Culture and the Self: The effect of self-construal on attitudes toward trade liberalization in Japan.

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ABSTRACT: By integrating theories from social psychology and political economy, this article examines the effect of self-construal and economic self-interest on trade attitude formation in Japan. It is argued that the effect of self-interest narrowly defined by factor endowment on trade attitudes is conditional upon whether individuals define the self independently or interdependently. Using data from the 2008 Japanese General Social Survey, it is confirmed that factor endowment has no significant direct effect on trade attitudes in Japan. Additionally it is shown that economic self-interest predicts trade attitudes in individuals reporting an independent self-construal. Furthermore, the effect of self-interest on trade attitudes of independent individuals is significantly different from that of interdependent individuals. Differences in self-construal across both individuals and cultures should be considered when examining trade attitudes and other policy preferences.

「文化と自己：日本の貿易自由化に対する態度に自己観が与える影響」

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要旨：本論は社会心理学と政治経済学の理論を統合することによって、自己観と経済的利己主義が日本の貿易に対する態度形成に与える影響を考察する。利己主義とは狭義には要素賦存によって定義されるものだが、利己主義が貿易に対する態度形成に与える影響は、個々人が自己を相互独立的な存在としてみなすか、相互協調的な存在とみなすかによって変わってくる。２００８年の日本の総合的社会調査からのデータを使用した結果、要素賦存は日本における貿易に対する態度形成には直接の重大な影響を与えないという確証が得られた。また本論は、相互独立的自己観を持つ個人においては、経済的利己主義によって貿易への態度形成が予測できること、さらに、相互独立的な個人において利己主義が貿易への態度に与える影響は、相互協調的な個人における場合とかなりの程度異なっていることも示す。貿易に対する態度やその他の政策選好を考察する際は、個人と文化の双方における自己観の違いを考慮に入れる必要があるというのが、本論の結論である。

Recent critiques of international relations have highlighted a lack of diversity in the field and questioned the explanatory power of "objective" theories (Lake 2016). This uniformity is particularly prominent in the literature examining individual interests. Following an Open Economy Politics (OEP) framework, interests are the building blocks of international political economy (Lake 2009). Understanding of human interest in IPE, however, is largely restricted to theories adopted from economics.[1] Many of these "objective" theories assume a universal approach to cognition that reflects the biases and "intuitions" of the researchers who shaped and defined the field.

Research in psychology, however, has emphasized the impact of culture on how individuals think and feel. Culture has been shown to influence decision making (Ohbuchi, Fukushima, and Tedeschi 1999 and Mann, Radford, Burnett, Ford, Bond, Leung, Nakamura, Vaughan, and Yang 1998) and cognition (Nisbett and Masuda2003) as well as attitudes and beliefs (Diener, Oishi, and Lucas2003; Brockner, Chen, Mannix, Leung, and Skarlicki 2000; Yuki, Maddux, Brewer, and Takemura 2005). A prominent dimension in personality and social psychology for understanding differences in thoughts and behaviors is the self-construal.

While some aspects of the self are universal, individuals can define themselves as autonomous from others or interconnected. How one views the self influences cognition, affect, motivation, and interpersonal relationships. Many commonly applied theories of decision making and preference formation, never-the-less, assume an independent self-construal. The applicability of such theories are limited both at the individual level and cross-nationally.

This article examines the impact of self-construal as an individual and cultural trait on attitudes toward trade liberalization. The results of the analyses confirm that the effect of skill endowment on trade policy-preferences is conditional on how one defines the self. Factor endowment has a strong impact on trade attitudes for individuals with an independent self-construal. Furthermore, preliminary evidence suggests that the effect of factor endowment is consistent with the cultural view of the self. A general effect for economic self-interest is not found in Japan as has traditionally been reported for other developed economies. Differences in self-construal across both individuals and cultures should be considered when examining interests and preferences.

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[1] Despite this focus, a number of studies have examined the impact of psychological factors on trade attitudes such as perceptions about harm, inequality-aversion, and risk orientation (Lü et al 2012; Hearn 2014; Baron 1996; Ehrlich and Maestas 2010).

Defining the Self

Although there are some universal aspects of the self, individuals define the self and the relationship between the self and others differently (Markus and Kitayama 1991). While the self can be defined in many ways, whether the self is construed as an independent whole or interconnected with others provides a major dimension for both individual and cross cultural differences in cognition and behavior. How one defines the self is not static. The self can be construed differently depending on context. Priming studies, for example, can encourage individuals to focus on particular aspects of the self (Cross et al 2011). Differences in how one *typically* defines the self, however, are stable and observable (Markus & Kitayama 1991; Rhee, Uleman,Lee, and Roman 1995; Trafimow, Triandis, and Goto 1991). The majority of research has focused upon three major self-construals; the independent, collective-interdependent, and relational-interdependent.

As described by Cross et al (2011), early theories of the self "reflected the cultural assumptions and beliefs of the researchers (p. 142)" who by and large were men from the US, Western Europe, and Canada. It was thus assumed that there was a universal self that was independent of others. The independent-self is "an individual whose behavior is organized and made meaningful primarily by reference to one's own internal repertoire of thoughts feelings and actions (Markus and Kitayama 1991, p. 226)." Individuals with an independent self-construal view the self as a bounded whole that is unique and separate from others. While this view of the self has continued to dominate much of the social sciences, research on the self has emphasized greater diversity in self-construal and brought into question early assumptions of universal independence.

The interdependent-construal defines the self as less differentiated from others and embedded into the social context. An interdependent-self is thus not a bounded whole but a piece of the larger social group in which the self's role is defined in relation to changing contexts. There are two major varieties of interdependence. Individuals who focus on group cohesion are defined as having a collective-interdependent self-construal. Others may be classified as relational-interdependent which defines the self in terms of close relationships. Both collective and relational construals view the self as interconnected with others but differ in whether this interconnectedness extends to a whole group or close personal relationships.

How one defines the self influences cognition, affect, motivation, and social behavior. Individuals with an independent self-construal display low context sensitivity

and focus on separation and contrast. In relation to affect, an independent self-construal prioritizes high self-esteem and self-consistency. Motivationally, the independent self is associated with individualistic values and self-enhancement. And in interpersonal relations, independent individuals are self-promoting, value frank communication, and are willing to engage in confrontational behavior (Cross et al 2011). The goal of an independent self is separating from others and "developing one's distinct potential" (Markus and Kitayama 1991 p. 226)

Individuals with a collective-interdependent self-construal, on the other hand, display high context sensitivity and focus on connection and assimilation. Well-being is not based on self-esteem, but the adherence to social norms and cohesion. From a motivational standpoint, an interdependent self vales group harmony and thus relies on secondary control strategies to cope.[2] Social behavior is group-oriented. Communication is often indirect, and direct confrontation is avoided (Cross et al 2011). The development of an interdependent construal does not stress individual uniqueness but the ability to exercise self-control over inner desires to promote group harmony (Markus and Kitayama 1991).

Although much less studied in comparison with the previous two construals and often conflated with the collective-interdependent construal, a relational self embeds the individual not within a larger group but with close personal relations such as friends and family. The cognitive consequences of the relational self include high relationship sensitivity and assimilation. Well-being is measured not by individual or group goals but by the quality of close relationships. Individuals with a relational self-construal value affectionate relationships and are other enhancing. Relational individuals adjust to partners to create cohesion and prioritize joint gains for close relationships (Cross et al 2011).

Culture, Gender, and the Self

While the self-construal provides an important dimension for understanding individual differences in cognition and behavior, how one defines the self is also found to vary between cultures, subcultures, and genders. One of the earliest applications of self-construal was to understand cross cultural differences between Western and mainly

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[2] Secondary control strategies refer to changing ones expectations or goals to match the environment and contrast with primary control strategies which attempt to change one's environment to match internal goals and expectations.

Eastern cultures. Following early work by Hofstede (1980), in Western cultures the self is defined as autonomous and separate from others. Individualism is thus a focus on oneself and immediate family. This individual culture was often compared with Non-western and particularly Eastern cultures hypothesized to define the self as connected with others. In the collectivist identity, the individual is one part of the group which shares a common fate and goals. Individualism-collectivism is as a cultural trait and commonly used to understand cultural differences between the US/Western Europe and East Asia. Collectivism-Individualism, however, is not an individual trait. It is therefore important to emphasize that an individual is not collectivist or individual. Individuals in collectivist or individual societies can and do have both independent and interdependent self-construals. At the individual level, however, members of collectivist cultures are more likely to *typically* define the self as interdependent while members of individualist cultures are more inclined to develop independent self-construals (Kitayama et al 2009; Triandis 1989; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Noguchi 2007).

There are also common associations between sub-cultures and ethnic groups within multicultural societies and self construal. In the US case, for example, Asian Americans and Hispanics are found to define the self as interdependent more than White and African Americans. Similarly, White and African Americans report independent self-construals more frequently than Asian Americans and Hispanics (Heine et al 2002). Furthermore, it is expected that membership to sub-cultures that emphasize communal and collective values, such as the Quakers in the US or Kibbutz in Israel, increase the likelihood of defining the self interdependently. Finally, there are gender differences in self-construal. In the US it is found that women score higher on relational-interdependence than men (Cross and Madson 1997).

Self-Construal and Attitudes toward Globalization

Traditional theories of decision making, however, often assume a universal definition of the self eerily similar to the "focus on oneself and immediate family" described in the typical independent construal. Under this assumption of a universal independent self, it seems reasonable to predict that policy preferences are determined by narrowly defined self-interest. After all, an independent individual's wellbeing is largely defined by achieving individual goals. If individuals have a tendency to define the self interdependently, however, it is less clear how individual pocketbook concerns will factor into preference formation. Furthermore, cultural, sub-cultural, and gender differences in tendencies to define the self as independent or interdependent impact

public sentiments and goals as well as limit the mobility of theories that assume a universal construction of the self.

Consider, for example, public attitudes toward trade and globalization. Political-economy predictions are typically formed from the Heckscher-Ohlin model. The HO model predicts international trade to result from differences in factor endowments. The classical setup includes two countries; two factors of production, capital and labor; and two commodities differing in there intensive use of the factors of production. The country relatively abundant in capital will be comparatively advantaged in producing and exporting the capital-intensive good and will thus import the labor-intensive commodity.

Attitudes toward trade are predicted to form as a result of an individual's position in the economy. If factors are mobile between industries, Stolper-Samuelson effects emerge predicting class-based opposition to trade liberalization. Individuals that possess the economy's dominant factor will see employment returns to trade. Those who possess the scarce factor, however, will risk job loss and wage reductions as a result of the decreasing costs to trade. If factors are not mobile between industries, the Ricardo-Viner model anticipates sector-based cleavages.[3] Individuals employed in exporting industries should expect gains as open trade will increase available markets. Those employed in an import-competing industry, however, face losses from international trade as a result of increased competition from foreign firms. Individuals employed in exporting industries are, therefore, expected to support trade liberalization and those employed in import-competing industries are likely to oppose free trade.[4] Following Scheve and Slaughter (2001), the majority of research on individual trade attitudes has focused on testing and sometimes challenging the effect of factor endowment or employment sector on trade-policy preferences.[5]

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[3] Hiscox (2002) argues that the R-V and S-S models are extreme cases and that factors should not be considered either mobile or immobile but as a "continuous variable affected by a range of economic, technological, and political conditions" (9).

[4] Rehm (2009) notes that skills are transferable across industries but not occupations; furthermore, individuals socialize within their occupation group not industry. Rehm thus contends that occupation not industry is the important factor influencing trade attitudes.

[5] Baker (2005), for example, extends self-interest to include consumer preference. Mansfield and Mutz (2009) challenge the role of factor endowment and emphasize socio-tropic attitudes.

Economic models, such as the Stolper-Samuelson and Ricardo-Viner, focus on narrowly defined interest and predict an approach to attitude formation that does not allow for variation in self-construal. Under this approach, an independent self is the baseline or "normal" construal and other others are deviations to be explained or controlled. Individuals with an interdependent construal, however, are likely to both pay more attention to wider context and emphasize group goals over individual interest. It is thus unreasonable to believe that an individual with a collective-interdependent construal would think trade that harms her individually is a bad thing if it has positive consequences for the in-group. Self-interest narrowly defined likely impacts trade attitudes of those who construe the self as independent. For the rest, however, more consideration to both in-groups and personal relationships most be given. Beyond individual differences, there are also implications for differences across genders, sub-groups, and cultures that should be explored. The following section analyzes trade attitudes in Japan to directly test the effect of self-construal at the individual-level and provide a preliminary examination of cultural differences in trade attitude formation.

Factor Endowment and Trade Attitudes in Japan

While much research has examined public opinion towards trade liberalization in developed economies, most studies have focused upon the US and Western Europe. Some analysis have included Japan at the aggregate level (Mayda and Rodrik 2005), but very few studies focus specifically on the determinants of trade-policy preferences in the world's third largest economy. Four studies focusing on Japan have produced mixed results in relation to predictions of both the Stolper-Samuelson and Ricardo-Viner models. This lack of support, however, should be taken cautiously as one of these studies addresses the determinants of attitudes toward agricultural trade (Naoi and Kume 2011), another analyzes attitudes toward a specific trade agreement - the TPP (Naoi and Urata 2013), and a third while focusing on general trade attitudes does not directly test the effect of factor endowment or sector of employment on preference formation (Naoi and Kume 2015). A fourth study by Tomiura et al (2016) finds mixed support for the Ricardo-Viner predictions and support for Stolper-Samuelson. This evidence of the specific factors model, however, should also be taken cautiously as the study lacks many of the usual control variables and defines skill as a college education. The shortcomings of this specification will be discussed in detail below.

Japan is an advanced industrialized economy with a comparative advantage in the production of capital and skill intensive goods. It is thus expected that reductions in

barriers to trade will lead to a premium for skilled workers. Unskilled labor, on the other hand, will face job market risks as a result of open trade. Following the predictions of the Stolper-Samuelson model, low skill individuals should be the least supportive of trade. As argued above, however, this impact of factor endowment should be conditional on self-construal. The following hypothesis is made:

H1: The effect of skill on trade support is conditional on self-construal. Support for trade will increase with skill level in individuals with an independent self-construal.

From a cultural perspective, Japan is traditionally defined as a collectivist society. In fact, much of the research on collectivism and interdependence stemmed from studies of Japan. Japan's emphasis on group harmony is often argued to originate as a response to economic factors related to the historical importance of paddy farming. Rice cultivation was both labor and water intensive forcing early farmers to live in close clusters dependent upon both the communal sharing of labor and resources. Because a farmer would be incapable of surviving independent of the community, these living conditions are believed to necessitate an emphasis on collectivism and the avoidance of conflict; social norms commonly described as prominent features of Japanese society. These values were later upheld through the feudal political system and the teachings of Buddhism and Shintoism The influential anthropologist Lebra noted that "not only in economic enterprises, but in politics and even personal matters like marriage, the group tends to claim priority over the individual" and that the Japanese nightmare is not failing to separate oneself but being excluded (Lebra 1976, p. 35).

A large amount of evidence highlights the dominance of collectivist values in Japanese society. The significance of conformity is expressed in famous sayings, such as, "the nail that stands up will get beat down." Parental practices stressing the importance of the development of *sunau*, the willfull submission tto group preferences over individual desires, indicates an emphasis on group cohesion. Even the Japanese word for oneself, *jibun* 自分, reflects that individuals are not a bounded whole. The radical *ji* 自 indicates self while *bun* 分 refers to the concept of a part or fraction. Individuals are thus a part or fraction of society. Hamaguchi et al (1985) argue that "selfness is only confined through interpersonal relationships (cited in Markus and Kitayama 1991 p. 228).

Beyond these anecdotal arguments a number of studies have found cross cultural differences between Japan and the US in cognition, affect, self-enhancement, and other behaviors consistent with the predictions based on the collectivism-

individualism dimension. Furthermore, in relation to self-construal, using implicit measures Japanese are found to have higher levels of interdependence and lower levels of independence than Americans and Western Europeans (Kitayama et al 2009). Similarly, Japanese are found to pay greater attention to external cues than their American counterparts and focus less on internal cues (Noguchi 2007). It is thus expected that individual pocketbook concerns will not directly drive trade attitudes in Japan. Though this hypothesis cannot be directly tested as it is the prediction of the absence of an effect.

To examine the above hypotheses data from the 2008 Japanese General Social Survey are analyzed. To test the individual level prediction a measure of factor endowment, self-construal, and trade attitude are necessary. In the literature skill-level is typically measured in two ways by education and by wage. First, a measure of wages from respondents' main job is constructed.[6] Individuals with a higher wage are anticipated to have a higher skill-level. It is thus expected that an increase in wage will lead to an increase in support for trade liberalization for individuals with an independent self-construal. Additionally, at the cultural level it is predicted that wage will have no direct impact on trade attitudes.

Although education level is routinely found to affect trade attitudes, the interpretation of this empirical result is uncertain. A number of studies contend that the positive effect of a college degree on support for trade is consistent with the predictions of the factors model (Scheve and Slaughter 2001; O'Rourke et al 2001; Hays et al 2005; Mayda and Rodrik 2005; Sanz and Coma 2008). Others, however, criticize the use of education level as a measurement of skill and show that the effect of education diminishes after controlling for confounding variables (Hainmuller and Hiscox 2006; Baker 2005; Mansfield and Mutz 2009). To account for the multiple effects of education, two dummy variables are created in reference to high school graduates. First a dummy variable for graduates of college or university is constructed. It is expected that this variable taps the "the learning to love globalization" hypothesis. Individuals with a college degree are more likely to receive exposure to economic theory and cosmopolitan values. A second dummy variable for individuals with less than a high school degree is constructed. It should be noted that high school education is not mandatory in Japan. It is contended that these low skill workers are the most exposed to labor risk. The effect of low-education is similarly predicted to be conditional on self-construal, with low-education levels leading to protectionist attitudes in independent

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[6] See appendix for original questionnaire wording

individuals. And at the cultural level, it is anticipated that low education will have no direct effect on trade-policy preferences.

Self-construal is typically measured using likert-type scales. The most common measure used to specify between interdependent and independent self-construals is the Self-Construal Scale created by Singelis (1994). The scale taps independence and interdependence as distinct traits not separate ends of a spectrum. The 12-item scale thus provides a separate score for interdependence and independence. However, a number of related constructs and measures are commonly used as proxies (Cross et al 2011). While the data does not provide a full scale, a proxy of independent self is created based on responses to a measure of in-group orientation. Individuals who report not feeling honor when people who come from the same town play an important role in society are coded as independent. It is contended that these individuals define the self independently from other in-group members and thus are not directly influenced by others success. Interdependent individuals, on the other hand, construe the self as connected and thus feel pride as a result of success of the group.

Trade attitudes are measured in response to the question: *Japan should limit the import of foreign products in order to protect its national economy.* The dependent variable *trade support* ranging from 1-7 is created with individuals who strongly disagree with the statement coded as 7.

It is also important to consider three attitudinal factors theorized to influence trade-policy preferences; socio-tropic concerns, risk orientation, and nationalism. Mansfield and Mutz (2009) contend that many citizens have difficulty relating national policy debates to their daily lives. The authors argue that concerns about the national economy influence trade preferences and demonstrate that once socio-tropic and social attitudes are accounted for, both skill level and sector of employment have no meaningful effect on trade attitudes. To control for socio-tropic attitudes a direct measure of individuals' belief about the effect of trade on the national economy is included. The variable *socio-tropic* is constructed based on whether or not individuals' believe the *mobility of people, goods, and capital is good or bad for Japan's economy.*

Ehrlich and Maestas (2010) find that risk orientation influences trade-policy preferences. To account for these effects, a proxy for risk-aversion is constructed from respondents' agreement or disagreement with the following statement: *A life full of risks and chances is more desirable than an ordinary and stable life.*

As argued by Mayda and Rodrik (2005), nationalism is associated with higher levels of support for protectionism. To control for this effect, the variable *nationalism* based on respondents' agreement with the statement that *Japan should follow its*

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national interest even if these would lead to conflicts with other nations is constructed.

Additional demographic variables often found to influence trade attitudes such as marital status, age, and gender are also accounted for. Descriptive statistics of the data and variables used in the analysis are described in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Range	Obs.
Trade Support	3.74	1.14	1-7	2,151
Wage	6.72	3.42	0-19	1,086
Independent Self	3.16	1.06	1-7	2,152
Education (years)	12.58	2.49	6-18	2,135
Female	0.54	0.50	0-1	2,160
Age (years)	52.35	16.99	20-89	2,160
Married	0.71	0.45	0-1	2,160
Risk Aversion	4.13	1.16	1-7	2,153
Nationalism	4.41	1.10	1-7	2,149
Socio-tropic	3.31	1.25	1-7	1,932

Results of the analysis are reported in Table 2. First consider the Stolper-Samuelson predictions that factor endowment will drive trade attitudes. Model 1 provides a typical specification of trade-policy preference formation. As reported, there is no support for the specific factors model. The coefficient for wage fails to reach statistical significance. And more surprising not only does a low education level have no significant effect on trade attitudes the sign is in fact in the wrong direction. College graduates are significantly more supportive of trade but as previously discussed this is consistent with arguments related to economics training and the spread of cosmopolitan values in colleges. These results are consistent with the cultural hypothesis that factor endowment will not directly affect trade attitudes in a collectivist society where individuals are more likely to define the self as interdependent. It should be emphasized, however, that while the analysis produces support for the cultural view, it is not a direct test of the hypothesis.

Model 2, incorporates the interaction of wage and independent self and provides a direct test of the individual level hypothesis. The interaction is significant and in the predicted direction indicating that the effect of wage is different for independent and interdependent individuals. Furthermore, as depicted in Figure 1, the effect of wages is positive and significant for individuals with an independent self-

construal.

Next, education as a measure of skill is considered. Model 3 provides a second test of the individual hypothesis by interacting low education with self construal. It is argued that low-education will lead to decreased support for protection in individuals who define the self independently. The results of the analysis support the hypothesis. The interaction term for low-education and independent self is negative and statistically significant. The effect of low education differs significantly depending on self-construal. Likewise as shown in Figure 2, the effect of low education is negative and statistically significant for individuals with an independent self-construal.

Table 2: Determinants of Trade Attitudes

	Model 1 (Basic)	Model 2 (Wage)	Model 3 (Low Education)
Wage	0.019 (0.013)	0.014 (0.014)	0.019 (0.013)
Low Education	-0.037 (0.121)	-0.036 (0.120)	0.027 (0.122)
College Graduate	**0.305 (0.074)**	**0.298 (0.074)**	**0.299 (0.074)**
Independent Self		-0.396 (0.325)	0.339 (0.184)
Independent X Wage		**0.082 (0.041)**	
Independent X Low Educ.			**-1.212 (0.459)**
Female	**-0.334 (0.080)**	**-0.337 (0.080)**	**-0.32 (0.080)**
Age	0.002 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)
Married	-0.013 (0.081)	-0.022 (0.081)	-0.030 (0.082)
Risk Averse	-0.029 (0.033)	-0.030 (0.033)	-0.033 (0.033)
Nationalistic	**-0.372 (0.039)**	**-0.378 (0.039)**	**-0.375 (0.039)**
Socio-tropic Concern	**-0.126 (0.031)**	**-0.125 (0.031)**	**-0.125 (0.031)**
Pseudo R-Squared	0.0747	0.0768	0.0777
Chi Squared	181.07	185.54	188.43
Observations	1,001	1,001	1,001

Notes: Coefficients for ordered-probit. Bold indicates $p<.05$ in Two-tailed t-test. Robust standard errors in parenthesis. Adjacent threshold parameters (not reported) are significantly different in all models.

Other variables in the model perform largely as expected. Gender has a large and stable effect with women being less supportive of trade liberalization as typically found. Attitudinal variables also have a large and stable effect across all the models. Of the attitudinal variables, only risk-orientation fails to significantly predict trade attitudes

consistently. This is perhaps not surprising as Ehrlich and Maestas (2010) contend that risk orientation should be conditional on risk exposure. Nationalism has a large impact on trade policy preferences that is constant across all models. Part of the impact of nationalism, however, may be related to the framing of the trade attitude measure. While a negative frame related to job loss or a positive frame related to consumer prices is not included the measure associates limiting trade with "protecting the economy." This phrasing possibly had the unintended consequence of cuing nationalistic concerns. Similarly, socio-tropic concern has a stable and large effect on trade attitudes. The interpretation of this coefficient, however, is not clear. As argued by Fordham and Kleinberg (2012), for example, it is not certain the direction of causation between trade attitudes and socio-tropic attitudes. Furthermore, the relationship between self-interest and socio-tropic beliefs is not clear as individuals may simply form socio-tropic attitudes based on personal pocketbook concerns and not vice versa (Ehrlich et al 2010).

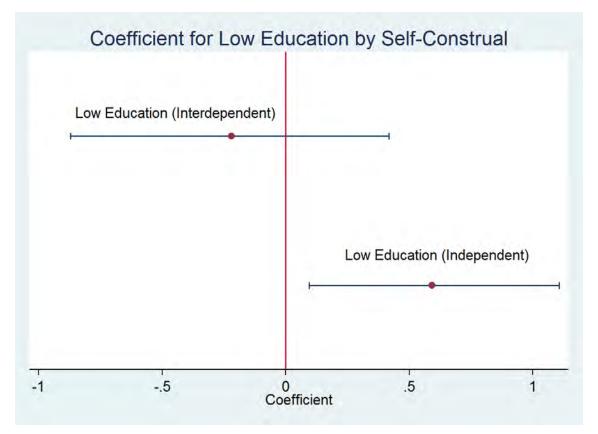**Figure 1: Conditional Effects of Wage**

Figure 2: Conditional Effects of Low Education

The results of the analysis highlight the importance of self-construal in trade attitude formation. Two test of the individual hypothesis show support for the conditional effect of factor endowment on trade attitudes. Individuals with an independent self-construal view the self as separate from others and focus on individual goals and self-esteem. As expected, these individuals also form policy preferences based on personal pocketbook interest narrowly defined. Individuals with an interdependent self construction of the self, define the self as interconnected with others, pursue group goals, and pay less attention to personal factors when making decisions. It is thus not surprising that interdependent individuals will not form policy preferences from personal interest narrowly defined. Furthermore, the results reflect the expectations of the cultural view of the self. Although factor endowment is routinely found to influence trade attitudes in Western countries (Scheve and Slaughter 2001; O'Rourke et al 2001; Hays et al 2005; Mayda and Rodrik 2005; Sanz and Coma 2008), there is little support for a direct effect of skill-level on trade attitudes in Japan.

Taking Culture Seriously in IR

This study has examined the effect of self construal on trade attitudes at both the individual and cultural level. The results of the study largely support the hypothesis but a more thorough analysis in needed before strong claims about cross cultural variation in attitudes can be made. First, this paper relies on the traditionally accepted view that Japan is a collectivist society. While it is certain that collectivism has played a historical role in Japanese culture it is less certain that it remains a dominant value today. The economic factors encouraging group cohesion on the islands no longer exist. Furthermore, the major political and social institutions that helped to reinforce collectivistic values over the centuries have either been entirely replaced or lost much of their influence over society. Future work should seek to verify the continued cultural importance of collectivism in East Asia. Considering the difficulties in properly anchoring cross national Likert-type measures, this work will most likely need to be experimental utilizing priming techniques or focusing on implicit measures.

Furthermore, this paper assumes that Stolper-Samuelson effects are typically found in Western developed economies. While this is routinely reported in the literature, we should be careful when considering all the evidence. First many studies that find support for factor endowment driving trade preferences incorporate a dummy variable for college graduate as a measure of skill. The interpretation of this variable is uncertain particularly when proper controls are not included. Future work should directly compare the effects of pocketbook interest and self-construal both between subcultures and cross-nationally.

Stronger conclusions can be drawn from the individual level hypothesis. The previous analysis shows that skill level measured through wage or income is conditional on self-construal. This finding is robust and substantively important. Further research however, should attempt to measure self-construal more precisely. A precise measure would allow for considerations of different types of interdependence and give a stronger test of the individual level hypothesis. Moving forward, future research needs to explain how interdependent individuals form preferences. A focus on interdependent construals could help to align divergent strands of literature that emphasize different modes of decision making. Most importantly, however, it is essential to expand our understanding of preference formation and decision making beyond a narrow view.

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Appendix

[*Wage*] あなたの収入は、先ほどうかがった主なお仕事からの収入だけに限ると、どのくらいになりますか。

> なし, 70 万円未満, 70〜100 万円未満, 100〜130 万円未満, 130〜150 万円未満,
> 150〜250 万円未満, 250〜350 万円未満, 350〜450 万円未満, 450〜550 万円未満,
> 550〜650 万円未満, 650〜750 万円未満, 750〜850 万円未満, 850〜1,000 万円未
> 満, 1,000〜1,200 万円未満, 1,200〜1,400 万円未満, 1,400〜1,600 万円未満, 1,600〜
> 1,850 万円未満, 1,850〜2,300 万円未満, 2,300 万円以上

[*Self-construal*] 同郷の人が社会で活躍すると、自分も誇らしい気持ちになる。

> 強く賛成, 賛成, どちらかといえば賛成, どちらともいえない, どちらかといえば
> 反対, 反対, 強く反対

[*Risk orientation]* 平凡で安定した人生よりも、不安定だが可能性に満ちた人生の方が好ましい。

> 強く賛成, 賛成, どちらかといえば賛成, どちらともいえない, どちらかといえば
> 反対, 反対, 強く反対

[*Trade attitude*] 日本と他の国々との関係についてお尋ねします。次の意見について、あなたは賛成ですか、反対ですか。日本経済を守るために外国製品の輸入は制限すべきだ。

> 強く賛成, 賛成, どちらかといえば賛成, どちらともいえない, どちらかといえば
> 反対, 反対, 強く反対

[*Nationalism*] 他の国々と対立するとしても、日本は自国の国益を追求すべきだ。

> 強く賛成, 賛成, どちらかといえば賛成, どちらともいえない, どちらかといえば
> 反対, 反対, 強く反対

[*Socio-tropic*] ヒト・モノ・カネなどが、国や地域を越えて動くことが増えています。そのことは、次の事柄にとって良いことだと思いますか、悪いことだと思いますか。

> 非常に良い, 良 い, どちらかといえば良い, どちらともいえない, どちらかとい
> えば悪い, 悪 い, 非常に悪い, わからない