Cultural Dimensions Research - Chen

Aim: Investigate how long term or short term orientation affects decision-making

Procedure
- Participants were bicultural Singaporean-Americans, who were exposed to both Singaporean and American cultures (for example, someone who was born in Singapore but who now lives in America)
- Participants were randomly assigned to have one of their cultures "primed" (brought to mind) by showing photos, either of the New York skyline (to prime American culture) or Chinese lanterns (to prime Singaporean culture)
- Afterwards, participants were instructed to order a book from an online shop. There were two delivery options (1) free shipping, which would take longer for the book to arrive, or (2) immediate shipping, which would result in faster delivery time for an extra fee

Findings
- Participants "primed" with American culture were more likely to pay extra for the immediate shipping, while those "primed" with Singaporean culture were more likely to opt for the free shipping

Conclusion
- Singaporean culture has a long-term orientation, which values patience and saving money for the future, so reminding participants of this culture led to different behavior than a reminder of American culture, which favors immediate gratification

Evaluation
- This was a well-designed experiment, demonstrating a causal relationship between the independent variable (which culture was primed) and the dependent variable (which shipping option was selected)
- This study also suggests that bicultural participants have absorbed the values of two cultures, and will act according to whatever culture is brought to mind in that moment
- This study only involved Singaporean-Americans, so it is not clear if these results will generalize to other cultural groups with different time orientations
- The authors of the study explain the results in terms of long-term vs. short-term orientation, but there may be other differences between Singaporean and American culture (perhaps pace of life?) that could also explain the findings