UNIT 13: INDIVIDUALISM

UNIT STRUCTURE

13.1 Learning objectives

13.2 Introduction

13.3 Philosophical views on the individual

13.4 History of Western Individualism

13.5 Philosophical Individualism

13.6 Moral Individualism

13.7 Criticisms

13.8 Let us sum up

13.9 Further readings

13.10 Answers to check your progress

13.11 Model questions

13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Explain the concept of individualism
- Understand the philosophical views on the individual
- Understand the history of western individualism
- Distinguish between individualism and collectivism
- Understand different positions of philosophical individualism
- Criticisms of individualism
- Examine individualism in terms of ethics and morality

13.2 INTRODUCTION

Individualism is the moral stance, political philosophy, ideology, or social outlook that emphasizes the moral worth of the individual. Individualists promote the exercise of one's goals and desires and so value independence and self-reliance and advocate that interests of the individual should achieve precedence over the state or a social group, while opposing external interference upon one's own interests by society or institutions such as the

government. Individualism is often defined in contrast to totalitarianism, collectivism and more corporate social forms.

Individualism regards every man as an independent, sovereign entity who possesses an inalienable right to his own life, a right derived from his nature as a rational being. Individualism holds that a civilized society, or any form of association, cooperation or peaceful coexistence among men, can be achieved only on the basis of the recognition of individual rights-and that a group, as such, has no rights other than the individual rights of its members.

Individualism makes the individual its focus and so starts with the fundamental premise that the human individual is of primary importance in the struggle for liberation. Classical Liberalism, existentialism, and anarchism are examples of movements that take the human individual as a central unit of analysis. Individualism thus involves the right of the individual to freedom and self-realization.



LET US KNOW

Individual rights refer to the liberties of each individual to pursue life and goals without interference from other individuals or the government. Examples of individual rights include the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as stated in the United States Declaration of Independence.

13.3 PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWS ON THE INDIVIDUAL

Before discussing further on individualism it becomes important to understand the very idea of an individual. An individual is a person or any specific object in a collection. In the 15th century and earlier, and also today within the fields of statistics and metaphysics, individual means "indivisible", typically describing any numerically singular thing, but sometimes meaning "a person." From the 17th century on, individual indicates separateness,

as in individualism. Individuality is the state or quality of being an individual; a person separate from other persons and possessing his or her own needs, goals, and desires.

The word "individuality is the state or quality of being an individual who exists as a distinct entity and possesses sum total of qualities and characteristics that form the individual's identity and distinguish the individual from others. However, the concept of individuality and the doctrines in which it has been embodied are not easy to unravel. They have been viewed differently in various historical periods, and they can be examined from different perspectives, such as that of psychology, sociology, political science, and ethics.

Here, we are faced with an important distinction between the two concepts "individualism" and "individuality". From a technical viewpoint, the former is often depicted as social and ethical phenomena of human relations and conduct, while the latter is often depicted as a psychological phenomenon of mental growth. In this sense, not without exceptions, individualism is a proper subject matter within the disciplines of sociology and ethics while individuality is an appropriate subject matter within the discipline of psychology. Nonetheless, each discipline has its own distinct concepts of individualism and individuality.

Let us understand the different views on the concept of the individual:

Empiricism: John Locke in late 17th century introduced the idea of the individual as a tabula rasa ("blank slate"), shaped from birth by experience and education. This ties into the idea of the liberty and rights of the individual, society as a social contract between rational individuals, and the beginnings of individualism as a doctrine.

Hegel: Hegel regarded history as the gradual evolution of Mind as it tests its own concepts against the external world. Each time the mind applies its concepts to the world, the concept is revealed to be only partly true, within a certain context; thus the mind continually revises these incomplete concepts so as to reflect a fuller reality (commonly known as the process of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis). The individual comes to rise above his or

her own particular viewpoint and grasps that he or she is a part of a greater whole insofar as he or she is bound to family, a social context, and/or a political order.

Existentialism: With the rise of existentialism, Kierkegaard rejected Hegel's notion of the individual as subordinated to the forces of history. Instead, he elevated the individual's subjectivity and capacity to choose his or her own fate. Later Existentialists built upon this notion. Nietzsche, for example, examines the individual's need to define his/her own self and circumstances. The individual is also central to Sartre's philosophy, which emphasizes individual authenticity, responsibility, and free will. In both Sartre and Nietzsche, the individual is called upon to create his or her own values, rather than rely on external, socially imposed codes of morality.

Buddhism: In Buddhism, the concept of the individual lies in anatman, or "no-self." According to anatman, the individual is really a series of interconnected processes that, working together, give the appearance of being a single, separated whole. Instead of an atomic, indivisible self distinct from reality, the individual in Buddhism is understood as an interrelated part of an ever-changing, impermanent universe.

Ayn Rand's Objectivism: Philosopher and novelist Ayn Rand's objectivism regards every human as an independent, sovereign entity who possesses an inalienable right to his or her own life, a right derived from his or her nature as a rational being. Individualism and Objectivism hold that a civilized society, or any form of association, cooperation or peaceful coexistence among humans, can be achieved only on the basis of the recognition of individual rights and that a group, as such, has no rights other than the individual rights of its members.



LET US KNOW

What happens when the source of moral values is the individual? He is the sole arbitrator of what is right and wrong, the creator of values he deems right.

Thus, the German economist and sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920) wrote that when faced with conflicting moral positions, "the individual has to decide which is God for him and which is the devil."



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1. What is individualism?

.....

Q.2. Who is an individual?

.....

Q.3. Differentiate between individuality and individualism?

.....

Q.4. Give example of movements that take the human individual as a central unit of analysis.

.....

Q.5. What is individualism opposed to?

13.4 HISTORY OF WESTERN INDIVIDUALISM

With the dawn of the modern era, individualism gradually began as a way of adapting to the new social, economic, and political conditions in Europe. And, henceforth, it evolved into social, economic, political, and philosophical doctrines expressive of one's independence, self-reliance, self-determination, and, hence, individuality. In general, individualism gives

primacy to the individual over what opposes her/his individuality, be it a social institution or the state. This new way of adapting to life under the new circumstances found diverse expressions, not always in agreement with each other, in the philosophies of the French philosophes, Immanuel Kant, W.G.F. Hegel, John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx, Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean Paul Sartre etc.

Let us now briefly explore the complex phenomenon of individualism mainly within a historical context, starting with the Greece of antiquity.

Ancient Greece: There seems to have been no awareness of individuality in ancient times. The Greeks, unlike the contemporary Western societies, probably did not have high-ranking value for individuality. To them, our contemporary individualism would have been an unconscionable act of social division-estranging ourselves from each other and the society. Fifth century Athenians were interested not in the rights of man as an individual, but in the rights of Athenians as a whole. To the Greeks, the Delphic Oracle's maxim "know thyself" did not mean to individuate or dissociate themselves from the society. For them, one's livelihood, well-being, and personal developments were essentially dependent on the communal life. This is manifest in life of Socrates when he, out of respect for the laws of Athens which had condemned him to death, chose not to escape from his own execution when he had the chance. He argued that individuals who disobey the laws of their own society tear away at the foundation of communal life. The Greek sense of community is also exhibited in their intellectual activities. For the Athenians, the pursuit of philosophical truths was no private, individual affair; truth was not something that could be attained individually and monologically, but something that could be achieved collectively and dialogically.

Medieval Age: During the Medieval Age in Europe (roughly from 476 to 1517), Christian beliefs and values dominated the scene. The Medieval Christianity put an end to free thinking, and replaced it with dogmas and authoritarianism, enforcing strict obedience to the authority of the Church. As a general rule, anyone who dared to challenge the dogmas or

authority of the Church was tortured and/or put to death. Consequently, individualism found no significant expressions in the Dark Ages of Europe. However, there gradually developed a growing sense of doubt and mistrust toward the Church, its authority, its worldview, and its political control. Hence, the conditions were ripe to gradually give birth to the age of individualism. History seems to demonstrate that when religious, social, and political institutions are untrustworthy and lose their legitimacy and no longer function for the sake of the common good, people individuate and break away from them to shape their own fragmented lives.

Renaissance: The 15th century Renaissance (which is a French word for "rebirth") in Europe brought about a revival of Greco-Roman art, literature, philosophy, and humanism. The Greek man-centered view of the world (Protagoras's statement, "Man is the measure of all thing.") inspired them and brought about an intellectual and social revolution, which reaffirmed the dignity, worth, and powers of human beings. Renaissance is deemed as the rediscovery of the human, that man is a capable being, with the power to direct one's own destiny. This emergent view, of course, undermined the influence of the Church and weakened the structure of the Medieval feudalism. The new ethical posture of the Europeans, coupled with the invention of the printing press, Columbus' discovery of the New World, and the discovery of new trade routes via water and land, gradually promoted advent of a new social order.

Protestant Reformation and Cartesian Thinking: As individualism gradually began to unfold in Europe, there was a growing sense of incertitude and mistrust of the Church and the medieval institutions. In fact, this sense of incertitude and mistrust seems to have inspired the way of thinking as exemplified by French mathematician, philosopher René Descartes (1596-1650), the father of modern philosophy. Modern philosophy is recognizably different in many ways from the Greek philosophy. While the Greeks of antiquity philosophized dialogically and outdoors in the public, Descartes (and many subsequent thinkers) philosophized monologically and in seclusion away from the public view. Modern philosophy begins with

Descartes, with the self thinking in solitude, becoming conscious of the false and doubtful ideas one has accepted so far in life, and deciding that the time has come to overthrow all of one's beliefs.

The Age of Enlightenment: Following the footsteps of Renaissance, the Age of Enlightenment (roughly from 1650 to 1770) celebrated human reason and reawakened a sense of self-confidence and self-discipline. Having observed how human reason had managed to discover the natural laws of nature under the hands of Nicolaus Copernicus, Galileo Galilei, Johannes Kepler, and Sir Isaac Newton, the Enlightenment figures applied reason to human nature and society to infer natural rights of liberty, equality, and property for all mankind. French philosophes, such as Voltaire, charged the Church and the political establishment with having conspired together to fetter human reason and to keep the masses ignorant and impoverished. Jean Jacque Rousseau, another Enlightenment philosopher, stated, "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains." (The Social Contract) Eventually, such Enlightenment ideas contributed to the French Revolution (1789-1799), which put an end to the dominance of the Church and monarchy in France. Thereafter, the Enlightenment gospel of independence and freedom spread throughout Europe, paving the way for the modern individualism, which was concurrent with the rise of secularization and bureaucratization of the social and political structures of European societies, adding to the complexity of the modern life.

The Modern Age: With the diminution of the power and influence of the Church hand in hand with the cessation of the Medieval age and its feudal socio-economic structures, the modern age gradually took form as a result of many factors, among which are: the new Cartesian mode of thought, the scientific understanding of the world, the Enlightenment values and their applications, propagation of money, and the formation of the nation-states accompanied by secularization and bureaucratization of their social and political institutions, and the advent of capitalism and industrialism. With the rise of "modernity", a new ethical view of human conduct, which put the accent on the individual, emerged in the Western societies.

The Post-Modern Era: Postmodern may mean that which occurred after the modern era, a period often identified as the first half, or even most, of the twentieth century. More philosophically, postmodern connotes an outlook that rejects the accessibility, perhaps even the existence, of absolute truth and advocates relativism as the basis for human thought, including ethics, philosophy, and religion. Postmodern individualism refers to a radical individualism linked to total, or nearly total, relativism. There are at least two problems with radical postmodern individualism. First, postmodern individualism carried to its logical conclusion makes community, whether family, tribe, nation, church, or any other form of community, impossible. Secondly, postmodern individualism with its absolute relativism provides no basis for declaring any behaviour wrong for everyone.

13.5 PHILOSOPHICAL INDIVIDUALISM

There are many positions of philosophical individualism. Let us briefly look at some of them.

Ethical egoism is the normative ethical position that moral agents ought to do what is in their own self-interest. Ethical egoism contrasts with ethical altruism, which holds that moral agents have an obligation to help and serve others. Egoism and altruism both contrast with ethical utilitarianism.

Existentialism is a term applied to the work of a number of 19th- and 20th-century philosophers who, despite profound doctrinal differences, generally held that the focus of philosophical thought should be to deal with the conditions of existence of the individual person and his or her emotions, actions, responsibilities, and thoughts. The early 19th century philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, posthumously regarded as the father of existentialism, maintained that the individual solely has the responsibilities of giving one's own life meaning and living that life passionately and sincerely, in spite of many existential obstacles and distractions including despair, angst, absurdity, alienation, and boredom.

Subsequent existential philosophers retain the emphasis on the

individual, but differ, in varying degrees, on how one achieves and what constitutes a fulfilling life, what obstacles must be overcome, and what external and internal factors are involved, including the potential consequences of the existence or non-existence of God. Existentialism became fashionable in the post-World War years as a way to reassert the importance of human individuality and freedom.

Free thought holds that individuals should not accept ideas proposed as truth without recourse to knowledge and reason. Thus, freethinkers strive to build their opinions on the basis of facts, scientific inquiry, and logical principles, independent of any logical fallacies or intellectually limiting effects of authority, confirmation bias, cognitive bias, conventional wisdom, popular culture, prejudice, sectarianism, tradition, urban legend, and all other dogmas. Regarding religion, freethinkers hold that there is insufficient evidence to scientifically validate the existence of supernatural phenomena.

Humanism is a perspective common to a wide range of ethical stances that attaches importance to human dignity, concerns, and capabilities, particularly rationality. Although the word has many senses, its meaning comes into focus when contrasted to the supernatural or to appeals to authority. 21st century Humanism tends to strongly endorse human rights, including reproductive rights, gender equality, social justice, and the separation of church and state. The term covers organized non-theistic religions, secular humanism, and a humanistic life stance.

Objectivism is a system of philosophy created by philosopher and novelist Ayn Rand that holds: reality exists independent of consciousness; human beings gain knowledge rationally from perception through the process of concept formation and inductive and deductive logic; the moral purpose of one's life is the pursuit of one's own happiness or rational self-interest. Rand thinks the only social system consistent with this morality is full respect for individual rights, embodied in pure laissez faire capitalism; and the role of art in human life is to transform man's widest metaphysical ideas, by selective reproduction of reality, into a physical form, a work of art, that he

can comprehend and to which he can respond emotionally. Objectivism celebrates man as his own hero, "with his own happiness as the moral purpose of his life, with productive achievement as his noblest activity, and reason as his only absolute."

Philosophical anarchism is an anarchist school of thought which contends that the State lacks moral legitimacy and - in contrast to revolutionary anarchism - does not advocate violent revolution to eliminate it but advocate peaceful evolution to superate it. Though philosophical anarchism does not necessarily imply any action or desire for the elimination of the State, philosophical anarchists do not believe that they have an obligation or duty to obey the State, or conversely, that the State has a right to command.

Philosophical anarchism is a component especially of individualist anarchism. Philosophical anarchists of historical note include Mohandas Gandhi, William Godwin, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Max Stirner, Benjamin Tucker, and Henry David Thoreau.



LET US KNOW

There is a debate between individualism and collectivism. Does the individual's life belong to him-or does it belong to the group, the community, society, or the state?

Individualism is the idea that the individual's life belongs to him and that he has an inalienable right to live it as he sees fit, to act on his own judgment, to keep and use the product of his effort, and to pursue the values of his choosing. It's the idea that the individual is sovereign, an end in himself, and the fundamental unit of moral concern

Collectivism is the idea that the individual's life belongs not to him but to the group or society of which he is merely a part, that he has no rights, and that he must sacrifice his values and goals for the group's "greater good." According to collectivism, the group or society is the

basic unit of moral concern, and the individual is of value only insofar as he serves the group. As one advocate of this idea puts it: "Man has no rights except those which society permits him to enjoy. From the day of his birth until the day of his death society allows him to enjoy certain so-called rights and deprives him of others; not . . . because society desires especially to favour or oppress the individual, but because its own preservation, welfare, and happiness are the prime considerations."

13.6 MORAL INDIVIDUALISM

How do you decide what is right and what is wrong? What is the nature of good and bad, right and wrong? How, in principle, should people act? Such are the questions of ethics or morality. Morality is a code of conduct adopted by a society. But who decides what it is? In previous centuries people generally agreed on a common idea of morality, but times have changed. The hypocrisy of organized religion and the secularization of society have left us adrift and without a shared notion of right and wrong, and society suffers for it. Has the time come for us to reconsider a shared understanding of right and wrong based on timeless, universal and proven principles?

The Greek ethical view of human conduct often referred to as "virtue ethics", valued cultivation of character and virtues, such as strength, courage, prudence, justice, and moderation, in a society that principally functioned for the common benefit of the citizenry. In contrast, the Medieval ethical view was principally "authority ethics", that is, the right conduct was prescribed by whoever had the authority within the hierarchy of power, such as the Church, prince, feudal lord, or community. In contrast to the Greek and Medieval ethical postures, the modern ethics is generally based not on "character" or "authority"-but fundamentally based on "autonomy" of the individual in choosing her/his own conduct.

German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and English philosopher John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) put forth noteworthy, ethical theories based on autonomy of the individual.

Today, our Kantian and Millian legacy is that the individual's autonomy is central in making ethical decisions. In principle, the modern ethical view is a narrow inquiry, on the part of the autonomous individual, into whether action a, b, or c will be the good one to choose. And, in choosing, the individual applies a formula to judge the action. Kant's celebrated ethical formula is, "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law of nature." (Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals) In other words, do not lie or cheat if you do not like to be lied to or cheated. And, Mill's ethical formula is, "One should always act so as to bring the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people." (Utilitarianism) Since the French Revolution until present, the authority that has been most recognizable has been fundamentally that of the autonomous individual.

13.7 CRITICISM

1) One of the criticisms against individualism is that when people believe and act so autonomously as individuals, they tend to forget that they are social beings. Individualism fosters private life at the expense of the community. This loss of the traditional community has ruinous consequences for society and individuals alike.
2) In the modern era where individuals are estranged from one another in a society where social bonds are fragmented and not as fundamental anymore, ethics has become formulaic, instrumental, and considerably quantitative. For the most part, the new ethical view of man does not seem to put high value on the cultivation of character or virtues. As mentioned earlier, the existing modern ethical view is principally a narrow inquiry into whether action a, b, or c will be the good one to choose, a choice that is often predicated on safety, pleasure, expediency, profitability, efficiency of time, and/or minimization of hardship.
3) German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) had a negative view of political individualism and found it detrimental to the state. Inspired by the classical Greek city-state, in his Philosophy of

Right, he gave primacy and power to the state over the individual. In the book, he insisted that individuals exist for the sake of the state, not the other way around. In fact, according to Hegel, nation-states are the true individuals of world history. Furthermore, for Hegel, individualism does not make possible one's selfhood. In other words, one would not know that he is a self until he is looked at by another self, acknowledged by another self. Other selves act as mirrors through which one can become conscious of one's own self.

4) It is argued that individualism, which is oftentimes associated with cynicism, narcissism, pretentiousness, fanaticism, facile nationalism/ patriotism, is a dead-end. , postmodern individualism dehumanizes instead of humanizes people, the opposite of what it promises.

5) Regardless of what we might want to think, no person can exist entirely and completely as an individual.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.6. Fill in the blanks:

a) Individualism is the moral stance, political philosophy, ideology, or social outlook that emphasizes the …… of the individual.

b) Individual rights include the …… , ……. and the pursuit of happiness as stated in the United States Declaration of Independence.

c) Individualism holds that a civilized society, or any form of association, cooperation or peaceful coexistence among humans, can be achieved only on the basis of the recognition of ……

d) In contrast to the Greek and Medieval ethical postures, the modern ethics is generally based not on "character" or "authority" but

fundamentally based on …… of the individual in choosing her/his own conduct.

e) …… is the idea that the individual's life belongs not to him but to the group or society of which he is merely a part.

Q.7. State whether the following statements are true or false:

a) Individualists advocate that interests of the individual should achieve precedence over the state or a social group. (T/F)

b) Individualists do not oppose external interference upon one's own interests by society or institutions such as the government. (T/F)

c) Individual rights refer to the liberties of each individual to pursue life and goals without interference from other individuals or the government. (T/F)

d) Kierkegaard accepted Hegel's notion of the individual as subordinated to the forces of history. (T/F)

Q.8. What is the primary focus of Individualism?



11.7 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed in this unit the concept of individualism. The most important points are:

- Individualism emphasizes the moral worth of the individual.
- Individualism believes that interests of the individual should achieve precedence over the state or a social group.
- Individualism regards every man as an independent, sovereign entity who possesses an inalienable right to his own life.
- There are the different views on the concept of the individual.
- There seems to have been no awareness of individuality in ancient times.
- In the medieval age, the conditions were ripe to gradually give birth to the age of individualism.

- As individualism gradually began to unfold in Europe, there was a growing sense of incertitude and mistrust of the Church and the medieval institutions during the renaissance and the Enlightenment period.

- This paved the way for modern individualism and a new ethical view of human conduct, which put the accent on the individual, emerged in the Western societies.

- Today, our Kantian and Millian legacy is that the individual's autonomy is central in making ethical decisions. In principle, the modern ethical view is a narrow inquiry, on the part of the autonomous individual.

- Since the French Revolution until present, the authority that has been most recognizable has been fundamentally that of the autonomous individual.



13.9 FURTHER READING

1) "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Lukes" \o "Steven Lukes" Lukes, Steven (1973). Individualism. New York:
2) "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HarperCollins" \o "HarperCollins" Harper & Row .
3) "https://en.wikipedia.org/w index.php?title=Alain_Renaut&action=edit&redlink=1" \o "Alain Renaut (page does not exist)" Renaut, Alain (1999). The Era of the Individual. Princeton, NJ
4) Shanahan, Daniel. (1991) Toward a Genealogy of Individualism. Amherst, MA: HYPERLINK "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Massachusetts_Press" \o "University of Massachusetts Press" University of Massachusetts Press .
5) "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ian_Watt" \o "Ian Watt" Watt, Ian . (1996) Myths of Modern Individualism. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
6) Dewey, J. (1930). Individualism: Old and New. New York: Minton.

13.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q1: Individualism is the moral stance, political philosophy, ideology, or social outlook that emphasizes the moral worth of the individual.

Ans. To Q. No. 2: An individual is a person or any specific object in a collection. In the 15th century and earlier, and also today within the fields of statistics and metaphysics, individual means "indivisible", typically describing any numerically singular thing, but sometimes meaning "a person".

Ans. To Q. No. 3: Individualism is often depicted as social and ethical phenomena of human relations and conduct, while individuality is often depicted as a psychological phenomenon of mental growth.

Ans. To Q. No. 4: Classical Liberalism, existentialism, and anarchism are examples of movements that take the human individual as a central unit of analysis.

Ans. To Q. No. 5: Individualism is opposed to external interference upon one's own interests by society or institutions such as the government. Individualism is often defined in contrast to totalitarianism, collectivism and more corporate social forms.

Ans. To Q. No. 6: a) moral worth
b) right to life, liberty
c) individual rights
d) autonomy
e) Collectivism

Ans. To Q. No. 7: a) True
b) False
c) True
d) False

Ans. To Q. No. 8: Individualism gives primacy to the individual over what opposes her/his individuality, be it a social institution or the state.

13.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short Questions

Q1: Define individual rights?

Q2: Give an example of an individual right?

Q3: What is morality?

Q4: What is collectivism?

B. Short questions: (answer in about 150-200 words)

Q1: What is individualism? What is its primary focus?

Q2: State the differences between individuality and individualism?

Q3: What is the difference between individualism and collectivism?

Q4: Discuss individual rights.

C. Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500)

Q1: Discuss Hegel's concept of the individual. How did Kierkegaard oppose Hegel's view?

Q2: Discuss the evolution of the concept of the individual.

Q3: Write a note on philosophical individualism.

Q4: Critically examine the concept of individualism.

Q5: Trace the historical development of western individualism.

*** ***** ***