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Individualism versus collectivism in motivations for contribution to open content projects

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Key Words: Motivation, open content, Wikibooks, culture, Hofstede, individualism

Open content web pages allow individuals to write and share their ideas and knowledge with others. 'Open content textbooks', such as *Wikibooks*, is a recent evolution of open content movement revolution. Individuals who contribute to open content textbooks have different motivators. While most individuals inspired to write to open textbooks because they want to make learning contributions and learn new ideas, others take the opportunity to publish their work and network with others (Sajjapanroj et al. 2008). Although individuals regulate their behaviour in relation to others (Markus & Kitayama 1991), the orientation of their goals differs from individualist to collectivist cultures (Hofstede 2001). Pfeil et al. (2006) explored in their study on *Wikipedia*, an open content encyclopedia, that individuals from higher individualism countries are less likely to clarify or add into its content, and vice versa.

Extending Sajjapanroj et al. (2008) and Pfeil et al. (2006) research, contributors to *Wikibooks* were surveyed, using web-based questionnaire, about their writing motivations. The analysis explored that motivations of contributors from individualist culture are more self-oriented while contributors from collectivist culture consider more their communities. This research investigated contributors to Arabic and English pages of *Wikibooks*, mainly from eight countries. Therefore the results may not be generalized to contributors from other countries who write to other language versions of *Wikibooks* before further research.

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Individualism versus collectivism in motivations for contribution to open content projects

By

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Open textbooks are an openly-licensed textbooks offered online by their author(s).

The open license allows users to:

- read the textbook online
- download and use the textbook
- print the textbook at no cost
- distribute the textbook

However, some open textbooks' authors allow textbooks' users to:

- add to the content of textbooks
- edit the content of textbooks
- redistribute the textbooks

The famous example of these open textbooks websites is

Number of Articles

110000

Number of Languages

120

Number of Subscribers

240



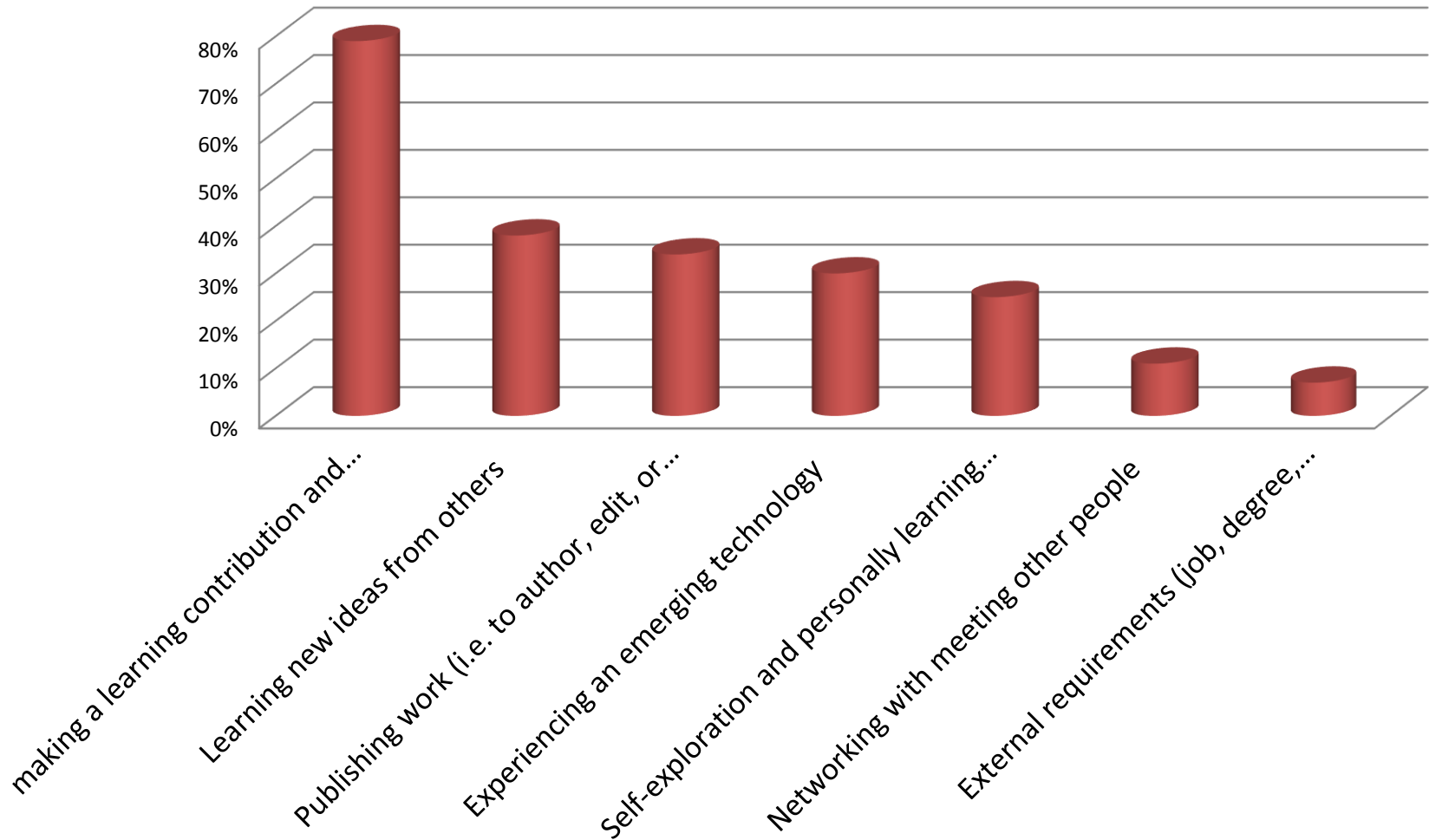
a multilingual free
encyclopedia
Wiktionary
['wɪkʃənərɪ] n.,
a wiki-based Open
Content dictionary
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Sajjapanroj et al. (2008):

Online survey: 80 responses out of 1,500 invitations sent to
Registered users of the English pages of Wikibooks

Reasons for contributing to Wikibooks



Pfeil *et al.* (2006) found that the contribution patterns to Wikipedia differ across cultures

Contributor Activities	Dutch	French	German	Japanese	Average
Add Link	34.78%	19.81%	24.27%	33.86%	0.28
Format	17.39%	16.51%	15.21%	18.11%	0.17
Add Information	7.61%	10.61%	13.27%	18.11%	0.12
Fix Link	9.78%	11.79%	9.71%	5.51%	0.09
Clarify Information	5.43%	5.90%	8.41%	7.87%	0.07
Spelling	6.52%	10.85%	2.27%	2.36%	0.06
Grammar	4.35%	9.20%	3.56%	0.00%	0.04
Delete Link	4.35%	3.54%	5.18%	3.94%	0.04
Delete Information	2.17%	1.89%	3.24%	2.36%	0.02
Other activities	7.620%	9.900%	14.880%	7.880%	
Individualism score	80	71	67	46	



navigation

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search

community


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- [Community portal](#)
- [Reading room](#)
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- [Policy discussions and votes](#)
- [Contact us](#)

create a book

[main page](#)[discussion](#)[draft source](#)[history](#)

You are invited to participate in research that aims to explore the motivations among Wikibookians' participation.

To [take the survey](#), use *motivations* as your username and *wikiproject* as your password. The study has been approved by UniSA Human Ethics.

 This is the latest [quality](#) revision, approved on 26 January 2009. The draft has [template/image changes](#) awaiting review. [\(+/-\)](#)



Welcome to Wikibooks!

Wikibooks is a [Wikimedia](#) community for creating a free library of educational textbooks that **anyone can edit**. Wikibooks began on July 10, 2003; since then Wikibooks has grown to include over **35,088 pages** in a multitude of textbooks created by volunteers like you!

- Have questions or comments? [Contact us](#).
- Need a quick introduction to get you started? See our [welcome page](#).
- Explore, play in the [sandbox](#), have fun, **be bold** and good luck!

[Other languages/FAQ](#)**Wikijunior**

Books for Children

Simple English

Simplified English Books

Search and Browse



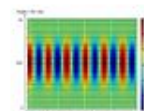
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Acoustics

[Acoustics](#) is the science that studies sound, in particular its production, transmission, and effects.



Knowing Knoppix

[Knoppix](#) is a Linux distribution that runs completely from a CD or DVD. There is no need to install. It bypasses all the software already installed on your PC or laptop and automatically detects the hardware in your computer.



Wikijunior Solar System

Outer space is perhaps the final frontier for man. Even though the rest of the solar system objects may seem like tiny dots from Earth, our celestial neighbors are still important to learn about.



The [Spanish](#) language is spoken by roughly 420 million people worldwide. Join their number with

Online questionnaire

6 reasons for contribution

- **Enjoyment**
- **The impact of friends**
- **Helping poor people**
- **Publishing the individual's work**
- **The use of free time**
- **The aim of creating educational resources**

Intrinsic motivation

Extrinsic motivation

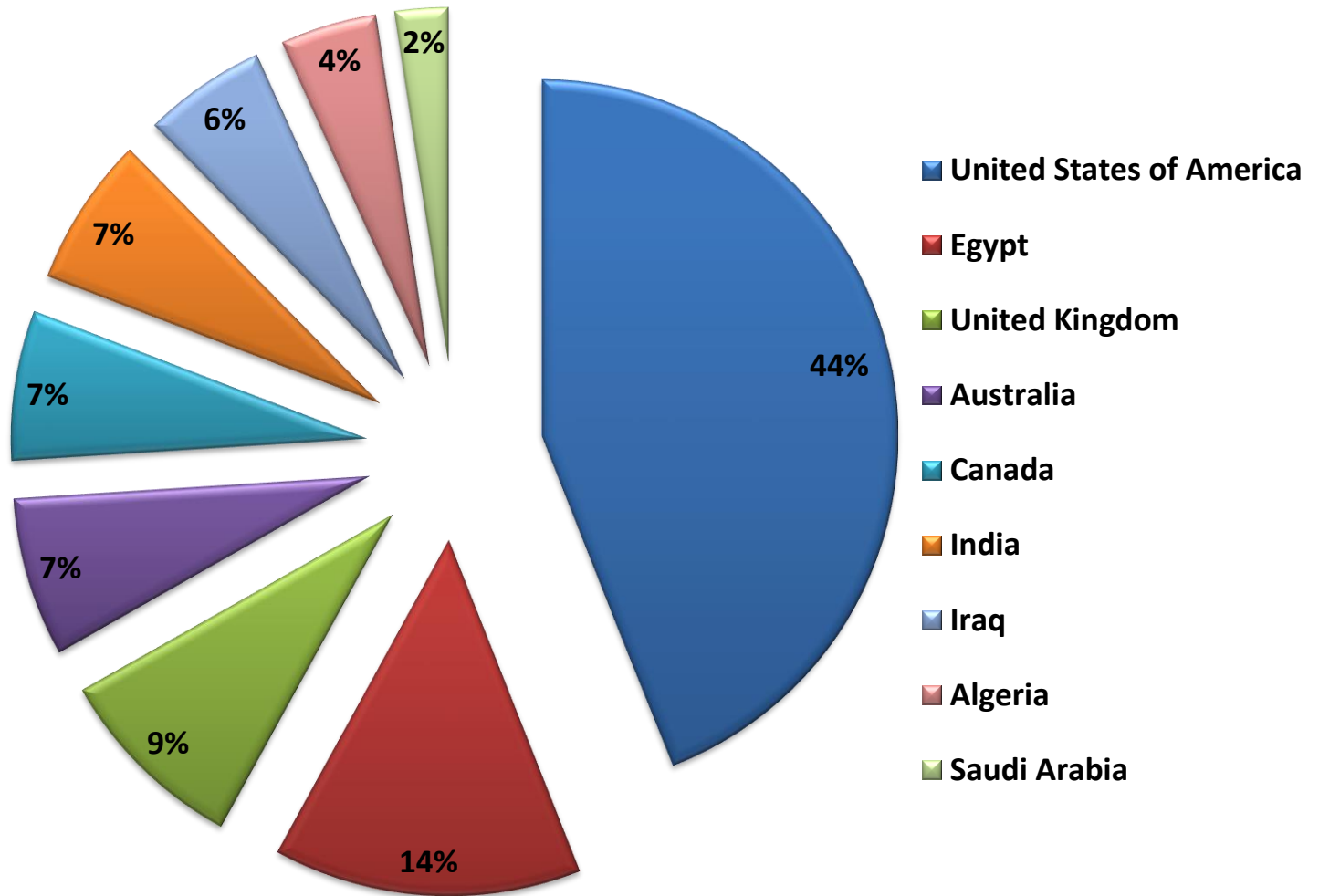


A Venn diagram consisting of two overlapping yellow circles. The left circle is labeled 'Intrinsic motivation' and contains the text 'Enjoyment, Publishing work, The use of free time'. The right circle is labeled 'Extrinsic motivation' and contains the text 'The impact of friends, Helping poor people, Creating educational resources'. The two circles overlap in the center.

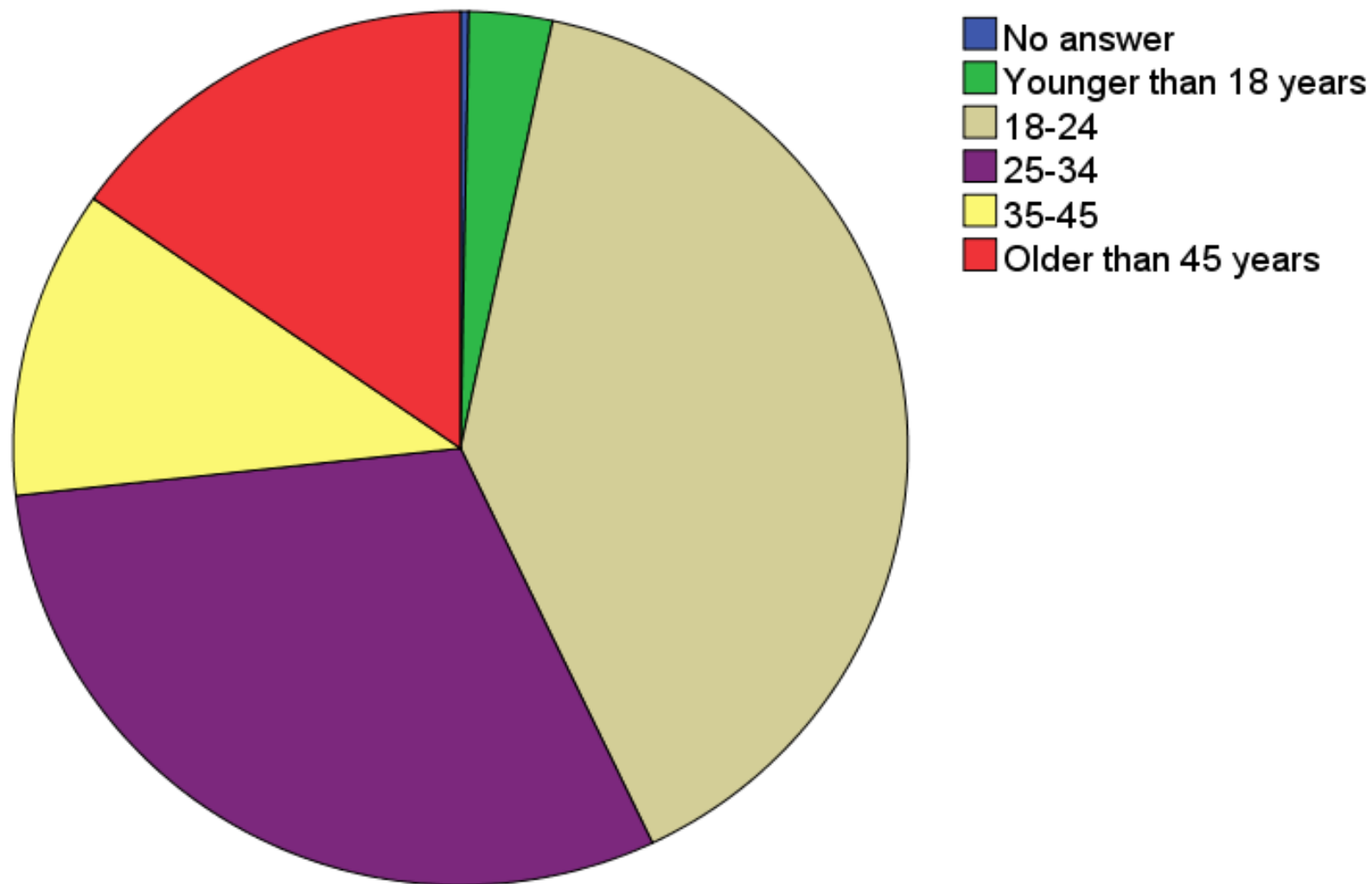
**Enjoyment,
Publishing work
The use of free time**

**The impact of friends
Helping poor people
Creating educational resources**

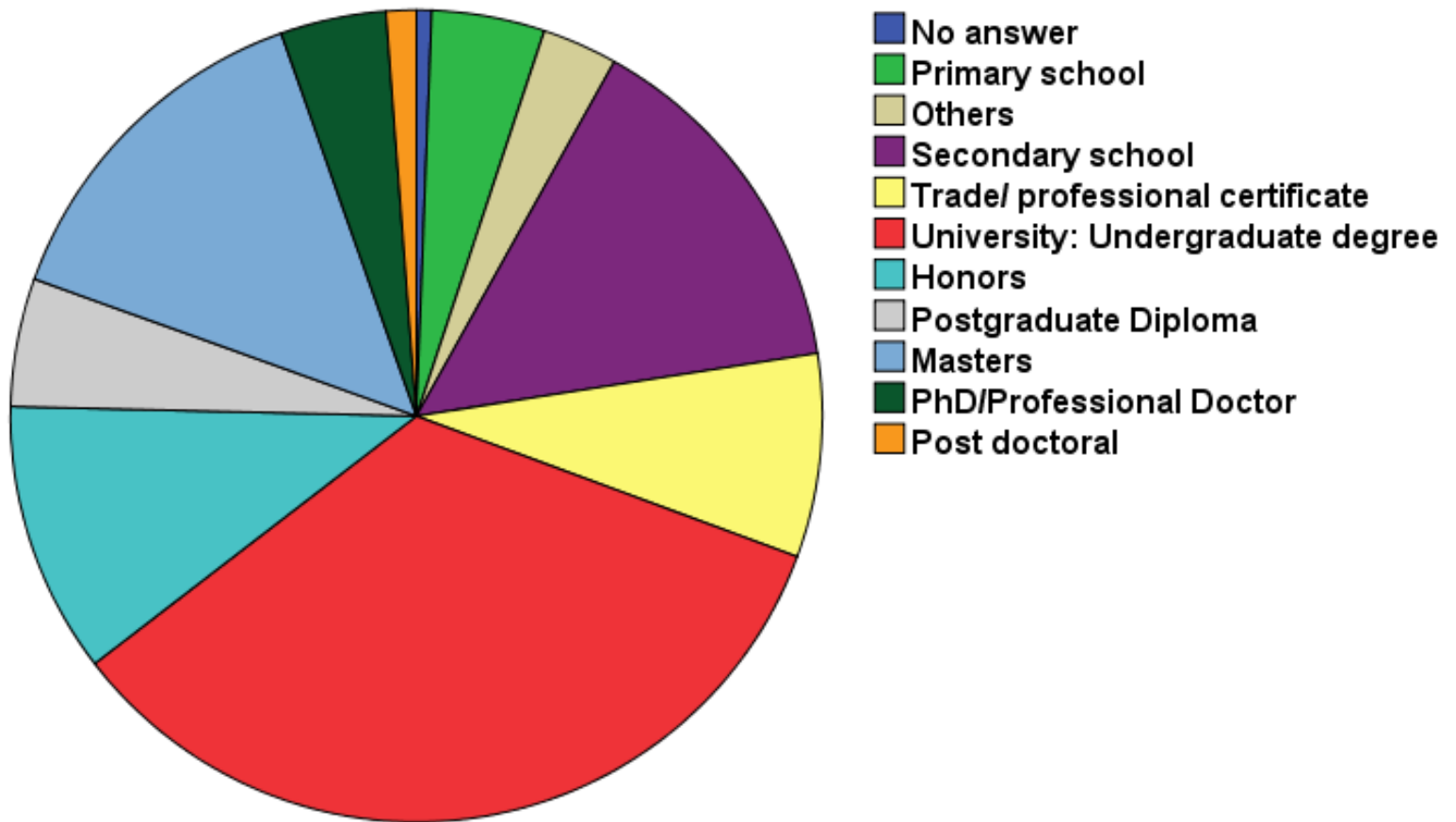
250 Responses out of 371

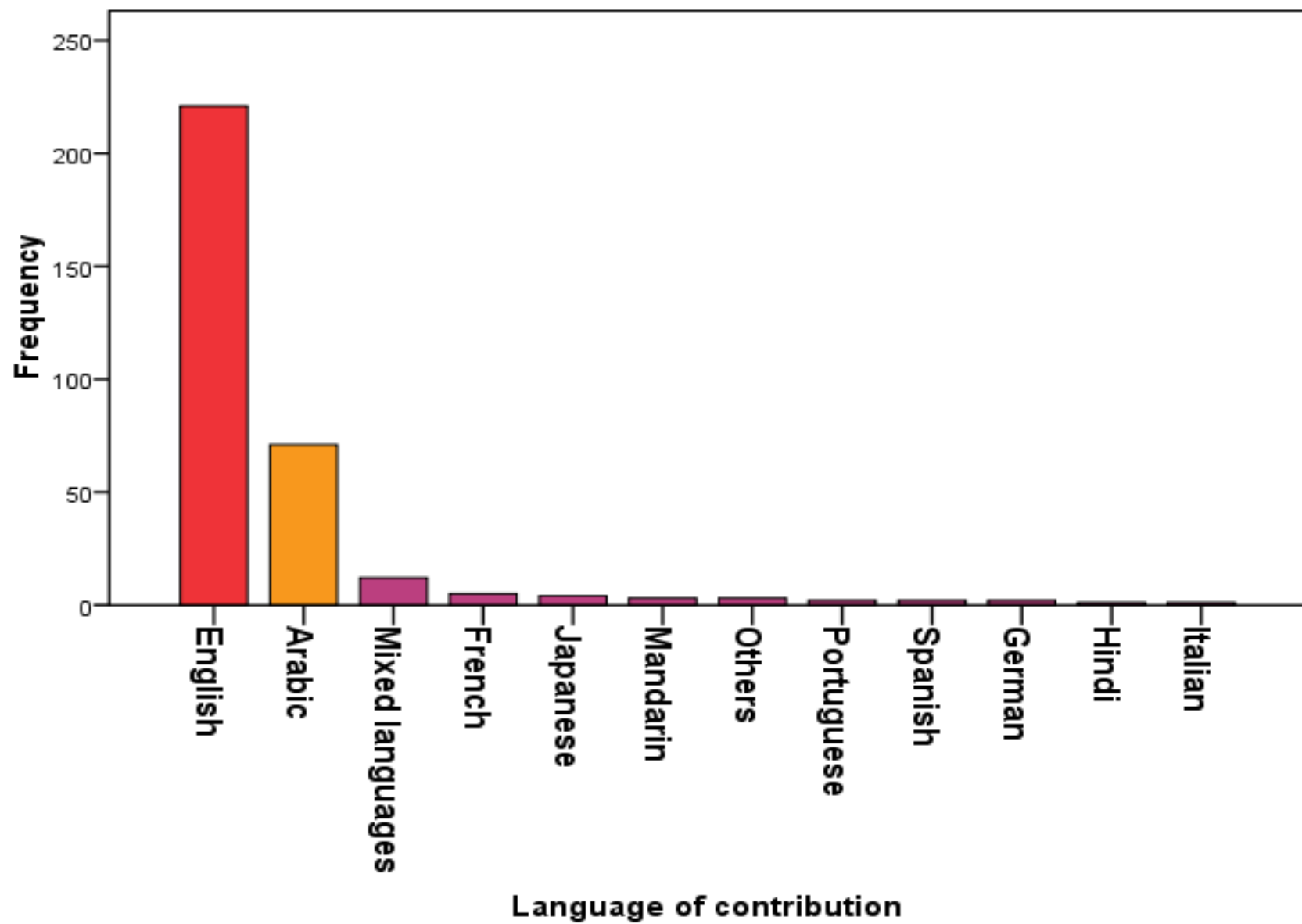


Age

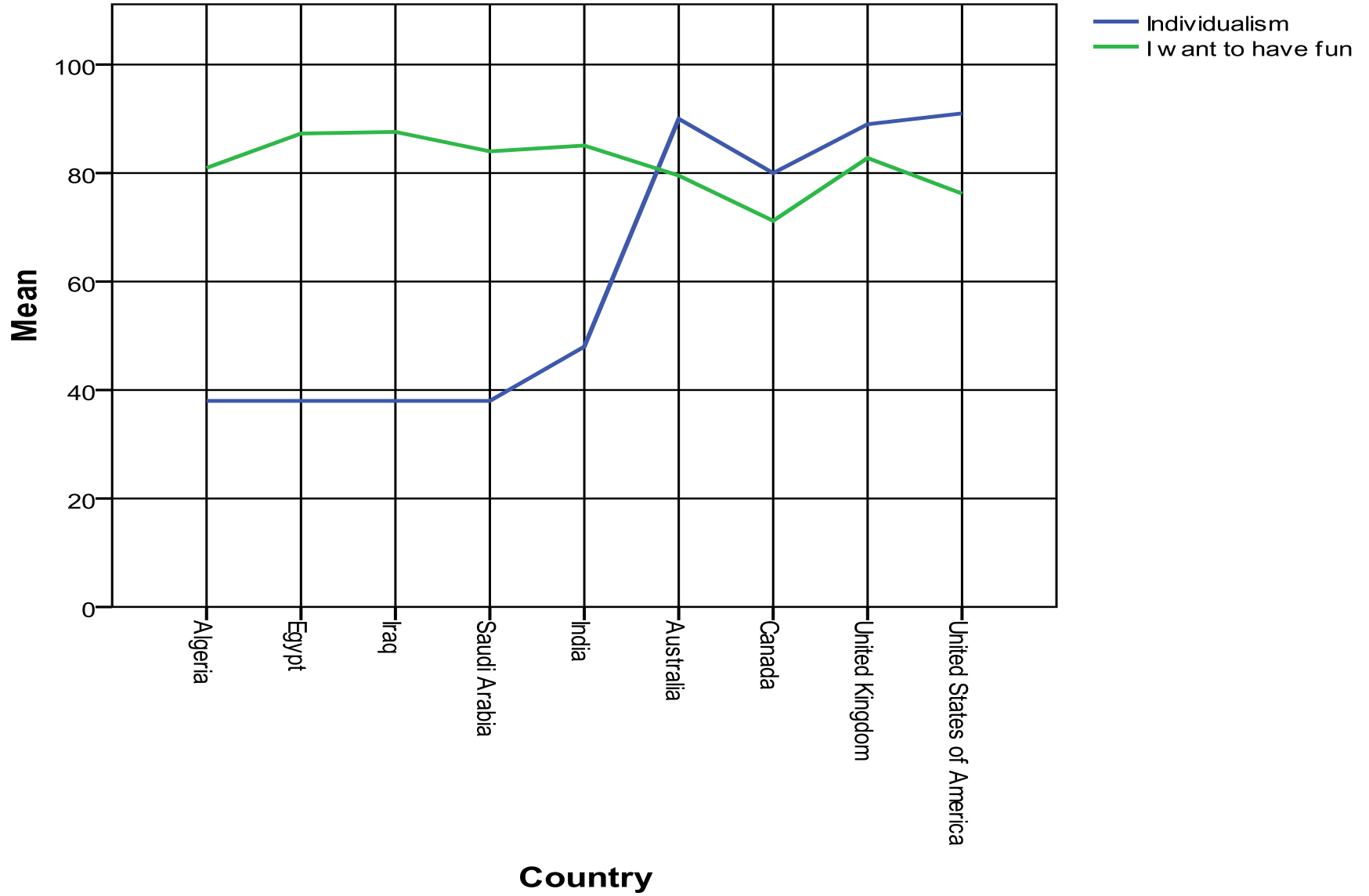


Educational level

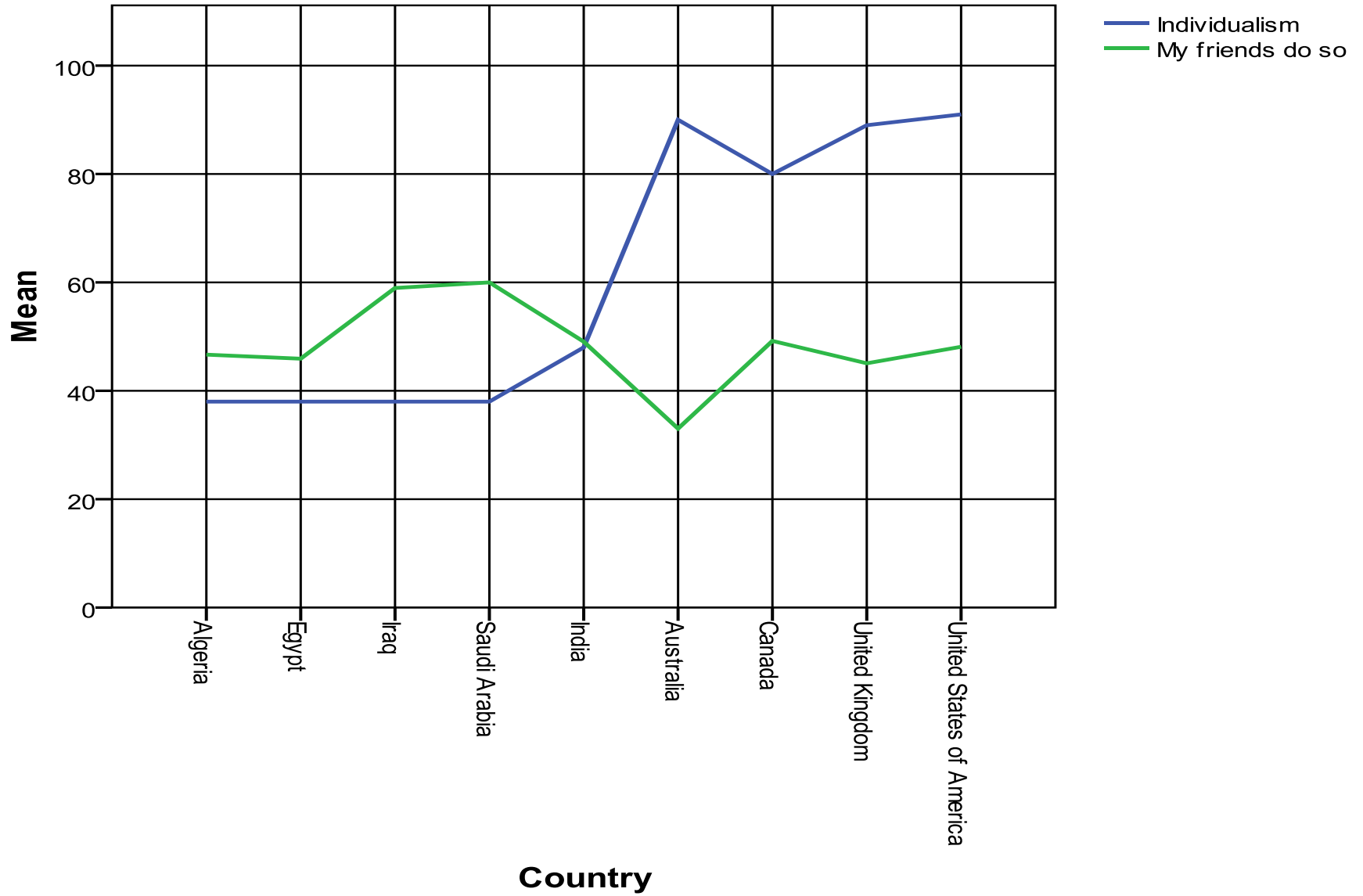




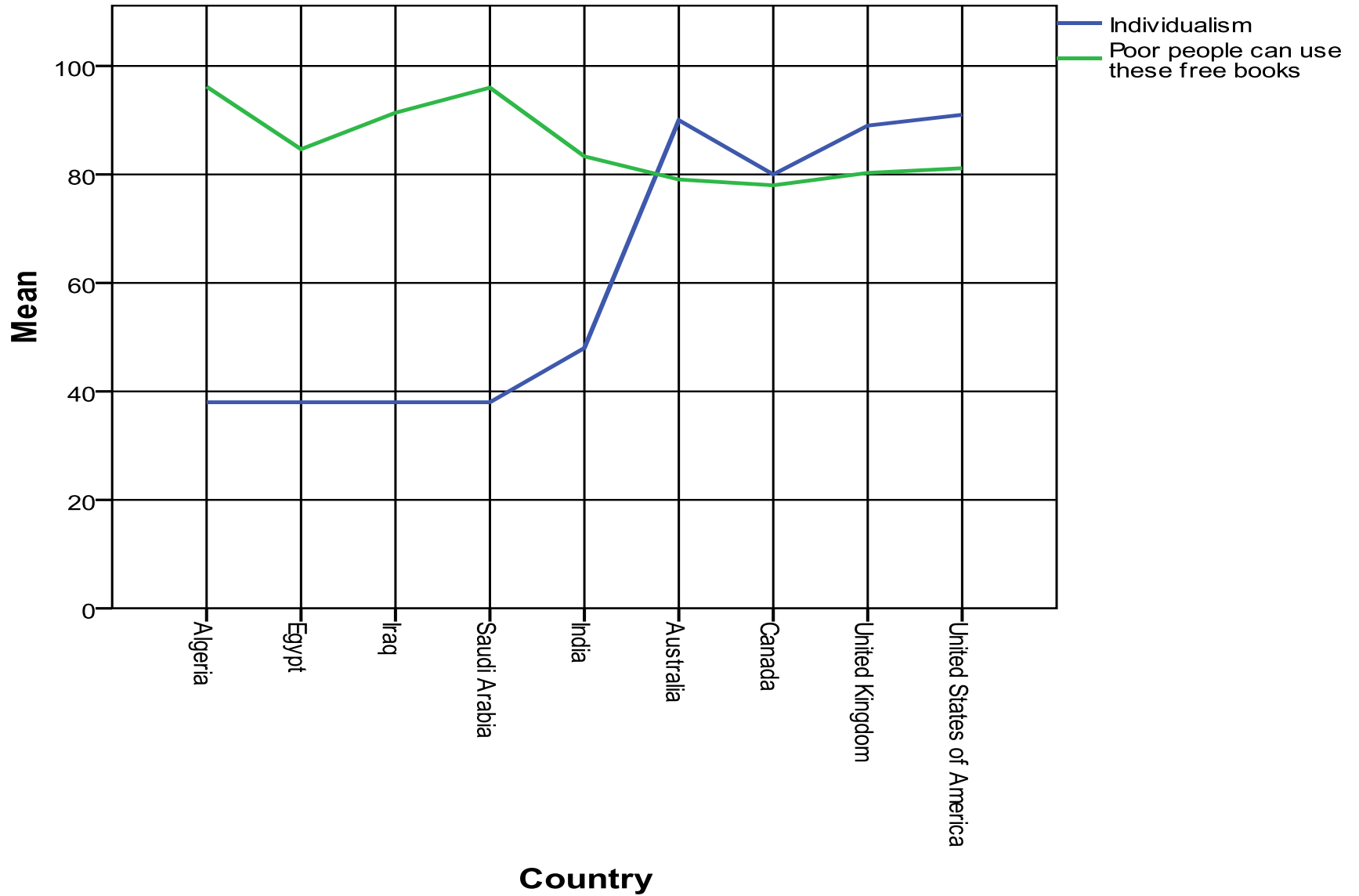
Enjoyment



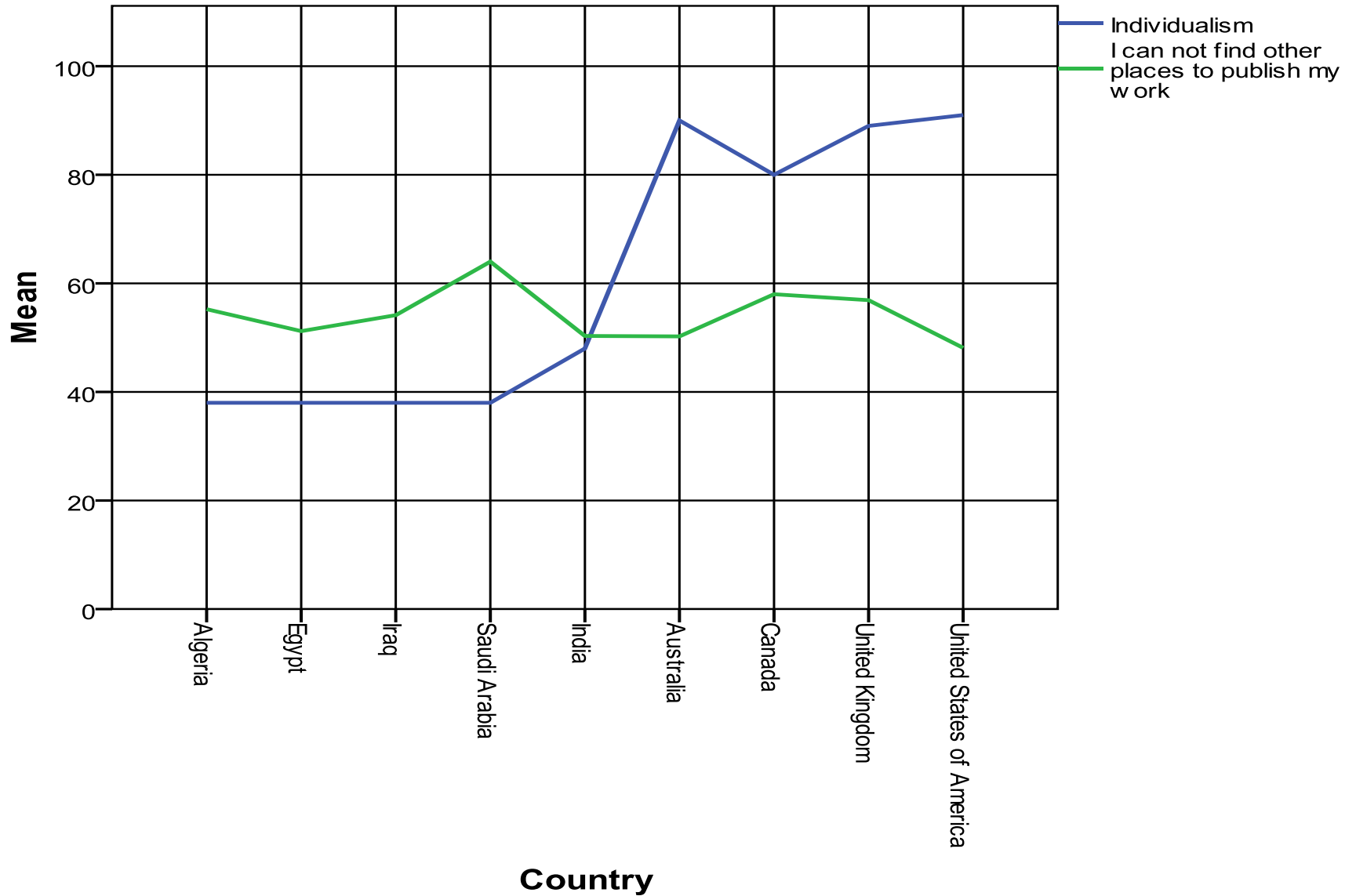
The impact of friends



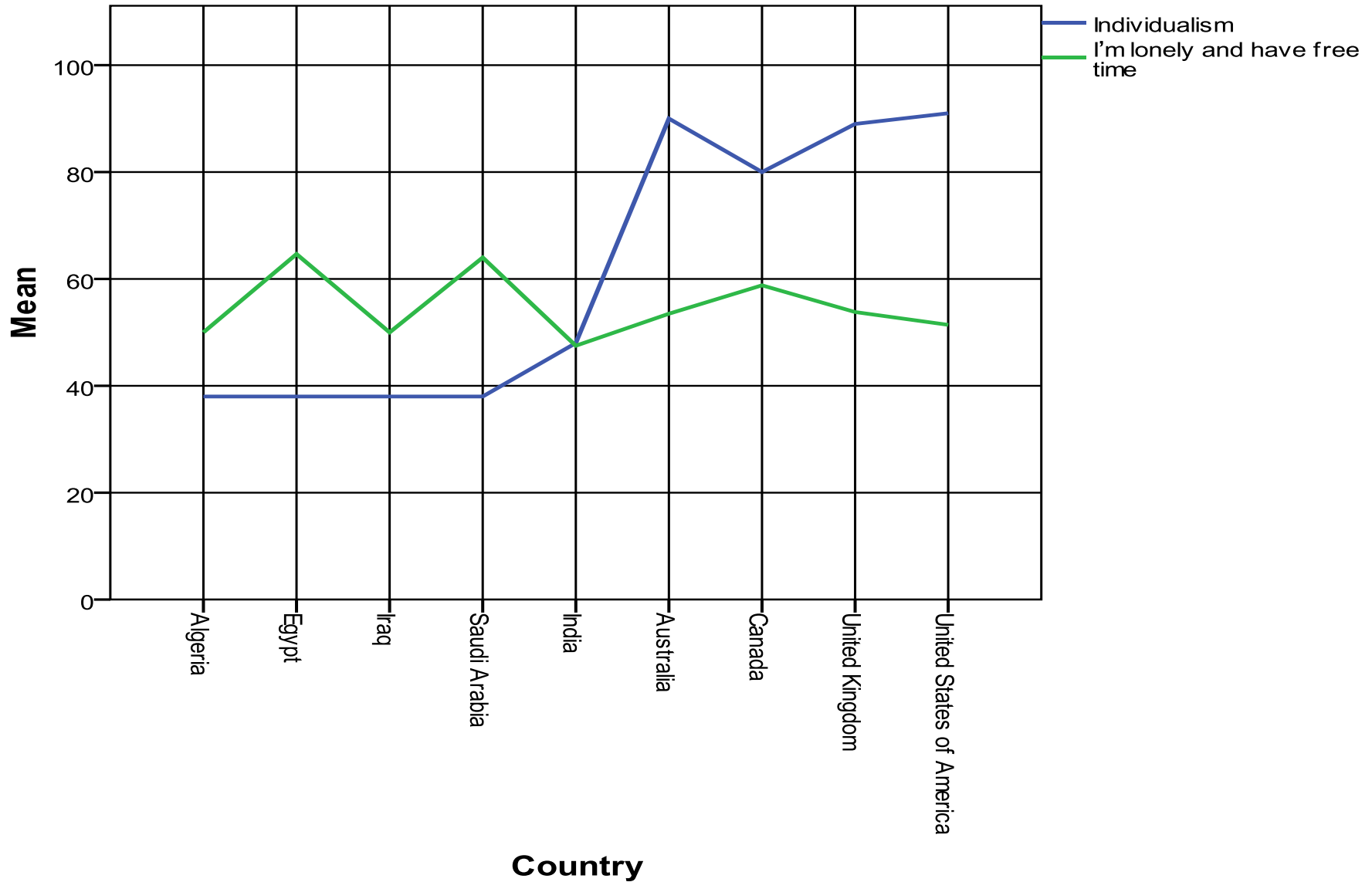
Helping '*poor*' people



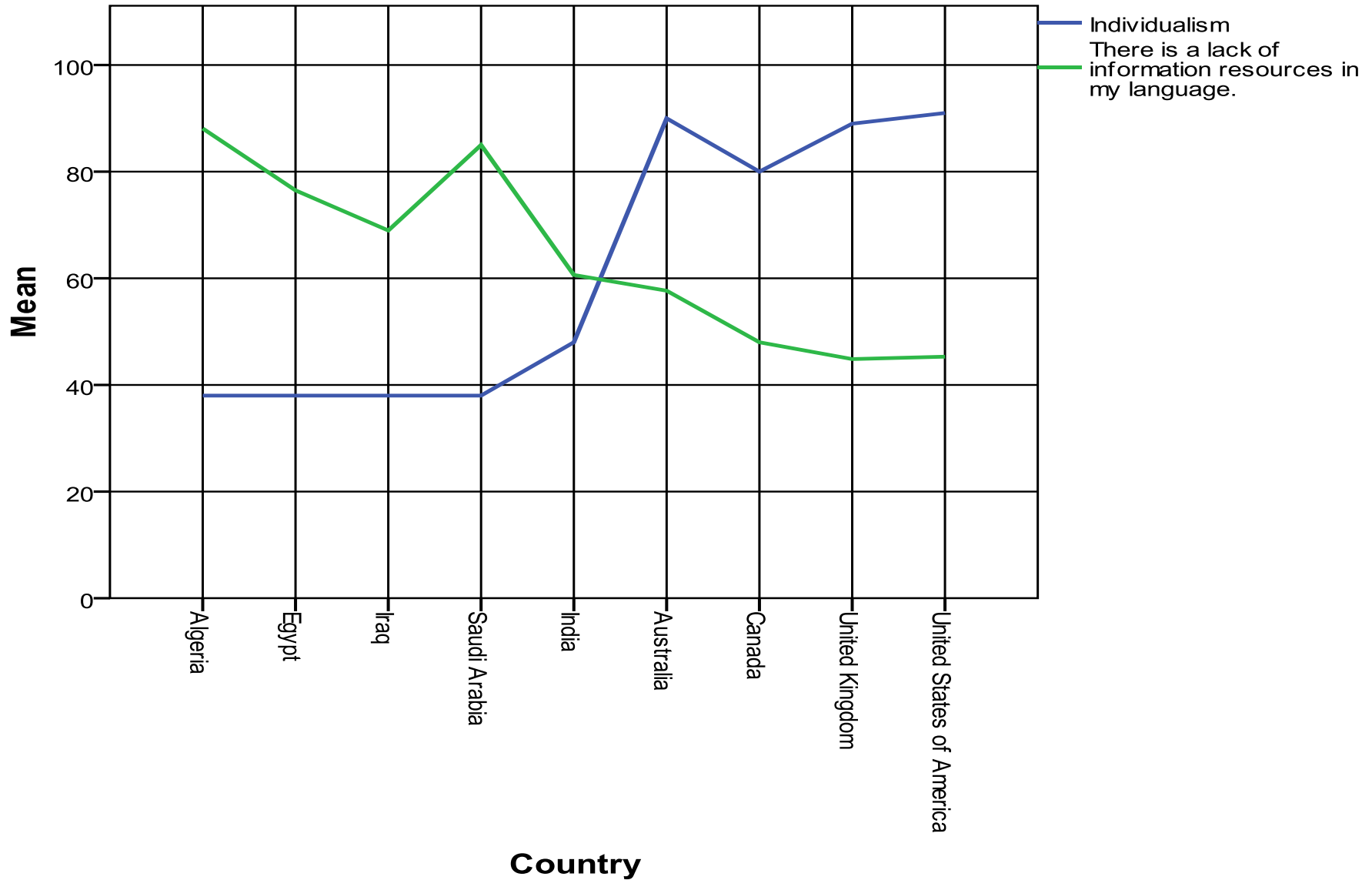
Publishing the individuals' work



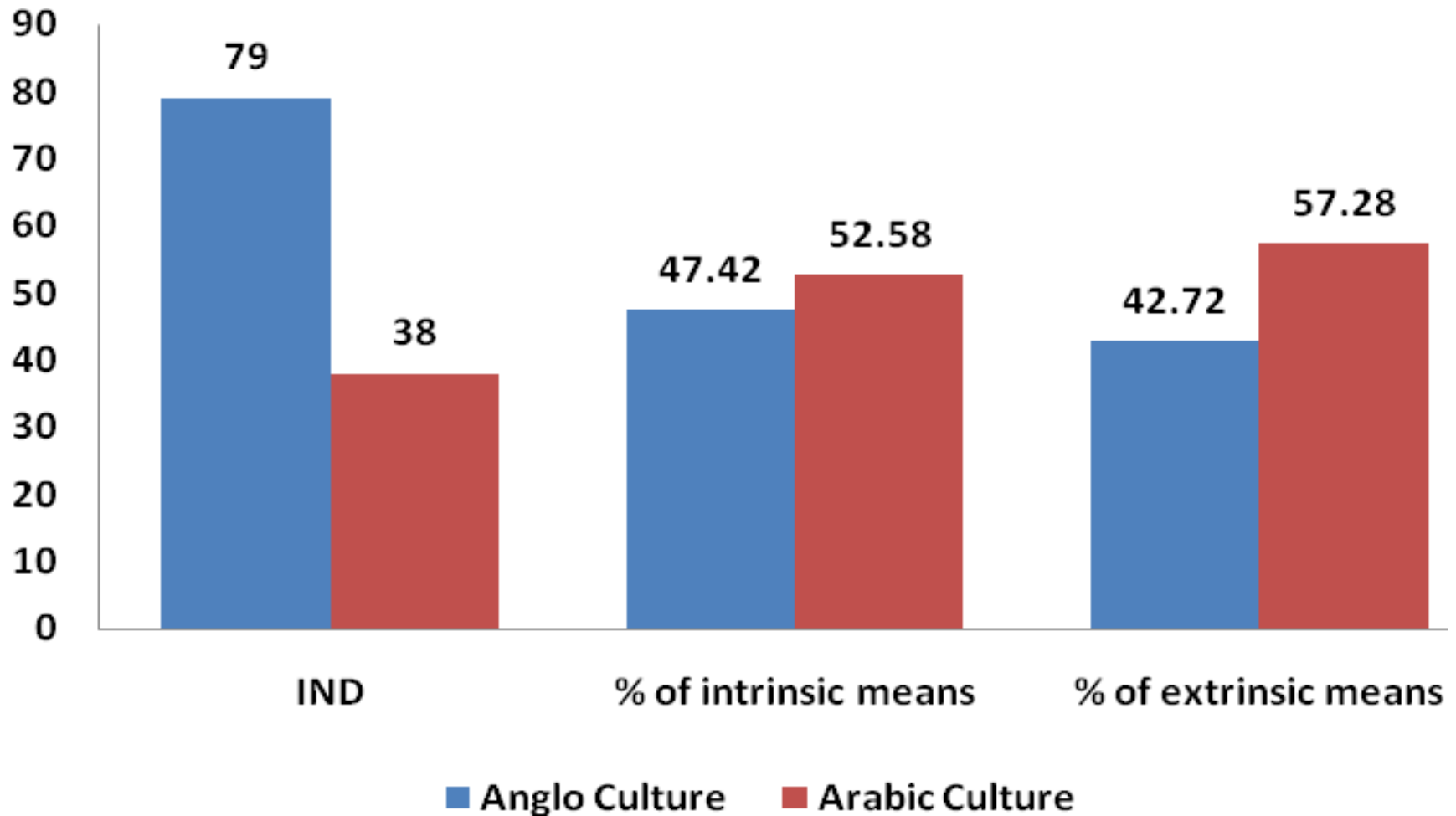
The use of free time



The aim of creating educational resources



Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation In Anglo and Arabic Culture



Hofstede argued that individualists culture, individuals seek to achieve their personal goals (intrinsic orientation), while in collectivists culture individuals consider their communities when they setup their goals (extrinsic orientation)

This study shows:

1) In individualist culture:

- I want to have fun
- I feel lonely
- I want to publish

2) In collectivist culture:

- Poor people
- Friends
- Lack of resources

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