Making Good Decisions : The Influence of Culture, Attachment Style, Religiosity, Patriotism, and Nationalism

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Abstract

This study explored the conflict model of decision making (Janis Mann, 1977) in relation to culture, attachment style, religiosity, patriotism, and nationalism. Two groups of university students from Australia (n=135) and Singapore (n=159) were invited to participate through the use of a web survey. Vigilant decision making was higher and hyper-vigilant decision making was lower for Australian than for Singaporean respondents. Vigilant decision making was negatively related to avoidant attachment style and blind patriotism, while positively associated with constructive patriotism and civic content nationalism. Vigilant decision making was predicted by gender (female), low avoidant attachment style, civic nationalism and constructive patriotism. Hyper-vigilant decision making was positively related to anxious and avoidant attachment style, external religiosity, blind patriotism, traditional and civic nationalism, while negatively related to constructive patriotism. Hyper-vigilance was predicted by gender (female), anxious and avoidant attachment style, and extrinsic religiosity. Buck-passing was positively associated with anxious and avoidant attachment style, and civic nationalism. Buck-passing was predicted by anxious and avoidant attachment style and by civic nationalism.Procrastination was positively related to anxious and avoidant attachment style and was predicted by country (Singapore), and anxious and avoidant attachment style. These results are explained in terms of decisions that are made around the world that may have broad ramifications, including those relating to positions on refugees and terrorism.

Index terms— Culture, attachment style, religiosity, patriotism, and nationalism.

1 I. Introduction

e are constantly involved in making decisions that increasingly have ramifications in other parts of the world, given the ability of the media and use of the internet to flash these decisions around the globe. Regional views that used to only be influential locally, are now often part of world opinion as perceptions related to injustice and inequalities are widely distributed. For example, the decision of an outspoken and conservative American preacher to burn the Quran in a Christian church service in the deep south, instantly became world news initiating the potential for an international crisis. Thus, given this increase in the power of decision makers, the factors that i nfluence strategies for making decisions are important topics of research. The information that is considered is often influenced by attitudes and values of those making these decisions, as well as other personal factors that become relevant when under pressure. These attitudes and beliefs may have an important influence which may be crucial in the decisions that are made. This paper considers the decision making process through an exploration of the conflict model of decision making (Janis & Mann, 1977) in relation to factors that may influence the manner in which decisions are made.

The conflict model of decision making is based on the idea that decision making may generate psychological distress as the decision maker considers alternatives that may have differential effects on the individual, and the

potential negative impacts of making a bad decision (Janis & Mann, 1977). The way this stress is managed, is thought to influence the style of decision making that is adopted. Janis and Mann (1977) identified a number of styles of decision making. Vigilant decision making is seen as the most effective style that is a methodical approach utilizing a number of clear stages. In this style, the decision maker considers the goals or objectives of the situation requiring a solution, collects information related to the goals, outlines the strategies for reaching those goals, evaluates each of the strategies in terms of their pros and cons, and reaches the decision that most effectively achieves the desired outcome with minimal negative consequences. Thus, vigilant decision making requires a cool headed approach when there may be stressful factors in the environment that would invite decision makers to be less considered in their approaches.

Other styles of decision making are impacted by the psychological distress that may be involved in making decisions, resulting in a number of less effective styles of decision making. Hypervigilance (Janis & Mann, 1977) is a style of decision making that is influenced by stress experienced by the decision maker. The decision maker perceives that there is insufficient time to make a carefully considered decision and searches somewhat impulsively for a solution that will alleviate the stress and hopefully deal with the problem. Janis and Mann (1977) also identified other styles of decision making such as buck-passing, and W procrastination as ways of dealing with distressing situations requiring decisions. These styles of decision making reflect the inability or unwillingness of individuals to make decisions by denying that decisions are theirs to be made and passing responsibility on to others, or by simply putting off making any decisions until a later time. Thus, a variety of decision styles may be adopted by individuals that may be related to their ability to manage the stress and responsibility of making decisions that with time may have unknown ramifications. Janis and Mann (1977) noted that individual differences may influence the style of decision making adopted. However, few differences have been explored with the conflict model of decision making, apart from culture, gender, and age **??**Brew, (Cabanac, 1992), sensitivity to reward (Franken, I. H. A., & Muris, 2005), and family differences (Tharenou, 2008). Thus, while a wide range of individual differences have been explored, yet few of these have been related to the conflict model of decision making.

Culture has been the major difference across groups that has been considered in the conflict model of decision making, even though Stewart (1986) has questioned the wisdom in comparing decision making across cultures, stating that decision making is predominantly a Western, individualistic idea. Hofstede (1980) also argued that the individualist-collectivist dimension highlights differences between cultures that prioritize individual goals, needs and rights associated with individual initiative and utilitarian values in the West. Eastern cultures prioritize community needs, obligations and responsibilities, influenced by the Confucian perspective of societal well-being, making the Western style decision making somewhat irrelevant to these cultures. Thus, not surprisingly, some cultural differences have been found. In a study of three Western cultures (USA, Australia and New Zealand) and three Eastern cultures (Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan), Mann et al. (1998) found that vigilant decision making did not vary across these cultures, a finding confirmed in other cross cultural work in Spain (Saez de Heredia, Arocena, & Gerate, 2004).

However, the Eastern cultures in the Mann et al. (1998) study reported higher hyper-vigilant decision making styles than the Western cultures. A study comparing Australian and Chinese adolescents found that the Chinese scored marginally lower on vigilant patterns and higher on non-vigilant patterns of decision making than the Australian sample (Brew, Hesketh, & Taylor, 2001).

These Chinese students (mainly from Hong Kong and Taiwan) were resident in Australia and the weak patterns may reflect Western individualist influences as they attempted to deal with culture conflict. However, this pattern of lower vigilant and higher non-vigilant patterns in an Asian culture was stronger for a study of decision making comparing Australian and Japanese adolescents (Radford, Mann, Ohta, & Nakane, 1993). While the research is conflicting, perhaps the differences may be explained partially by culture, but also by the individualistic underpinnings of the conflict model of decision making. However, it is also possible that variables related to values rather than personality characteristics or overall culture, may account for some of these differences. Thus, we decided to compare Australia, a Western country with Singapore, an Eastern country but with strong ties to the West in terms of tourism, finance, and trade, to see if traditional values (in particular family values, religion, nationalism, and patriotism), were related to style of decision making.

While family differences (Tharenou, 2008) were shown to be related to decision making, we felt that how family differences related to the ability to manage stress may be particularly relevant to family values and consequently to the style of decision making adopted. Thus, the variable of attachment style was selected for inclusion in this study. Attachment theory, while initially developed in relation to the interactions between infants and caregivers in terms of developing a confident self, was extended to adults focussing on subsequent romantic relationships as well as other people generally (Bowlby, 1969). Those with strong connections with caregivers who were reliable, developed secure attachment styles; while those without such predictable and trustworthy caregivers, ended up compensating by either become very anxious with regard to relationships with others, commonly known as anxious or ambivalent attachment style. A further group compensated by rejecting the attempts at connecting with others, commonly known as avoidant or dismissive attachment. These insecure attachment styles have been related to the expression of emotion and affect regulation generally (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Thus, anxious attachment style is associated with feeling overwhelmed by emotion while avoidant attachment style is associated with a dismissive attitude or simply cutting off from emotion. Attachment style has been extended

to career indecision **??** Year 2003) and the experience of stress (Kemp & Neimeyer, 1999). However, there has not been research on how attachment style relates to general styles of decision making. Given the connection between decisional conflict and psychological stress, insecure attachment style should play an important role in how decisions are made with secure attachment being positively related to vigilant patterns and insecure attachment being positively related to non-vigilant patterns of decision making.

The traditional values connected with nationalism, often involve strong beliefs that may override rational thought, and these beliefs could be influential in styles of decision making adopted. Nationalism may be viewed as an attachment not only to specific groups, but also to the group-defining elements (Rothi, Lyons, & Chryssochoou, 2005). Group defining elements may be viewed in relation to the exclusiveness of the boundaries that are perceived as defining the group or nation. For example, some members of a group would perceive that only those who share a common background or heritage with the majority would be included in the group category, while others might view identification with the group as related to the rights and obligations of the nation to which they belong, irrespective of their traditional background. Rothi et al. (2005) have developed a dualistic way of understanding nationalistic identity based on an attachment to the traditional culture reflecting a connection with the nation's traditional past, a position not requiring any significant thought.

On the other hand, civic construction, relating to the shared policy and civic practices of those defining themselves as belonging to the nation, is congruent with a position associated with a more thoughtful approach. Presumably these beliefs which vary on their degree of exclusivity would also be associated with more or less rigid beliefs which could likely be related to decision making style. Thus, traditional culture should be positively related to nonvigilant decision making patterns and civic construction should be positively related to vigilant decision making. Similarly, the traditional values associated with patriotism may be influential in the style of decision making adopted. Patriotism is defined by the personal behaviour that accompanies and encourages the group's or nation's decisions and actions (Rothi, Lyons, & Chryssochoou, 2005). Staub (1997) distinguishes between two types of patriotism: blind and constructive. Blind patriotism is represented by an unquestioning positive view of one's nation, a position requiring little thought.

Constructive patriotism requires critical questioning and reflection on the national practices with the view to create positive changes to the society, a position requiring considerable thought. Thus, blind patriotism should be positively associated with nonvigilant patterns of decision making while constructive patriotism should be positively associated with vigilant decision making.

Finally, values associated with strong religious beliefs may also be influential in the decision making styles that individuals choose. Allport (1954) originally wrote about religious motivation, conceptualizing two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic religious motivation was defined as ultimate religion which referred to religion as an end in itself, while extrinsic religious motivation was seen as instrumental, or religion as a means to achieve a particular end. Strong religious beliefs would probably over-ride a methodical thoughtful approach to decision making and would be associated with non-vigilant decision making styles. Thus, intrinsic religious motivation should predict stronger beliefs than extrinsic religious motivation and would thus be more strongly associated with nonvigilant styles of decision making than extrinsic motivation.

Thus, a number of individual differences related to the variables discussed above should be related to various styles of decision making.

The following hypotheses were made: 1. Culture will have an impact on decision making in that Australians will report high vigilant and lower non-vigilant patterns of decision making than Singaporeans. 2. Insecure attachment styles (anxious and avoidant attachment dimensions) will be positively related to non-vigilant styles of decision making and negatively related to vigilant decision making 3. Nationalistic beliefs associated with traditional culture will be positively related to non-vigilant styles of decision making and negatively associated with vigilance in decision making, while the beliefs associated with civic construction will be positively related to vigilant decision making and negatively related to non-vigilance in decision making. 4. Patriotic beliefs associated with blind patriotism will be positively related to non-vigilant decision making and negatively related to vigilant decision making; while beliefs associated with constructive patriotism will be positively associated with vigilant decision making while negatively associated with non-vigilant decision making. 5. Intrinsic religious motivation, representing a stronger belief will have a greater positive association with non-vigilant decision making styles and a greater negative association with vigilant decision making than extrinsic religious motivation. These hypotheses were tested on a sample of Australian and Singaporean university students.(D D D D) A Year

2   II. Method

The Australian sample consisted of 135 respondents (28 male and 107 female) attending psychology lectures in a university in Sydney, Australia who received course credit for their participation. Respondents ranged between 18 and 48 years of age (M=20.3, SD=4.10).

The Singaporean sample consisted of 159 respondents (60 male and 99 female) attending a university in Singapore. Respondents ranged between 18 and 56 years of age (M=19.9, SD=3.87).

A questionnaire was constructed the consisted of the following scales: Melbourne Decision Making Questionnaire (Mann, Burnett, Radford & Ford, 1997). This scale was based on the Janis and Mann (1977) conflict model of decision making and consists of 22 items measuring the four styles of decision making discussed above: vigilant (Sample item: " I consider how best to carry out the decision"); hyper-vigilant (Sample item: "I feel as if I'm

under tremendous time pressure when making decisions"); buck-passing (Sample item: "I prefer to leave decisions to others"); and procrastination (Sample item: "I waste a lot of time on trivial matters before getting to the final decision"). Items were rated on a 3 point scale of 1 (true for me), 2 (sometimes true for me), and 3 (not true for me), which were re-coded from 0 to 2. The following alpha reliabilities for the subscales have been reported: vigilance (alpha=.80), hypervigilance (alpha= .74), buck-passing (alpha=.87), and procrastination (alpha=.81). (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). This questionnaire consisted of 36 items measuring the two dimensions of anxious (Sample item: "When romantic partners disapprove of me, I feel really bad about myself").and avoidance (Sample item: "I do not often worry about being abandoned") attachment. Items were rated on a 7 point scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). Alpha reliabilities reported for the subscales were: Anxiety (alpha=.91) and Avoidance (alpha=.94). These two dimensions may be placed into categories in order to form discrete attachment styles. However, to prevent loss of data by categorization, and in line with previous research, the dimensions will be used as representative of the attachment styles. Thus, for this paper, the two dimensions will be used interchangeably with the two attachment styles of anxious and avoidant.

3   Experiences in Close Relationships

National Attachment and Patriotism (Rothi, Lyons, & Chryssochoou, 2005). National attachment consisted of 19 items measuring traditional culture (Sample item:

"In my opinion a person is truly Singaporean/Australian if they have family that has lived in Singapore/Australia for many generations"), and civic identity (Sample item: "In my opinion a person is truly Singaporean/Australian if they think of Singapore/Australia as their 'home'"). Items were rated on a 5 point scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Alpha reliability reported for the subscales were Traditional Culture (alpha=.91), and Civic Identity (alpha=.84).

Patriotism consisted of 21 item measuring blind orientation (Sample item:

"Questioning national decisions will lead to the downfall of Singapore/Australia") and constructive orientation (Sample item: "When you love your country you should say when you think its actions are wrong"). Items were rated on a 5 point scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Alpha reliability reported for the subscales were: Blind Orientation (alpha=.84), and Constructive Orientation (alpha=.85).

Religious Orientation Scale (Allport & Ross, 1967;Brewczynski & McDonald, 2006)). This questionnaire consisted of 21 items designed to provide a measure of extrinsic (Sample item: "Occasionally I find it necessary to compromise my religious beliefs in order to protect my social and economic well-being") and intrinsic (Sample item: "I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life") religious motivation. The scale was subsequently revised by Brewczynski and McDonald (2006) which was the version used for this questionnaire. Items were rated on a 5 point scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Alpha reliabilities were not reported on the revised scale.

There were a number of demographic questions asked including age, education, country of origin, the importance of religion in their lives, and questions about current and past relationships.

Following ethics approval, students were invited to participate in an online survey.

4   III. Results

Data were initially examined for differences between respondents based on country and gender. These results, along with alpha reliabilities for the scales are presented in Table 1. The Singaporean sample tended to report higher scores on anxious (F=9.18, p=.003), and avoidant attachment (F=17.40, p=.000), intrinsic (F=6.27, p=.013) and extrinsic religiosity (F=5.85, p=.016), blind orientation (F=23.75, p=.000) and traditional cultural content (F=24.21, p=.000), and hyper-vigilance (F=5.47, p=.020) in decision making. The Australian sample tended to report higher scores on constructive orientation (F=11.56, p=.001) and civic content (F=11.08, p=.001), and vigilance (F=6.83, p=.009) in decision making. Thus, hypothesis 1 was partially accepted in that Australian respondents reported higher vigilant and lower hyper-vigilant decision making scores than Singaporean respondents. With all of these reported differences between the two samples, we decided to control for culture in the regression

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Year analysis by using culture as a dummy variable. The data were then analysed for gender differences. Males scored higher on constructive orientation (F=19.48, p=.000) while females scored higher on blind orientation (F=6.88, p=.009), hyper-vigilance (F=13.78, -=.000), and procrastination.

There were no interactions between country and gender. We decided to control for these findings by including gender as a dummy variable in the regression analysis. We conducted Pearson product-moment correlation analyses between the decision making and the other variables. Initially, correlations were separated by country, but as there were only minor differences in the results, the data were combined. These results are reported in Table 2. Hypothesis 2 predicted that insecure attachment styles would be positively related to non-vigilant decision making and negatively related to vigilant decision making. Vigilant decision making was not related to anxious attachment, but was negatively related to avoidant attachment (r= -.19, p <.001). Hyper-vigilance was positively

related to anxious attachment (r=.33, p<.001) and avoidant attachment (r=.21, p<.001). Buck-passing was positively related to anxious attachment style (r=.23, p<.001) and to avoidant attachment style (r=.15, p<.01) Procrastination was positively related to anxious attachment style (r=.25, p<.001) and to avoidant attachment style (r=.23, p<.001). Thus, hypotheses 2 was largely accepted, with the exception of the relationship between vigilance and anxious attachment. As vigilant decision making increased, avoidant attachment decreased and as non-vigilant patterns increased, anxious and avoidant attachment style increased as well. Hypothesis 3 predicted that nationalistic beliefs associated with traditional culture would be positively related to non-vigilant decision making styles and negatively related to vigilant decision making while beliefs associated with civic construction would be positively related to vigilant decision making and negatively associated with non-vigilant decision making styles. Vigilant decision making was positively related to civic construction (r=.26, p<.001), but not significantly related to traditional culture.

Hyper-vigilance was positively associated with traditional culture (r=.19, p<.001) and civic construction (r=-14, p<.05). No other non-vigilant patterns of decision making were significant.

Thus, there was partial support for hypothesis 3. As vigilant decision making increased, so did civic construction. While hyper-vigilance increased, so did traditional culture, as well as civic construction, which was an unexpected finding.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that patriotic beliefs associated with blind patriotism would be positively related to non-vigilant decision making styles and negatively related to vigilant decision making, while patriotic beliefs associated with constructive patriotism would be positively related to vigilant decision making and negatively associated with non-vigilant decision making styles. Vigilant decision making was negatively related to blind patriotism (r=-.14, p<.01) and positively related to constructive patriotism (r=.26, p<.001). Hyper-vigilance was positively associated with blind patriotism (r=.20, p<.001) and negatively associated with constructive patriotism (r=-.14, p<.05). No other non-vigilant patterns of decision making were significant.

Thus, there was partial support for hypothesis 4. As vigilant decision making increased, so did constructive patriotism, while blind patriotism decreased.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that intrinsic religious motivation would be positively associated with nonvigilant decision making patterns and negatively associated with vigilant decision making and that this relationship would be in the same direction, but stronger than the relationships of extrinsic religious motivation. There were no significant relationships for vigilant decision making.

Hyper-vigilance was positively associated with extrinsic motivation (r=.17, p<.01). This was the only significant relationship.

Thus, hypothesis 5 was rejected as hyper-vigilance was positively related to extrinsic religious motivation, but not to intrinsic religious motivation.

We conducted linear regression analyses to ascertain the best predictors of vigilant and non-vigilant patterns of decision making. To predict decision making styles, variables were entered in the following order: country, gender, anxious attachment, avoidant attachment, blind patriotism, constructive patriotism, traditional cultural nationalism, civic content nationalism, intrinsic religiosity, and extrinsic religiosity. Vigilance in decision making was predicted by gender (female) (t=2.09, p=.04), lower avoidant attachment (t=-2.50, p=.01), higher constructive patriotism (t=3.08, p=.002), and higher civic content nationalism (t=2.88, p=.004), which accounted for 11.8% of the variance. Hypervigilance was predicted by gender (female) (t=3.81, p=.000), increasing anxious attachment (t=5.34, p=.000), increasing avoidant attachment (t=2.97, p=.003) and increasing religious extrinsic religious orientation (t=2.49, p=.01), accounting for 18.3% of the variance. Buck-passing was predicted by increasing anxious attachment (t=3.24, p=.001), increasing avoidance (t=2.24, p=.03), and higher civic content nationalism (t=2.16, p=.03), accounting for 7.1% of the variance. Procrastination was predicted by country (Singapore) (t=-2.127, p=.03), increasing anxious attachment (t=4.25, p=.000), and increasing avoidant attachment (t=3.93, p=.000), accounting for 10.4% of the variance.

6 Discussion

We explored variables that were related to decision making and found that there were a number of individual factors related to both vigilant and non-vigilant decision making. Australians scored higher on vigilant and lower on hyper-vigilant decision making than Singaporeans. Vigilant decision making was negatively related to avoidant attachment style and blind patriotism, while positively related to constructive patriotism and civic content nationalism.

Vigilant decision making was predicted by gender (female), low avoidant attachment style, civic nationalism and constructive patriotism. Hyper-vigilant decision making was positively related to anxious and avoidant attachment style, external religiosity, blind patriotism, traditional and civic nationalism, while negatively related to constructive patriotism.

Hyper-vigilance was predicted by gender (female), anxious and avoidant attachment style and extrinsic religiosity. Buck-passing was positively related to anxious and avoidant attachment style and civic nationalism. Buck-passing was predicted by anxious and avoidant attachment style and by civic nationalism. Procrastination was positively related to anxious and avoidant attachment style and was predicted by country (Singapore) and anxious and avoidant attachment style.

The pattern of higher vigilant scores and lower pyper-vigilance scores for Australians than for

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Singaporeans is congruent with past research (Brew et al., 2001;Radford et al., 1993) and for hyper-vigilance (Mann et al., 1998). However, these findings differed on previous research where there were no reported differences vigilant decision making based on country (Saez de **??**aeda et al., 2001;Mann et al., 1998). The differences with past research may be related to the particular country, as the countries reported do not include Singapore data. The current findings may also be related to the work by **??**tewart (1986) and Hofstede **??**1980) suggesting that decision making differences may be due to individualist-collectivist differences between Eastern and Western countries, questioning the advisability of conducting such research.

Yet, subsequent analysis in this paper provides additional information that is relevant to this discussion which will be considered later in the paper. However, perhaps more importantly, these results suggest that a range of individual factors are related to decision making. In particular, attachment style plays a key role in that insecure attachment is related to non-vigilant patterns of decision making. Thus, when a decision maker is not able to manage stress well, a pattern of knee jerk reactions associated with hyper-vigilance, or avoidance associated with procrastination or buck-passing is a plausible explanation. Insecure attachment styles with their associated difficulties in managing stress, are easily encompassed by the non-vigilant patterns of decision making that provide quick rather than considered solutions.

However it is not only attachment style, but beliefs that are associated with nationalism and patriotism that are also related to decision making. Generally, the more thoughtful positions on nationalism (civic) and patriotism (constructive) are associated with the more rational and considered position of vigilant decision making. Constructive orientation involves an active questioning and reflection on national practices while blind orientation implies a simple acceptance. Active questioning could be viewed as a significant part of the process in vigilant decision making. This is similar to nationalism and the civic identity where nationalism is viewed as an active process and was related to vigilant decision making. The other key pattern related to nationalism and patriotism is hypervigilance in decision making. This pattern was positively related to the less clearly thought-out positions on nationalism (traditional) and patriotism (blind) and negatively related to the more thought out positions of constrictive and civic. While the decisions made by these conservative thinkers may be innocuous if the content is unrelated to nationalistic and patriotic issues, there could however be important ramifications. For example, decision making on refugees and terrorism may well be related to ideas surrounding nationalism and patriotism, leading to less considered debate and processes of decision making. Thus, there is the potential for extreme reactions that have potentially enormous ramifications such as the decision that was initially taken by one man in the southern USA discussed in the introduction.

While the majority of the findings are consistent, there are a few anomalies such as the positive relationship between civic nationalism and hypervigilance and buck-passing. It is possible that civic nationalism, being more widely discussed and accepted as there are significant numbers of immigrants around the world, may be a more widely accepted position now and may not discriminate as well as does patriotism, a more traditional concept. Further research would need to be conducted in order to evaluate differences between the concepts of nationalism and patriotism.

The finding that being female was a predictor of both vigilant and hyper-vigilant decision making styles appears contradictory and is thus more difficult to explain. Clearly this finding was supported by the gender differences in the preliminary analysis of the means of the variables for hyper-vigilance but not for vigilance. It is possible that this finding may be due to the small number of males in the study in comparison to the females and these males may be less representative of the general population.

The other major anomaly was the finding that being Singaporean was a predictor of procrastination. This finding was also not mirrored in the results of mean differences between the two countries in the preliminary analysis. However, in these results, Singaporeans described themselves as less vigilant which could be related to procrastination as an avoidance technique. The predictor however was significant only at the .03 level, which was clearly not as robust as the other predictors for procrastination. Perhaps what is more surprising, is that given the number of differences between cultures in the preliminary analysis, that there were few significant cultural factors in the regression analysis. When comparing Singapore and Australia on decision making, that there are few significant differences. This finding questions the conclusions of Stewart (1986) and Hofstede (1980) who argued that the individualist-collectivist differences between Western and Eastern cultures make comparisons of decision making relatively meaningless. However, it could also be suggested that Singapore has become more Westernized and thus more individualistic in nature. Yet, we must be conscious of the finding that differences were found in the preliminary analysis, and also that we are sampling a non-representative university population. Possibly additional research would need to be conducted with a broader subject pool in Singapore and also less Westernized countries to further examine Hofstede's (1980) and Stweart's (1986) conclusions.

While a greater impact of religiosity was predicted, it was not realized. There was only one significant finding which related religiosity to hyper- A Year vigilance. It was expected that internalized rather than externalized religiosity would be more significant, but this was not the case. Perhaps in this modern world, religion doesn't play the part that we thought it would play in that religion is not as important, particularly with this university

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sample. We see many signs in our modern world of decisions that appear to be influenced by religiosity particularly related to issues such as terrorism, but this is perhaps masked by a more substantial influence of patriotism and nationalism. Of course many countries where there is strong patriotism and nationalism have strong ties to religion as well, making it easy for the variables of nationalism, patriotism and religiosity to be confusing. However, according to these findings, while we have been considering many decisions as a result of religion, it may be more helpful to think of them in a context of nationalism and/or patriotism instead.

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There are some limitations to this research as the respondents consist of a convenience sample of university students.

University students may have thought patterns that are quite different to the broader population when it comes to ideas about religion, patriotism, and nationalism, as well as styles of decision making which may lead to some bias in these data. The sample was overrepresented by female respondents which may have also biased the results. The survey also suffers from the deficiencies on any self-report strategy. For example, it is difficult to adequately assess attachment style by a questionnaire. However, the scale selected is widely used in such research and is generally accepted as an adequate measure for these purposes.

While there were a number of cultural differences between the two samples from Australia and Singapore, the culture variable only appeared to make a difference in the procrastination decision making style. Thus, there are many similarities between Australia and Singapore, which may be related to the rapid westernization of Singapore that has taken place as they increasingly compete in the global market for trade and tourism.

Future research should focus on a broader range of respondents so that is it not limited to a group of respondents that often think more broadly than those not attending university. It would also be important to obtain a group of people who have made particularly illadvised decisions, such as those in prison for a range of crimes as well as those who have made particularly good decisions. Perhaps the group used in this study would be thought of as being such a group. However, a broader aged group and similar numbers of males and females could be a more useful comparison group. Furthermore, other countries could be involved to ascertain the validity of comparing other eastern countries on decision making variables.

10 IV. Conclusion

This study explored the conflict model of decision making (Janis & Mann, 1977) in relation to culture, attachment style, religiosity, patriotism, and nationalism. Findings suggest that there are few major differences between Australia and Singapore on decision making, despite preliminary analysis of means.

However, attachment style, patriotism and nationalism were the key factors that appeared to be related to decision making styles.

More considered and thoughtful positions on patriotism and nationalism were associated with vigilant decision making, while the more traditional views and thus less well thought out positions were associated with the non-vigilant decision making patterns. Insecure attachment style also appeared to be a major factor in explaining non-vigilant decision making patterns. Thus, individual factors related to patriotism, nationalism and insecure attachment style appear to be significantly related to styles of decision making, while religion appeared to have very little significance. When we consider the importance of decisions that could be influential on the world stage, it seems that emotional stability (as measured by the attachment dimensions) and attitudes towards nationalism and patriotism may be more influential than culture or religion in determining outcomes related to issues such as immigration and terrorism, suggesting that it may be important to ensure that decision making is accompanied with as many well thought out opinions as possible to ensure a sense of stability in the world.

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Figure 1:
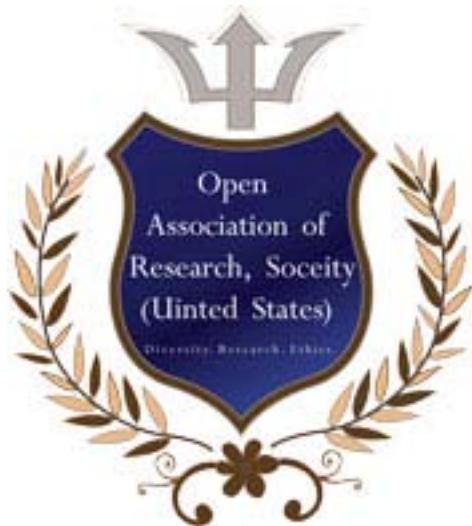
Saad, Eba, & Sejean, 2009; Tharenou, 2008). A range
of other models of decision making have considered
personality variables that might influence decisions
made by the decision maker including emotion
(Andrade, & Ariely, 2009), sensation seeking and locus
of control (Baiocco, Laghi, & D'Alessio, 2009),
impulsivity (Crone, Vendel, & van der Molen, 2003; Vigil-
Colet, 2007), hedonism

Figure 2:

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VARIABLE	SINGAPORE (n=159)	AUSTRALIA (n=135)	MALES (n=88)	FEMALES (n-206)	ALPHA
Age Attachment Dimensions	19.91	20.30	20.23	20.03	
Anxiety	4.08**	3.76	3.94	3.93	.89
Avoidance	3.25***	2.82	2.98	3.08	.52
Religiosity					
Intrinsic	3.08**	2.82	3.05	2.92	.89
Extrinsic	2.96*	2.81	2.98	2.86	.78
Patriotism					
Blind Orientation	2.66***	2.43	2.39	2.53**	.84
Constructive Orientation					
	3.68	3.91***	3.99***	3.70	.85
Nationalism					
Traditional Cultural					
Content	2.88***	2.43	2.76	2.64	.91
Civic Content	3.40	3.62***	3.38	3.56	.84
Decision Making Variables					
Vigilance	2.48	2.59**	1.48	1.55	.77
Hyper-vigilance	2.04*	1.95	0.89	1.05***	.59
Procrastination	1.86	1.88	0.79	0.90*	.69
Buck-passing	1.90	1.89	0.87	0.92	.59

Figure 3: Table 1 :

2

Decision Making Variable	Anx	Avoid	Int Relig	Ext Relig	Blind	Const	Trad	Civic
Vigilance	-.04	-.19***	.07	.01	-14**	.26**	-.07	.26***
Hyper-Vigilance	.33***	.21***	-.07	.17**	.20***	-.14*	.19***	.14*
Buck-Passing	.23***	.15**	-.01	.04	.08	-.02	.07	.15**
Proctrastination	.25***	.23***	-.09	.03	.07	-.09	.02	.09

[Note: Anx=Anxious Avoid=Avoidance, Int Relig=Internalized Religiosity, Ext Relig=Externalized Religiosity, Blind=Blind Patriotism, Const=Constructive Patriotism, Trad=Traditional Nationalism, Civic=Civic Nationalism]

Figure 4: Table 2 :

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