Author's response to reviews

**Title:** Does Chinese culture influence psychosocial factors for heroin use among young adolescents in China? A cross-sectional study

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**Author's response to reviews:** see over
Editors,

BMC Public Health

Dear Editors:

Thank you for your email of September 2, 2010 with the thoughtful and constructive comments of the two reviewers. We have responded to each of the points of the reviewers in the following pages. We appreciate the reviewers’ comments and have incorporated them into the revised manuscript. As per their request, detailed information about the features of collectivistic and individualistic cultures and measures of cultures has been added, which makes the manuscript much clear and strong. Please let me know if you wish to have additional information or changes.

Thank you again for your consideration of our manuscript.

Sincerely yours,

Hongjie

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Responses to reviewers’ comments

First of all, we thank the two reviewers for their thoughtful and constructive comments. We are pleased that the reviewers found that findings of the study were important and the manuscript was well written.

We have collectively taken their comments and made three major changes in the revision:

1. Based on our observation, the dimensions of cultures and measures of collectivism and individualism are still new to many readers in the field of public health; we have thus provided detailed information regarding (1) the characteristics of collectivism and individualism, (2) use of Matsumoto’s Individualism Collectivism Interpersonal Assessment Inventory (ICIAI) to measure IC at the individual level, and (3) definitions of the three specific-relationship interactions, i.e., with family members, close friends, and classmates. This detailed information will facilitate better understanding of cultures, their measures, and their potential influence to health. Due to these revisions, the length of the manuscript is not reduced.

2. Conceptual frames for the relationships between cultures and psychosocial factors for heroin use have been provided in the Introduction. Specifically, the formulation of our expectation and hypothesis has been added.

3. The introduction to the theory of planned behavior has been reduced.

Responses to the first reviewer’s comments

Introduction:

1. The introduction of the theory of planned behavior has been reduced.

2. Conceptual frames for the relationships between cultures and psychosocial factors for heroin use have been provided. Specifically, the formulation of our expectation and hypothesis has been added.

Methods:

1. We thank the reviewer for the comment that the methods section was well written.

2. We concur with the reviewer’s suggestions and have provided the detailed description of the ICIAI scale in the parts of Introduction and Method. The ICIAI is a well-established
measurement scale to evaluate individualism and collectivism (IC) and has been validated in many samples drawn from different countries. It enables evaluation of individualism vs. collectivism levels as well as subjects’ perception of IC values related to interacting with people in four types of relationships: family, close friends, colleagues and strangers. Matsumoto’s definition of values has been added. In our study, a total of 54 items (18 items x 3 relationship groups) were used to measure the levels of IC tendencies towards three interaction relationships, e.g., family members, close friends, and classmates. The definitions of the three relationships have been provided. As per the reviewer’s suggestion, we have also provided example items of the ICIAI scale and Cronbach reliability alpha for each sub-scale.

Discussion:

1. We thank the reviewer for this insightful comment and have provided the conceptual frames of the study in the Introduction.

Minor essential revisions:

1. All abbreviations have been spelled out.

2. Minor grammatical errors have been corrected by a doctoral student whose native language is English.

Responses to the second reviewer’s comments

General comments:

We thank the reviewer for the positive comments about our manuscript.

Background:

(1) The introduction to the theory of planned theory has been reduced.

Methods:

(2) We thank the reviewer for his carefully reading. We have made the study objective consistent.

(3) More detailed information about the removed ICIAI item has been provided, i.e., the statement of the item and the reason for the removal.

Analysis:

(4) ‘Chi-squared test’ has been replaced by ‘chi-square test’.
(5) The reason we did not create two composite scores to measure the levels of descriptive and subjective norms is that these items were actually directly measured from subjects and they were not latent variables in nature. In addition, as we wanted to specify where normative beliefs or influences came from, (e.g., either from family members, classmates, or villagers), the composite scores would conceal the sources of norms regarding heroin use.

(6) The results of descriptive norms have been deleted from Table 3.

Results:

(7) It has been changed to “study sample”.

(8) We concur with the reviewer’s comments and have deleted the statement “…although non-statistically-significant negative trend was observed”.