizes their vulnerability and wants to be helped (e.g., Park 2014). However, to effectively help vulnerable consumers and avoid potential unintended consequences, organizations (e.g., nongovernmental organizations, nonprofit service providers, policy makers) aiming to serve these populations must "take the time to understand their lives, in all their complexity and richness" (Banerjee, Duflo, and Qian 2012, p. viii). This awareness includes understanding how culture shapes perceptions of vulnerability, which is defined as the degree to which people perceive themselves as powerless and incapable of addressing adverse events in their lives (Blanton et al. 2001).

Culture influences consumers' representation of objects because it collectively reflects the people around us, the values imbued in us, and the perspectives we see in the world (Deleersnyder et al. 2009). Culture creates the framework for how a society functions and provides asymmetric access to cultural and economic capital, which engenders perceived vulnerability (e.g., Cheung and McColl-Kennedy 2019). While culture gives individuals a sense of belonging and identity and encourages behavior that can positively affect one's life, cultures can also perpetuate beliefs and behaviors that increase one's perceived vulnerability and ultimately negatively affect well-being (Garbinsky, Mead, and Gregg 2021). Perceived vulnerability then shapes vulnerable individuals' well-being through their general outlook and behaviors.

For example, before the 2008 financial collapse, rapid economic growth and the world's highest gross domestic product per capita influenced an Icelandic culture that valued material

Lixun Su is Assistant Professor of Marketing, School of Business, Eastern Kentucky University, USA (email: Lixun.Su@eku.edu). Emily C. Tanner is Assistant Professor of Marketing, Department of Marketing, John Chambers College of Business and Economics, West Virginia University, USA (email: Emily.tanner@mail.wvu.edu). Natalie A. Marquart is a doctoral student, Department of Marketing, John Chambers College of Business and Economics, West Virginia University, USA (email: namarquart@mix.wvu.edu). Dan Zhao is Lecturer of Home Economics, School of Humanities, Jilin Agricultural University, China (email: cloverdan@163.com).

goods and encouraged living beyond one's means (Garðarsdóttir and Dittmar 2012). Materialistic Icelanders negatively affected their financial well-being through behaviors such as compulsive spending and poor money management (Garðarsdóttir and Dittmar 2012). Worse, financial problems affect not only one's financial health but also other areas of well-being and, ultimately, overall well-being (e.g., Brüggen et al. 2017). In addition, cultural orientations not explicitly related to spending can play a role in perceived financial vulnerability. These relationships can also influence behaviors that harm financial well-being (or other types of well-being).

Traditionally, culture is operationalized at the national level, according to Hofstede's (1983, 1984, 2001) framework, and is the foundation of understanding cultural differences in consumer behavior (Sharma 2010). Conceptualizing culture primarily through a macro perspective limits our understanding of how culture influences consumer behavior. At the individual level, individuals from the same community can vary in the degree to which they reflect the culture of the community (e.g., Lam, Chen, and Schaubroeck 2002). While Icelandic culture in the early 2000s placed a high value on material goods, it is unlikely that every Icelander participated equally in this culture. For some Icelanders, their values may have varied, which potentially led to different behaviors that did not have the same financial consequences.

Personal cultural orientations are cultural values one person holds, and they can vary from the larger culture (Sharma 2010). Personal cultural orientations identify individual cultural dimensions, specifically idiocentrism/allocentrism, power distance, long- versus short-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity (Sharma 2010). By examining individual differences within a culture and understanding how these dimensions affect perceptions and behavior, we aim to help explain why some individuals in a particular group are more willing to change their behavior while others make decisions that perpetuate their vulnerability. Because understanding the lives of those whom organizations and policy makers intend to serve is necessary, understanding personal cultural orientations' influence on individual decisions is essential.

Extant studies have widely explored the consequences of perceived vulnerability across multiple contexts (e.g., Baker, Gentry, and Rittenburg 2005; Netemeyer et al. 2018; Tanner and Su 2019). However, to our knowledge, no research explains how personal cultural orientations affect perceived vulnerability and how this relationship influences financial behaviors that ultimately affect consumer financial well-being. Studies consistently demonstrate that financial well-being is a crucial determinant of overall subjective well-being (e.g., Brüggen et al. 2017; Netemeyer et al. 2018), and the importance of financial well-being on subjective well-being is extreme for low-income consumers (Mahdzan et al. 2019).

To fill this theoretical gap, we aim to understand the influence of each personal cultural orientation (i.e., idiocentrism/allocentrism, power distance, long- vs. short-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity) on perceived financial vulnerability and its consequences. We ask the following questions: How do personal cultural orientations influence an individual's perceived vulnerability? What are the individual consequences of personal cultural orientations on financial behaviors, specifically tendency to live for today, impulsive buying, and risky indebtedness, that affect financial well-being?

We conducted a transnational study comparing consumers in the United States and China to address these questions. The proposed framework explains the influence of idiocentrism and allocentrism on personal cultural orientations, which provide an opportunity to influence the perceptions of vulnerability that can be difficult to overcome. We consider the impact on three indicators that negatively affect financial well-being: attitudes toward the present and future, impulsive buying, and risky indebtedness (e.g., Abrantes-Braga and Veludo-de-Oliveira 2019). In addition to the contributions to theory, this deeper understanding of vulnerable consumers' barriers can then direct those serving vulnerable populations to design services or implement policies more likely to achieve the intended results.

Theoretical Background

Central to subjective well-being, personal cultural orientation influences how consumers reflect on the various aspects of their lives (Suh 2000). Personal cultural orientation highlights and prioritizes different parts of life experiences, playing a significant role in shaping what information is most important for members of different cultures (Suh 2000). Thus, differences among behaviors, values, and attitudes can be found among various cultures, influencing how individuals realize and manage their well-being and overall perceptions of life satisfaction (Oishi 2000). For example, personal cultural orientation influences consumer behaviors in response to a crisis (e.g., stockpiling behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic; Ahmadi et al. 2022). Table 1 summarizes studies about the influence of personal cultural orientation on subjective well-being.

Social representation theory (SRT) provides a lens to examine the relationship between personal cultural orientation and well-being (Hamilton et al. 2014). Social representation refers to "systems of opinions, knowledge, and beliefs particular to a culture, a social category, or a group with regard to objects in the social environment" (Rateau et al. 2011, p. 478). According to SRT, consumers' representations of objects are shaped by their groups, associations with others, the culture imprinted on them, and the people around them (Rateau et al. 2011). In addition, people differentiate "us" from "them" by defining justifications and legitimizing thoughts and behaviors (Hamilton et al. 2014). A social representation is the ensemble of a group's thoughts and feelings and is co-constructed by individuals in the group (Wagner et al. 1999). If active pursuits of financial success are considered inappropriate in a group, consumers who attempt to pursue financial success will be regarded as "them" (Kimuyu 1999). Because those consumers deviate from the typical (i.e., "us"),

Table 1. Examples of Studies on the Relationship Between Personal Cultural Orientation and Well-Being.

Studies	Cultural Orientation	Sample	Main Findings
Ahmadi et al. (2022)	Uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, indulgence, individualism	3,078 participants from 54 countries	Uncertainty avoidance, short-term orientation, and individualism motivate consumers to engage in stockpiling, negatively affecting consumer well-being.
Arrindell et al. (1997)	Uncertainty avoidance	100,000+ participants from 36 countries	Uncertainty avoidance increases subjective well-being.
Arrindell et al. (2003)	Masculinity/femininity	5,491 participants from 11 countries	Masculine culture decreases subjective well-being in terms of fear.
Basabe and Ros (2005)	Power distance	Participants from 70+ nations and regions	Power distance decreases subjective well-being.
Diener et al. (2000)	Individualism and collectivism	55,000+ participants from 42 nations	Individualism increases subjective well-being in terms of marital relations. Collectivism decreases overall subjective well-being in terms of marital relations.
Matsumoto, Yoo, and Nakagawa (2008)	Time orientation	3,018 participants from 23 countries	Long-term orientation is likely to increase one's support for subjective well-being.
Steel et al. (2018)	Individualism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance	4,000+ participants from 20+ countries	Individualism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity, and power distance arelikely to increase subjective well-being.
Suh, Diener, and Updegraff (2008)	Collectivism	214 participants from two countries	Collectivist/allocentric people elevate their subjective well-being through social appraisals.

they will be socially excluded and not receive opportunities from the community (Hamilton et al. 2014).

The degree to which people define themselves as connected to others can be considered the fundamental dimension of personal cultural orientation: idiocentrism/allocentrism (Triandis 1989). Idiocentrism is defined as "a personal cultural orientation associated with acting independently, a strong self-concept, a sense of freedom, autonomy, and personal achievement" (Sharma 2010, p. 790). Allocentrism is defined as "a personal cultural orientation associated with acting as a part of one or more in-groups, a strong group identity, a sense of belongingness, reliance on others, giving importance to group-goals over own individual goals, and collective achievement" (Sharma 2010, p. 790). Conceptually, the idiocentrism/allocentrism distinction is closely related to the individualism/collectivism distinction, but individualism/collectivism is a concept at the national level, whereas idiocentrism/allocentrism is at the individual level. We focus on idiocentrism/allocentrism because people in the same community or nation may significantly vary in the level of self or group orientation.

Idiocentrism/allocentrism results from parental influences, psychological traits, interactions with other people, decision styles, and other characteristics (e.g., Talay et al. 2019; Triandis 1989; Triandis et al. 1985). For example, in the United States, children are traditionally raised in ways that value self-actualization, independence, and freedom (Zhang, Winterich, and Mittal 2010). In East Asian countries, children are taught to value the collective, connectedness, and harmony. Valuing independence, idiocentric people emphasize uniqueness, autonomy, and personal achievement, so personal achievements are worth the price of social exclusion (Markus and Kitayama 1991). Allocentric people seek harmony, connectedness, and equity, so endeavors to improve one's well-being may be interpreted negatively (Markus and Kitayama 1991). Because allocentric people have strong desires to fit in, they will likely avoid anything that might get them singled out.

Individualism and collectivism are fairly well understood at a national or organizational level; however, more studies are needed at the individual level (i.e., idiocentrism and allocentrism). Therefore, we examine how idiocentrism and allocentrism influence consumers' perceived vulnerability and how these perceptions influence consequential behaviors. Specifically, we examine how idiocentrism and allocentrism influence consumers' perceived vulnerability through other personal cultural orientations and the consequence of perceived vulnerability (see Figure 1).

Hypotheses

Idiocentrism, Allocentrism, and Perceived Vulnerability

Perceived vulnerability is the belief that one cannot handle or lessen the impact of adverse outcomes (e.g., Blanton et al. 2001). This awareness of the perceived lack of capabilities is based on comparing one's ability to deal with potential adverse events to that of others in the same situation and can vary among people in the same circumstance (Tanner and Su 2019).

One key difference between idiocentric and allocentric people is the level of social sensitivity or the ability to interpret others' behaviors, attitudes, and cues (Koenig and Eagly 2005). Allocentric people associate their social identities with commitments to fulfilling others' expectations, establishing harmonious relationships, and avoiding conflicts with others in the community (Tafarodi and Smith 2001). This behavioral pattern requires high evaluative sensitivity, which empowers allocentric people to detect others' implicit attitudes and

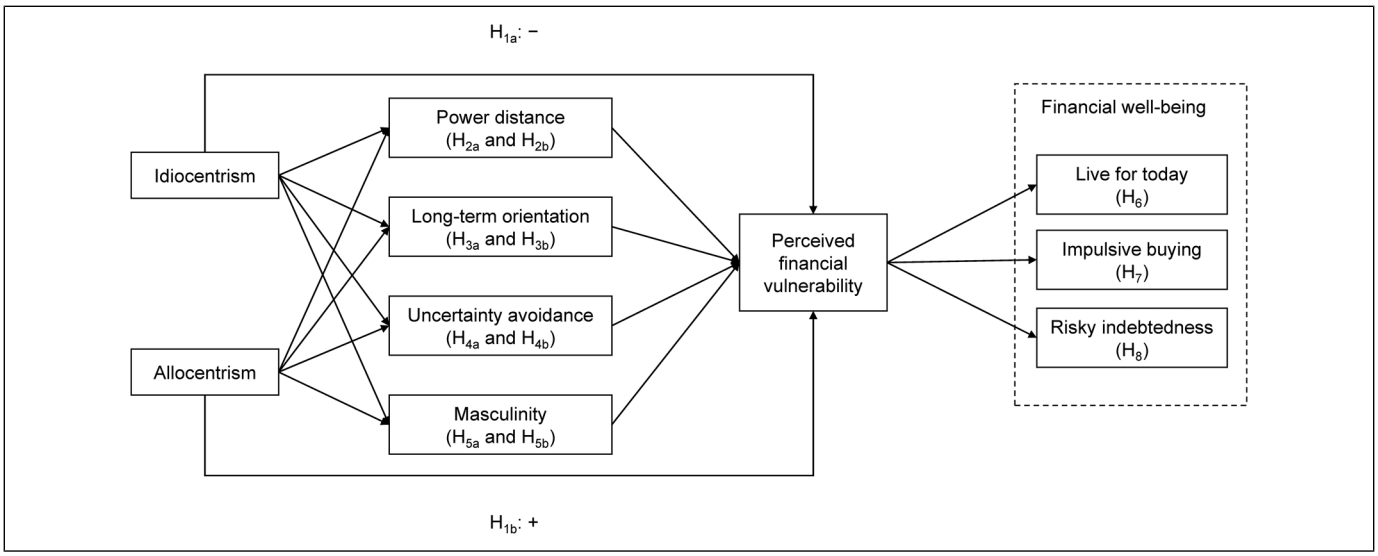

Figure 1. Theoretical framework of personal cultural orientations, perceived financial vulnerability, and financial well-being.

identify deviations from the group to maintain their status in a group (Tafarodi and Smith 2001). Contrarily, idiocentric people do not depend on others for defining the self, so judgments and criticism from others are often downplayed; thus, idiocentric people have low social sensitivity (Tafarodi and Smith 2001).

Consumers with higher social sensitivity are more likely to perceive themselves as vulnerable when faced with adverse events (Tafarodi and Smith 2001). Thus, allocentric consumers are likely to perceive high vulnerability because their high social sensitivity increases the perceived severity of adverse events. By contrast, idiocentrism decreases an individual's social sensitivity, diminishing their perceived vulnerability. Formally, we hypothesize:

H_{1a}: Idiocentrism decreases perceived vulnerability.

H_{1b}: Allocentrism increases perceived vulnerability.

Mediators Between Idiocentrism/Allocentrism and Perceived Financial Vulnerability

Previous studies have revealed a wide range of antecedents of perceived financial vulnerability, including self-control (e.g., Mahdzan et al. 2019), materialism (e.g., Chatterjee, Kumar, and Dayma 2019), personality traits (e.g., De Matos et al. 2019), plans for money, and willingness to take investment risks (e.g., Netemeyer et al. 2018). Surprisingly, the influence of personal cultural orientations on perceived financial vulnerability has attracted little research attention, given that many of the antecedents mentioned previously stem from personal cultural orientations. While they may vary in how they influence various perceived vulnerabilities, personal cultural orientations create the overall cultural structure in which an individual lives and behaves (Sharma 2010).

Power distance. Recall that vulnerable consumers feel powerless; thus, power distance is a personal cultural orientation that should be particularly relevant in understanding response to perceived vulnerability. Power distance is defined as "the extent to which the less powerful person in a society accepts inequality in power and considers it as normal" (Hofstede 1984, p. 390). In high-power-distance cultures, subordinates depend more on superiors, accepting that power is unequally distributed (Hofstede 1984). In addition, low-income consumers in a high-power-distance culture have more tolerance for income inequality than those in a low-power-distance culture (Hofstede 1994).

Idiocentric people strive for autonomy, freedom, and discretion (Hofstede 1984). As a result, idiocentric people are less likely to accept unequally distributed power than allocentric people are (Oetzel et al. 2003). Allocentric people seek harmony in interpersonal relationships and tend not to confront authorities (Tafarodi and Smith 2001). Therefore, consistent with prior research (e.g., Chan, Yim, and Lam 2010), we propose that allocentrism should be positively related to power distance.

In a high-power-distance culture, people accept inequality in power and wealth and let it grow (Hofstede 1983), making it difficult to fill the gaps between the top and bottom. Therefore, a high-power-distance culture will have more significant gaps than a low-power-distance culture, creating inherent burdens on financially vulnerable consumers. For example, in the United States, a typical low-power-distance culture, consumers generally believe that everyone is created equal, so social welfare is distributed in a way that favors, or at least does not work against, financially vulnerable consumers (Yang et al. 2007). Low-income Americans can seek the "American dream" even when facing many difficulties without systematic cultural hindrance.

From the preceding discussion, idiocentrism should decrease power distance orientation, but allocentrism increases power distance orientation. A high power-distance culture exposes

financially vulnerable consumers' difficulties more than a low-power-distance culture does. Therefore, financially vulnerable consumers in a high power-distance culture should perceive more vulnerabilities than those in a low-power-distance culture. In summary,

H_{2a}: Power distance mediates the relationship between idiocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability such that idiocentrism decreases power distance orientation, and a reduced power distance orientation attenuates perceived financial vulnerability.

H_{2b}: Power distance mediates the relationship between allocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability such that allocentrism increases power distance orientation, and an increased power distance orientation enhances perceived financial vulnerability.

Long-term orientation. Long-term-oriented consumers are more focused on the future, whereas short-term-oriented consumers are more focused on the present. Long-term-oriented people value persistence (Bearden, Money, and Nevins 2006). When consumers persist in achieving goals, they are more likely to believe that what does not kill them makes them stronger, and they have confidence in their abilities and power to overcome difficulties (Deleersnyder et al. 2009). Idiocentric people are more likely to believe in their roles in overcoming difficulties because of the evolution of science and technology, while allocentric people are more likely to believe in fate (Chan, Wan, and Sin 2009). When people believe in fate, they are more likely to resign, quit planning, and formulate a lazy attitude because they believe "they have no control over the future anyway" when facing predicaments (Harrell 1987, p. 93). Therefore, we assert that allocentric people are more short-term-oriented when facing financial problems than idiocentric people are.

When consumers are short-term-oriented, they only focus on immediate benefits and outcomes, whereas long-term-oriented consumers are aware of the future and the present benefits (Bearden, Money, and Nevins 2006). Those future benefits for long-term-oriented consumers can offset current perceived financial vulnerability. Specifically, long-term-oriented consumers are more likely to perceive challenges as investments in achieving their ultimate goals (Deleersnyder et al. 2009). In contrast, short-term-oriented consumers tend to perceive difficulties as suffering (Deleersnyder et al. 2009). Long-term-oriented consumers can see the future benefits that short-term-oriented consumers often overlook, a comprehensive view resulting in reasonable, long-term, and practical plans to eliminate their financial vulnerabilities. In contrast, short-term-oriented consumers are more likely to follow improvised strategies to get them through the present.

In summary, according to SRT, long-term-oriented consumers may interpret the perceived financial vulnerabilities they are enduring as investments that may bring a better financial situation eventually. Contrarily, short-term-oriented consumers may pay too much attention to their perceived financial vulnerabilities and ignore future opportunities. Thus, long-term-oriented consumers are more likely to address their vulnerable financial situations because they have higher levels of persistence, perceive more benefits, and hold more positive attitudes toward their current financial circumstances. Because idiocentrism increases consumers' long-term orientation, whereas allocentrism increases consumers' short-term orientation, we hypothesize:

H_{3a}: Long-term orientation mediates the relationship between idiocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability such that idiocentrism increases long-term orientation, and an increased long-term orientation attenuates perceived financial vulnerability.

H_{3b}: Long-term orientation mediates the relationship between allocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability such that allocentrism decreases long-term orientation, and a reduced long-term orientation enhances perceived financial vulnerability.

Uncertainty avoidance. Uncertainty avoidance reflects peoples' attitudes toward uncertainty and risks (Hofstede 2001). Low-uncertainty-avoidance cultures encourage personal risks and variety-seeking, whereas high-uncertainty-avoidance cultures encourage personal security (Hofstede 1984). Previous studies found that allocentrism is correlated with uncertainty avoidance (Lee, Garbarino, and Lerman 2007) because adverse outcomes lead to more embarrassment, disapproval, and loss of face for allocentric people (Mandel 2003).

Generally, perceived financial vulnerability is accompanied by financial risks, stress, and insecurity (Blocker et al. 2013). Because consumers with high uncertainty avoidance are more sensitive to risks, they are more likely to avoid doing anything that might worsen their financial situation. Thus, their perceived financial vulnerability is heightened compared with that of consumers with low uncertainty avoidance when facing the same financial predicaments.

Because idiocentrism decreases uncertainty avoidance and allocentrism increases uncertainty avoidance, which in turn decreases perceived vulnerability, we hypothesize:

H_{4a}: Uncertainty avoidance mediates the relationship between idiocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability such that idiocentrism decreases uncertainty avoidance, and reduced uncertainty avoidance attenuates perceived financial vulnerability.

H_{4b}: Uncertainty avoidance mediates the relationship between allocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability such that allocentrism increases uncertainty avoidance, and increased uncertainty avoidance enhances perceived financial vulnerability.

Masculinity. Masculinity is used to define the roles of gender. In a masculine culture, men are expected to be ambitious, successful, assertive, determined, strong, and fast (Hofstede 1984). By contrast, women are expected to be careful, physically weak,

and less ambitious (Hofstede 1984). Communities that emphasize independence and self-sufficiency should have more liberal attitudes toward sex roles (Shafiro, Himelein, and Best 2003). At the individual level, idiocentric people tend to be more feminine and value gender equality (Chung 2005), whereas allocentric people tend to be more masculine (Shafiro, Himelein, and Best 2003).

For allocentric people, success and status are evaluated from their material possessions because masculine culture stresses material success (Hofstede 1984). As SRT suggests, people's understanding of material success determines their reaction to poverty, wealth, and perceived vulnerability. When material success is perceived as necessary in a culture, poor people undergo more discrimination. On the contrary, in a feminine culture, people are encouraged to show concern for the weak and the vulnerable (Hofstede 1984). Vulnerable consumers might find it easier to gain support to overcome their vulnerable conditions, reducing their perceived vulnerability. Thus, consumers in a feminine culture can obtain some resources to help them overcome their financial vulnerabilities.

We propose that allocentrism increases masculinity, whereas idiocentrism increases femininity. Because material wealth is more important in a masculine culture than in a feminine culture, poor consumers will suffer more perceived financial vulnerability in a masculine culture than in a feminine culture. Therefore,

H_{5a}: Masculinity mediates the relationship between idiocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability such that idiocentrism decreases masculinity, and reduced masculinity attenuates perceived financial vulnerability.

H_{5b}: Masculinity mediates the relationship between allocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability such that allocentrism increases masculinity, and increased masculinity enhances perceived financial vulnerability.

Consequences of Perceived Financial Vulnerability on Indicators of Financial Well-Being

We examine three financial behaviors that affect financial well-being: tendency to live for today, impulsive buying behavior, and risky indebtedness. Financial well-being reflects consumers' ability to maintain current and future living standards and financial freedom (Brüggen et al. 2017; Consumer Financial Protection Bureau 2015). Therefore, in this study, we choose a financial behavior related to an individual's short-term financial situation (i.e., impulsive buying behavior), one related to the long-term financial situation (i.e., risky indebtedness), and one related to both the short- and long-term financial situation (i.e., tendency to live for today).

Tendency to live for today. Previous studies have demonstrated that consumers who perceive high financial vulnerability are more likely to make poor financial decisions than those who perceive low financial vulnerability (e.g., Loke 2017). One reason behind poor decision making is that consumers with high perceived vulnerability are more process focused than outcome focused. In addition, they tend to pay more attention to the present than to the future because poor consumers usually feel that they do not control their environments or the future developments from current events (Baker, Gentry, and Rittenburg 2005). Therefore, consumers who perceive themselves as highly vulnerable struggle to make a reasonable financial plan (e.g., Brennan and Coppack 2008). For example, Tanner and Su (2019) demonstrated that consumers are more likely to focus on the present instead of the future when they perceive high vulnerability.

As a result, these consumers tend to ignore the benefits of seeking and using help from organizations and are resistant to change. Thus, they are less likely to overcome vulnerabilities. For these reasons, we propose that financially vulnerable consumers have a higher tendency to live for today, which is defined as the extent to which consumers do not plan for their financial situation and lack consideration of future consequences (Howlett, Kees, and Kemp 2008). Because allocentrism and idiocentrism affect perceived financial vulnerability through personal cultural orientations, we propose that idiocentrism and allocentrism affect one's tendency to live for today through personal cultural orientations and perceived financial vulnerability in that order. Formally,

H_6: The effect of allocentrism and idiocentrism on one's tendency to live for today is serially mediated by personal cultural orientations and perceived financial vulnerability.

Impulsive buying behavior and risky indebtedness. As mentioned previously, financial well-being is a part of consumers' reflection on their quality of life and subjective well-being (Netemeyer et al. 2018). Consumers with low financial well-being are more likely to engage in irrational financial decisions and behaviors such as impulsive buying and risky indebtedness. Impulsive buying behavior is defined as purchase decisions "that are based on spontaneous desires elicited by emotive imagery and associated sensation, and such decisions could be inconsistent with one's long-term plans and goals" (Thomas, Desai, and Seenivasan 2011, p. 127). Risky indebtedness is defined as "a behavioral tendency to getting into hazardous debt revealed by repetitive debts due to spending more than one can afford" (Abrantes-Braga and Veludo-de-Oliveira 2019, p. 1029).

Scarcity-reduced tunneling effects could explain the influence of perceived financial vulnerability on irrational financial decisions and behaviors. These tunneling effects refer to perceived scarcity pushing consumers to attend only to the scarcity, creating a tunneling perspective that ignores everything else (Mullainathan and Shafir 2013). Under this circumstance, vulnerable consumers may not consider external resources when making financial decisions. Thus, they usually engage in destructive financial behaviors, which worsen their perceived financial vulnerability in return (Mullainathan and Shafir 2013). According to scarcity-reduced tunneling effects, we propose

that perceived financial vulnerability increases one's impulsive buying behavior and risky indebtedness.

As we hypothesize that idiocentrism and allocentrism affect perceived financial vulnerability through personal cultural orientations, we propose that idiocentrism and allocentrism affect impulsive buying behavior and risky indebtedness through personal cultural orientations and perceived financial vulnerability in that order. Formally,

H_7: The effect of allocentrism and idiocentrism on one's impulsive buying behavior is serially mediated by personal cultural orientations and perceived financial vulnerability.

H_8: The effect of allocentrism and idiocentrism on one's risky indebtedness is serially mediated by personal cultural orientations and perceived financial vulnerability.

Methodology and Results

We used two studies to test the research framework. Study 1 used the Midlife in the United States (MIDUS) data to test the influence of idiocentrism and allocentrism on perceived vulnerability (i.e., H_{1a} and H_{1b}). Study 2 used a primary data set collected from the United States and China to test the mechanisms through which idiocentrism and allocentrism influence perceived vulnerability (i.e., H_2–H_5) and the consequences of perceived vulnerability in the context of financial vulnerability (H_6–H_8).

Study 1

Sample and measurement. The objective of Study 1 was to examine H_{1a} and H_{1b} based on MIDUS, which is an interdisciplinary longitudinal study examining midlife development in the United States with data collected by researchers at several universities in the United States to learn about Americans' midlife period.[1] The universities recruited participants by random-digit dialing and asked them to complete an approximate 30-minute survey via phone and a follow-up two-hour mail survey. In the survey, participants answered a comprehensive set of questions including health conditions, habits, personality, life satisfaction, work conditions, and other areas of their lives. The universities collected the data in three waves in the United States in 1995–1996 (MIDUS 1), 2004–2006 (MIDUS 2), and 2013–2014 (MIDUS 3). Because idiocentrism and allocentrism were not measured in the MIDUS 1 data, we used only MIDUS 2 and MIDUS 3 to test H_{1a} and H_{1b}.

Because of the longitudinal nature of the present study, we only included participants who completed both the MIDUS 2 and MIDUS 3 surveys in the data analysis. Within the MIDUS 2 sample, we used a random drop generator in SAS to keep only one of the siblings'/twins' data to ensure the independence of observations (Turiano et al. 2012). Next, we used the expectation maximization technique in SPSS 24 to impute all missing values, resulting in 3,293 complete cases used in the data analysis. (For participants' demographic statistics, see Web Appendix A).

The survey measured idiocentrism (Singelis 1994), allocentrism (Singelis 1994), and perceived vulnerability (Lachman and Weaver 1998) by well-established scales. (For means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha, see Web Appendix B.) Because descriptive statistical values were only reported at the construct level rather than at the item level in the MIDUS database, we cannot calculate means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha on the basis of the respondents remaining in our data set. Because the total sample without missing values was 4,000 in MIDUS 2 and 2,700 in MIDUS 3, the descriptive statistical characteristics of our data set, which included 3,293 cases, should not differ significantly from the attributes of the total sample.

Results. We used structural equation modeling via SmartPLS 3.0 to test the influence of idiocentrism and allocentrism on perceived vulnerability. We controlled participants' demographic information, including age, gender, highest level of education, employment status, marital status, and yearly household income.

The results based on MIDUS 2 showed that idiocentrism is negatively related to perceived vulnerability ($\beta = -.197$, $t = -11.089$, $p < .01$), and allocentrism is positively related to perceived vulnerability ($\beta = .167$, $t = 9.604$, $p < .01$), in support of H_{1a} and H_{1b}. Consistent with the results based on MIDUS 2, the results based on MIDUS 3 also support H_{1a} and H_{1b}. Specifically, idiocentrism is negatively related to perceived vulnerability ($\beta = -.171$, $t = -9.304$, $p < .01$; supporting H_{1a}), and allocentrism is positively related to perceived vulnerability ($\beta = .215$, $t = 11.377$, $p < .01$; supporting H_{1b}).

Finally, we built a model to test the long-lasting influence of idiocentrism and allocentrism on perceived vulnerability. Specifically, we tested the impacts of idiocentrism and allocentrism in MIDUS 2 on perceived vulnerability in MIDUS 3. Consistent with the results of the cross-sectional data, the results of the longitudinal data showed that idiocentrism is negatively related to perceived vulnerability ($\beta = -.134$, $t = -7.720$, $p < .01$), and allocentrism is positively related to perceived vulnerability ($\beta = .134$, $t = 7.495$, $p < .01$). Therefore, H_{1a} and H_{1b} are supported.

The results based on three structural equation models consistently show that idiocentrism decreases and allocentrism increases perceived vulnerability. The results from this sizable data set offer an insightful but preliminary understanding of the influence of personal cultural orientation on perceived vulnerability. Admittedly, Study 1 has at least four limitations regarding the data set. First, many missing values existed in the data set, accounting for 20% of the total data points in our data set. Even though imputing missing values is commonly acceptable and has been done in previous studies, the results may be biased. Second, the questions related to perceived vulnerability in the data set were about respondents' life in general.

[1] We received MIDUS data in a deidentified format, and it is considered not human subjects research by the Institutional Review Board at our university.

Investigating a specific type of vulnerability would help formulate direct and pertinent guidance for organizations and governments that tend to help vulnerable consumers. Therefore, Study 2 focuses on a specific type of vulnerability: financial vulnerability. Third, the data set is not timely, because the most recent data (i.e., MIDUS 3) were collected in 2013–2014. Finally, the MIDUS data were collected from only one country; the generalizability of findings investigating personal cultural orientations would be greater with data from multiple countries. To overcome the limitations and increase the generalizability of the findings, we conducted Study 2, in which we collected primary data from American and Chinese consumers regarding their perceived financial vulnerability.

Study 2

Study 2 extends Study 1 in three ways. First, Study 2 attempts to replicate Study 1 in a different context, poverty. In Study 2, we investigate financial vulnerability as a research context because it is one of the most common vulnerabilities globally and thus has attracted plenty of research attention (e.g., Voola et al. 2018). Study 2 focuses on understanding low-income consumers' perceived financial vulnerability. Second, we test the mediating effects of personal cultural orientations between idiocentrism/allocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability (i.e., H_2–H_5), and serial mediating effects from idiocentrism/allocentrism, personal cultural orientations, and perceived financial vulnerability, to financial behaviors (i.e., H_6–H_8). Finally, to increase the generalizability of results, we collected data from two countries: the United States and China, representing high idiocentrism and high allocentrism, respectively.

Sample and measurement. We collected data from online data collection platforms: CloudResearch in the United States and Sojump.com in China. Multiple studies have shown that data collected from these two platforms perform comparably to or even better than data collected in other ways (e.g., Chandler et al. 2019). To screen for low-income consumers (based on median and mean household data from both U.S. and Chinese census data), we used household income of less than $50,000 in the United States and ¥50,000 in China as the cutoff values. After deleting responses that failed three attention check questions or did not meet the household income requirement, we obtained 360 cases in the United States and 216 in China. We then deleted outliers and cases in which the respondent chose the same values for idiocentrism and allocentrism (final n = 304 in the United States and n = 172 in China). (For participants' demographic statistics, see Web Appendix A).

In the survey, we asked questions about independent variables (i.e., idiocentrism and allocentrism), mediators (i.e., power distance, long-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity), perceived financial vulnerability, and three outcomes of perceived financial vulnerability. We adapted the scales to measure allocentrism, idiocentrism, and perceived financial vulnerability as in Study 1. We used well-established scales to measure mediators (Sharma 2010), tendency to live for today (Prenda and Lachman 2001), impulsive buying behavior, and risky indebtedness (Abrantes-Braga and Veludo-de-Oliveira 2020). (For means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha, see Web Appendix B). Finally, we collected participants' demographic information.

Results. In this study, we used SmartPLS to test the model as shown in Figure 1. The results showed that the total effect of idiocentrism on perceived financial vulnerability is significantly negative ($\beta = -.148$, $t = -3.094$, $p < .01$), in support of H_{1a} (for the results, see Table 2). In addition, the influence of idiocentrism on perceived vulnerability is mediated by long-term orientation ($\beta = -.064$, $t = -3.646$, $p < .01$), but not mediated by power distance ($\beta = -.003$, $t = -.466$, $p > .10$), uncertainty avoidance ($\beta = .007$, $t = .392$, $p > .10$), or masculinity ($\beta = -.018$, $t = -1.451$, $p > .10$). Therefore, H_{3a} is supported, and H_{2a}, H_{4a}, and H_{5a} are rejected.

Moreover, the results showed that the total effect of allocentrism on perceived financial vulnerability is significantly positive ($\beta = .128$, $t = 3.480$, $p < .01$), in support of H_{1b}. In addition, the influence is not mediated by power distance ($\beta = .007$, $t = .587$, $p > .10$) or long-term orientation ($\beta = .004$, $t = .174$, $p > .10$), resulting in rejection of H_{2b} and H_{3b}. However, the influence of allocentrism on perceived financial vulnerability is mediated by uncertainty avoidance ($\beta = .066$, $t = 3.487$, $p < .01$) and masculinity ($\beta = .025$, $t = 1.942$, $p < .05$). Thus, H_{4b} and H_{5b} are supported. Finally, the results showed that perceived financial vulnerability increases tendency to live for today ($\beta = .387$, $t = 9.560$, $p < .01$), impulsive buying behavior ($\beta = .382$, $t = 9.168$, $p < .01$), and risky indebtedness ($\beta = .514$, $t = 5.586$, $p < .01$).

Finally, we used structural equation modeling to test serial mediating effects from idiocentrism/allocentrism to financial behavior (i.e., H_6–H_8; see Table 3). Because H_{2a}, H_{2b}, H_{3b}, H_{4a}, and H_{5a} were not supported, we only tested the serial mediation of perceived financial vulnerability and the personal cultural orientations that significantly mediate the relationship between idiocentrism/allocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability (see Figure 2). Specifically, we tested serial mediation of long-term orientation and perceived financial vulnerability between idiocentrism and financial behavior. Then we tested the serial mediation of uncertainty avoidance and masculinity and perceived financial vulnerability between allocentrism and consequences of perceived financial vulnerability. The results showed that the serial mediation from idiocentrism, long-term orientation, and perceived financial vulnerability to the tendency to live for today is significant ($\beta = -.025$, $t = -3.152$, $p < .01$). In addition, the serial mediation from allocentrism, uncertainty avoidance, and perceived financial vulnerability to the tendency to live for today is significant ($\beta = .026$, $t = 3.006$, $p < .01$). Finally, the serial mediation from allocentrism, masculinity, and perceived financial vulnerability to the tendency to live for today is significant ($\beta = .010$, $t = 1.957$, $p < .05$). Therefore, H_6, which hypothesizes that the influence of idiocentrism/allocentrism on one's tendency to live for today is serially mediated

Table 2. The Antecedents of Perceived Financial Vulnerability.

	Study 1		Study 1		Study 2	
Path	**β**	**t**	**β**	**t**	**β**	**t**
Main Effects						
H_{1a}: Idiocentrism → PFV	−.197***	−11.089	−.171***	−9.304	−.095**	−1.934
H_{1b}: Allocentrism → PFV	.167***	9.604	.215***	11.377	.102***	2.931
Mediating Effects						
H_{2a}: Idiocentrism → Power distance → PFV					−.003	−.466
H_{2b}: Allocentrism → Power distance → PFV					.007	.587
H_{3a}: Idiocentrism → Long-term orientation → PFV					−.064***	−3.464
H_{3b}: Allocentrism → Long-term orientation → PFV					.004	.174
H_{4a}: Idiocentrism → Uncertainty avoidance → PFV					.007	.392
H_{4b}: Allocentrism → Uncertainty avoidance → PFV					.066***	3.487
H_{5a}: Idiocentrism → Masculinity → PFV					−.018	−1.451
H_{5b}: Allocentrism → Masculinity → PFV					.025**	1.942
Sample	MIDUS 2		MIDUS 3		Low-income U.S. and Chinese consumers	
N	3,293		3,293		476	

*$p < .10$.
**$p < .05$.
***$p < .01$.
Notes: PFV = perceived financial vulnerability.

Table 3. The Results of Serial Mediation.

Path	**β**	**t**
H_6: Tendency to live for today		
Idiocentrism → Long-term orientation → PFV → Live for today	−.025***	−3.152
Allocentrism → Uncertainty avoidance → PFV → Live for today	.026***	3.006
Allocentrism → Masculinity → PFV → Live for today	.010**	1.957
H_7: Impulsive buying behavior		
Idiocentrism → Long-term orientation → PFV → Impulsive buying	−.025***	−3.344
Allocentrism → Uncertainty avoidance → PFV → Impulsive buying	.025***	3.071
Allocentrism → Masculinity → PFV → Impulsive buying	.010*	1.878
H_8: Risky indebtedness		
Idiocentrism → Long-term orientation → PFV → Risky indebtedness	−.033***	−3.438
Allocentrism → Uncertainty avoidance → PFV → Risky indebtedness	.034***	3.267
Allocentrism → Masculinity → PFV → Risky indebtedness	.013**	1.998

* $p < .10$.
** $p < .05$.
*** $p < .01$.
Notes: PFV = perceived financial vulnerability.

by personal cultural orientations and perceived financial vulnerability, is supported.

Furthermore, the results showed that the serial mediation from idiocentrism, long-term orientation, and perceived financial vulnerability to impulsive buying behavior is significant ($\beta = -.025$, $t = -3.344$, $p < .01$). In addition, the serial mediation from allocentrism, uncertainty avoidance, and perceived financial vulnerability to impulsive buying behavior is significant ($\beta = .025$, $t = 3.071$, $p < .01$). Finally, the serial mediation from allocentrism, masculinity, and perceived financial vulnerability to impulsive buying behavior is significant ($\beta = .010$, $t = 1.878$, $p < .10$). Therefore, H_7, which hypothesizes that the influence of idiocentrism/allocentrism on one's impulsive buying behavior is serially mediated by personal cultural orientations and perceived financial vulnerability, is supported.

Lastly, the results showed that the serial mediation from idiocentrism, long-term orientation, and perceived financial vulnerability to risky indebtedness is significant ($\beta = -.033$, $t = -3.438$, $p < .01$). In addition, the serial mediation from allocentrism, uncertainty avoidance, and perceived financial vulnerability to risky indebtedness is significant ($\beta = .034$, $t = 3.267$, $p < .01$). Finally, the serial mediation from allocentrism, masculinity, and perceived financial vulnerability to risky indebtedness is significant ($\beta = .013$, $t = 1.998$, $p < .05$). Therefore, H_8, which hypothesizes that the influence of idiocentrism/allocentrism on

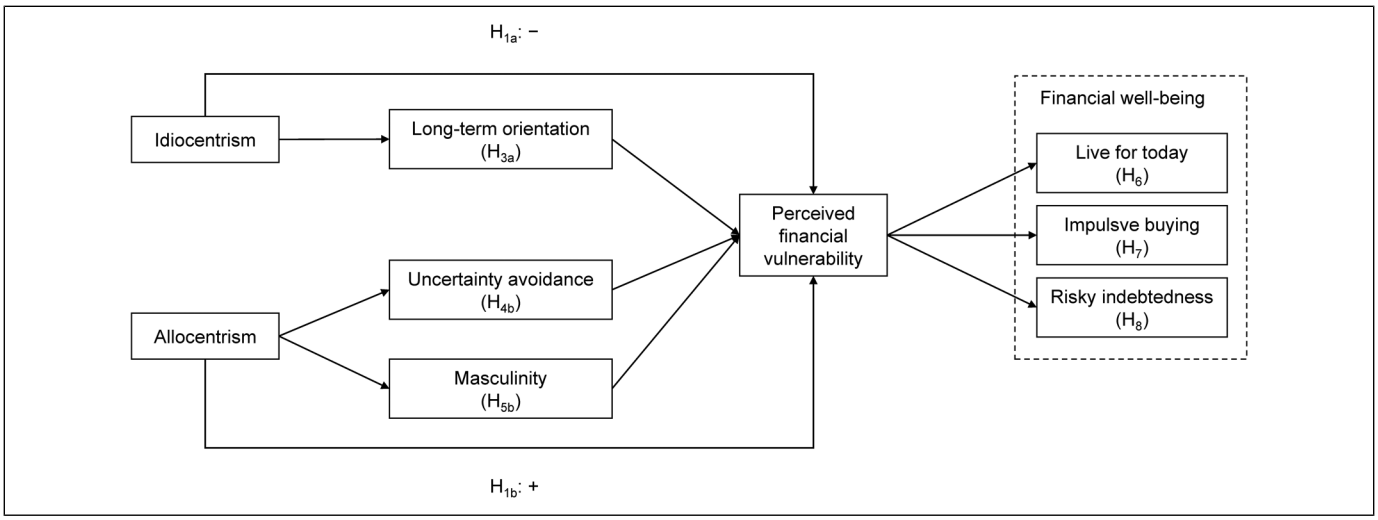

Figure 2. The results on the influence of personal cultural orientations on financial well-being.

one's risky indebtedness is serially mediated by personal cultural orientations and perceived financial vulnerability, is supported.

Discussion

Overview of the Results

The purpose of this research is to examine how personal cultural orientations influence perceived financial vulnerability and, ultimately, one's financial well-being. Based on two studies with both cross-sectional and longitudinal data, our results show that idiocentrism and allocentrism influence perceived vulnerability. Idiocentric consumers are less likely to perceive themselves as vulnerable because they are more future-focused than allocentric consumers are. As a result, idiocentric consumers have a lower tendency to live for today and are less likely to engage in impulsive buying behavior and risky indebtedness. Conversely, allocentric consumers are more likely to perceive themselves as vulnerable because they have higher uncertainty avoidance and are more masculine. As a result, allocentric consumers tend to live for today and are more likely to engage in impulsive buying behavior and risky indebtedness.

Although we focus on perceived financial vulnerability and financial well-being in Study 2, these studies provide insight into the potential consequences of idiocentrism/allocentrism on other contexts of perceived vulnerability and, ultimately, well-being. In Study 1, the relationship between idiocentrism/allocentrism and perceived general vulnerability holds in the specific context of financial well-being in Study 2. Therefore, these results provide solid evidence that personal cultural orientations influence perceived vulnerability, with important implications for theory and practice.

Theoretical Implications

Our examination of the influence of personal cultural orientations on perceptions of financial vulnerability and, ultimately, financial behaviors make several important theoretical contributions. First, our findings support the proposed theoretical framework, expanding SRT to explain individual cultural influences on behavior. Although we focus on the individual level of culture, idiocentrism/allocentrism and other personal cultural orientations are shaped by the people around us, and where we come from shapes how we see the world (Triandis 1989). In this sense, these findings support the position that SRT is particularly relevant to international marketing theory, as perceived vulnerability can be socially constructed (Hamilton et al. 2014).

Second, our findings enrich the understanding of the formation of perceived vulnerability by taking a societal and cultural perspective. Social contexts and personal cultural orientation considerably influence consumers' well-being and strategies for coping with vulnerability (Blocker and Barrios 2015). For example, low-income consumers may perceive themselves as vulnerable regarding their financial situation when the social representation of poverty is stigmatized, or less so in other countries, depending on how their culture views money or financial security (McKendrick et al. 2008). Nevertheless, there has been limited research on how vulnerable people's emotions, needs, and social status influence their perceived vulnerability and strategies for coping with vulnerability (Tanner and Su 2019). This research begins to fill that gap by accounting for personal cultural orientation.

Results across both studies show that allocentric consumers tend to perceive themselves as more vulnerable in adverse conditions than idiocentric consumers do, a nuance heretofore not observed. This effect on perceived vulnerability occurs because idiocentric consumers perceive less suffering by focusing on the future and pursuing various opportunities. In contrast, allocentric consumers may not pursue opportunities to avoid potential negative consequences, because they are risk averse. In addition, allocentric consumers tend to perceive more pressure when facing financial vulnerability because they prioritize material success more than idiocentric consumers do, a factor that accounts for individual differences in prior work, such as McKendrick et al. (2008).

Our results also contribute to the international literature by providing a new perspective on cultural values by treating cultural orientations as endogenous variables. At the national level, culture has five dimensions: individualism/collectivism, long-term orientation, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity. Often research examines the five dimensions of cultural values in parallel (e.g., Beck, Chapman, and Palmatier 2015). In addition, many studies in the field of international marketing treat cultural values as exogenous variables and examine their influence on marketing outcomes such as charitable behavior (Winterich and Zhang 2014), relationship quality (e.g., Beck, Chapman, and Palmatier 2015; Ozdemir and Hewett 2010), relationship longevity (e.g., Tower, Hewett, and Fenik 2019), and new product adoption (e.g., Dwyer, Mesak, and Hsu 2005). This view assumes that cultural values are transmitted from generation to generation and are stable (Cateora et al. 2020).

Finally, we identify the personal cultural orientations that affect financial behaviors (risky indebtedness, impulsive spending, and tendency to live for today) through perceived vulnerability and thus contribute to financial well-being. These results show that idiocentric orientation reduces the tendency to live for today by activating one's long-term orientation, which reduces the perceptions of financial vulnerability. We find that allocentric orientations are more likely to increase negative financial behaviors, impulsive buying, and risky indebtedness through uncertainty avoidance and masculinity orientations. These findings help explain behaviors that affect consumer financial well-being and provide insight into opportunities for intervention.

Practical Implications

By offering a framework for culture and perceived vulnerability, our findings provide various stakeholders, such as governments, policy makers, and service organizations, valuable insights to help them serve vulnerable populations and improve well-being. The mechanism of idiocentrism/allocentrism influencing perceived vulnerability has critical implications for the design of services targeting vulnerable populations. Because idiocentrism/allocentrism and other personal cultural orientations considerably influence service and consumer entities, it is crucial to consider these constructs when designing services or public policy to help vulnerable consumers (Anderson et al. 2013).

Previous studies have shown that a high percentage of people in need do not accept services from helpful nonprofit organizations, and building their trust is a key to effectively increasing usage (Park 2014; Remler and Glied 2003; Tanner and Su 2019). Research also has found that one's propensity to trust is influenced by idiocentrism/allocentrism (Westjohn et al. 2021). Organizations that aim to serve vulnerable populations should include a cultural assessment as part of a community need assessment (e.g., Tanner and Tanner 2020), at both the macro and micro levels. Understanding the community's culture and the degree to which the population varies in personal cultural orientations will help organizations deploy effective services.

In addition, understanding personal cultural orientations and their impact on behavior may help organizations identify individuals in the community who are more open to addressing their well-being. These individuals are likely early adopters of proposed coping responses and possible champions and advocates within the community. When community members see results improving for one of their own, then they might be more motivated to make changes.

Our results indicate that understanding idiocentrism and allocentrism may be critical in gaining trust and getting vulnerable individuals to use services, support legislation, or change behavior. Consistent with the study by Suh, Diener, and Updegraff (2008), which found that external sources can situationally influence cultural behavior, our findings indicate that long-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity influence how people view their relationships with others and affect multiple forms of financial well-being. Specifically, focusing on an individual's idiocentric rather than allocentric self can more effectively reduce perceived vulnerability and increase usage of professional services. Therefore, organizations should highlight personal benefits rather than social benefits when promoting their professional services to vulnerable people.

We recommend that organizations serving vulnerable populations direct consumers to long-term orientation, less uncertainty avoidance, and femininity by encouraging consumers' independent self-view. Slogans such as "make yourself a priority" (Zhu and Meyers-Levy 2009), focusing on the uniqueness of an individual (Westjohn et al. 2021), or prompting consumers to refer to a self-driven memory (Ryu and Bringhurst 2015) may elicit the desired orientations.

Long-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity mediate the relationships between idiocentrism/allocentrism and perceived financial vulnerability, increasing consumers' tendency to live for today, impulsive buying, and risky indebtedness. Individuals with high uncertainty avoidance want stability and predictability. While consumers' vulnerable state might not improve their well-being, it is what they know, and they have learned how to function day-to-day. Thus, proposing changes in behavior or bringing new services that disrupt the status quo may be met with resistance. In addition, short-term-oriented consumers may not see the benefits of disrupting their current state. Small, low-risk changes to daily life are more likely to be adopted than drastic life-altering changes.

Finally, we argue that organizations should base the design and adaptation of services on personal cultural orientations rather than geography. In contemporary society, many services (e.g., financial education, health consultation) can efficiently travel beyond geographic borders via technology. Designing services for idiocentric and allocentric consumers (vs. designing for individual geographies) would allow international organizations to serve more people and maximize resources.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

We use longitudinal and survey data to test the proposed model, but a few limitations still exist. First, more reliable scales

measuring idiocentrism and allocentrism are needed. To guarantee consistency and avoid instrument invalidity, Study 2 used the scales of idiocentrism and allocentrism that were utilized in MIDUS 2 and 3; however, the reliabilities of the scales are less than .70. Therefore, future studies should use different scales when measuring these constructs. Second, we collected data only from the United States and China. Replicating our results with data from other cultures and in other contexts would extend the generalizability of our results.

Future research in international marketing should pay more attention to individual cultural orientations and how they affect behavior. Examining individualism/collectivism at the national level cannot capture the differences between individuals within a community, possibly leading to incorrect conclusions (Duff and Newman 1997; Gaston-Breton et al. 2021). Personal cultural orientations are significant, as millions of immigrants from various places bring different cultures to their new countries. Immigration makes culture within a nation and community incredibly diverse. It offers many potential opportunities for research in understanding motivation to immigrate, how immigrants change a market, and the impact of a new culture on personal cultural orientations.

In addition, our results show that power distance does not mediate the relationship between idiocentrism/allocentrism and perceived vulnerability. The research context might explain these unexpected results. In the second study, we focus on financial vulnerability. Given that we explored our research questions only in the context of financial vulnerability, there might be differences in the relationships between idiocentrism/allocentrism, personal cultural orientations, and perceived vulnerability based on the context. Therefore, future research should examine the relationships in other areas, such as health (e.g., Tanner and Su 2019), relationships (e.g., Langer, Lawrence, and Barry 2008), and socioeconomic vulnerability (e.g., Blocker and Barrios 2015).

In addition to exploring different forms of vulnerability, understanding how personal cultural orientations are developed and how they deviate from the macro culture are opportunities for future research. Because many social factors (e.g., family size, income, governance pattern) may influence both personal cultural orientations and perceived vulnerability, identifying the factors that affect how close or far one's personal orientations are from those around them will help explain why some vulnerable individuals can address their vulnerability when others cannot. These questions are critical to understanding how marketing influences may shape personal orientations; for example, do appeals to self-indulgence strengthen allocentrism, or are they magnified by allocentrism? Allocentrism and idiocentrism were examined here as two independent dimensions; future research should consider whether and how each dimension can be strengthened or weakened to promote well-being.

Along those same lines, future research should consider how social champions or advocates can be encouraged and how personal cultural orientations can influence both the degree to which one adopts an advocacy role and the degree to which one is influenced by advocates. Applying personal cultural orientations to social influence work seems to be an area particularly ripe for additional study.

Moreover, the current research explores the relationships between idiocentrism/allocentrism, other personal cultural orientations, and perceived vulnerability on one set of attitudes and two behavioral outcomes. Future research should expand on these findings to explore potential moderators, such as resiliency, that might mitigate these cultural influences. For example, contrary to our expectations, the results show that idiocentrism and allocentrism do not significantly affect power distance. Are there circumstances in which idiocentrism and allocentrism significantly affect power distance?

Finally, are other financial behaviors or attitudes that positively affect well-being influenced by personal cultural orientations? Exploring interventions that can mitigate the influence of perceived vulnerability on how consumers prepare for the future may give consumers the tools to plan for a better future. From a marketing perspective, understanding interventions that can reduce perceived financial vulnerability will help prevent consumers from engaging in risky behaviors like impulsive buying and risky indebtedness. In summary, consumers will effectively overcome their vulnerabilities by working with organizations that intend to provide help only when we have a good understanding of the moderators and mediators related to perceived vulnerability.

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