



## Independence and interdependence are culturally interrelated in risk event assessment

Research on cultural differences in risk studies has shown that tendencies in the maintenance of certain views and representations differ across cultures (Heine & Lehman, 1995). The point here is that “cultures may differ in their emphasis on two types of tasks: independence (i.e. task related to agency and autonomy) and interdependence (i.e. tasks related to communion and affiliation)” (Oltedal et al., 2004, p. 13). Emphasis on the interrelatedness of the individual to others and the environment can lead to less optimism in people that belong to the group or community. For instance, studies that have dealt with the differences in optimism between Canadian and Japanese students showed that the interdependent Japanese assessed events to be more severe than did independent Canadians (Heine & Lehman, 1995; see also Hayakawa, Fischbech, & Fischhoff, 2000; Lajunen, Corry, Summala, & Hartley, 1998).

Note: See source document for full reference.

### Applicable to:

Stakeholders: [Social networks](#), [Worldviews](#)

Disaster Phases: [Prevention](#)

Types of Actors Concerned: [Non-active citizens](#)

Hazards: [Natural hazards](#), [Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations](#), [Man-made intentional hazards](#)

### Recommendations:

- [Develop guidelines for disaster practitioners that take into consideration the different needs of and approaches to different ethnical groups](#)
- [Use local knowledge, collective memory and shared cultural values to improve disaster preparedness, response and recovery](#)
- [Develop risk assessments methodologies, which consider cultural factors, the manner in which people cognitively process information and which employ a gender perspective](#)

### Source

[Deliverable D4.2 "Report on 'risk cultures' in the context of disasters" \(page 17\)](#)

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