This study utilized Hofstede’s (2001) study that tested whether Hofstede’s power distance (PD) dimension of culture is an important predictor for understanding cross-cultural facework. It investigated how cultural groups differing in their level of PD negotiate strategic responses (i.e., cooperative, indirect, or direct) to a face-threatening situation on the individual level. Respondents from six cultures—Japan, Hong Kong, Israel, Chile, Sweden, and the United States—completed questionnaires. Multivariate multiple regression results from an individual-level analysis show that large-PD culture members are more likely to use cooperative, indirect, and direct communication strategies to manage face threats than their small-PD counterparts. The cooperative and indirect facework findings in this study corresponded with Hofstede (1980, 2001), thereby adding support for Hofstede’s (1980, 2001) grand theory of cultural dimensions.

Keywords: Power Distance; Facework; Cultural Dimensions; Impression Management; Cross-cultural; Intercultural Communication
(Oetzel et al., 2003), how PD impacts on interpersonal cross-cultural facework strategy choices, particularly in embarrassing situations, has not been investigated.

There is a large body of research describing how individualism-collectivism (IC) influences facework (Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994; Gudykunst et al., 1996; Holtgraves & Yang, 1992; Imahori, 1994; Merkin, 2000; Oetzel et al., 2001; Singelis & Brown, 1995; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Ting-Toomey et al., 1991). However, IC is not the only cross-cultural influence on behavior. Cultures vary in different ways. In fact, a number of researchers have shown that a reliance on only cultural IC to explain communication behavior is limited and can lead to faulty conclusions (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Kim et al., 1996; Merkin, 2005).

According to the Handbook of Social Psychology, IC and PD stand out as two central cultural dimensions affecting psychological processes (Fiske, Markus, Kitayama, & Nisbett, 1998). In particular, Ting-Toomey (2005) pointed out that the PD should be taken into consideration in explaining face negotiation because PD and IC are separate cultural dimensions. PD and IC, however, are also correlated. Specifically, individuals from large-PD cultures tend to be more collective and individuals from small-PD cultures tend to be more individualistic (Hofstede, 1991, 2001). Despite their correlation, nevertheless, on their own, IC and PD explain different aspects of culture.

While IC refers to how individuals identify with their group, PD is about differences in equality perceptions between people. PD refers to the extent to which less powerful individuals from a society accept inequality in power and consider it normal (Stohl, 1993). Ting-Toomey (2005) explained that cultural-level PD refers to how cultures value unequal power distributions; but on the individual level of analysis, PD refers to the degree that people prefer horizontal-based facework interaction that minimizes social hierarchies (e.g., cooperative, indirect vs. direct facework strategies). Therefore, studying PD’s effects on facework should increase our understanding of how people enact facework cross-culturally.

In addition, while effects relating to IC are well known, the effects of PD have not been adequately explored with facework (Ting-Toomey, 2005). Moreover, the correlation between PD and IC makes it possible to confuse their different effects. While individuals’ assumptions about their reference group may have an impact on their subsequent communication, the different role of perceptions resulting from an individual’s level of PD should affect facework differently from IC perceptions. Therefore, it is worthwhile to extend extant facework research by analyzing how the specific effects of PD impact on individuals’ facework strategy choices.

**Embarrassment: A Face-Threatening Context**

According to facework negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988) and subsequent research (Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998), people in all cultures try to preserve and negotiate face (using facework) in all communication situations partly to avoid being embarrassed.
Embarrassment results from deficiencies in one’s presented self (Klass, 1990; Modigliani, 1968; Shott, 1979). Embarrassment, i.e., self-conscious distress, ensues when one is in a social context, as opposed to shame and guilt (Edelmann, 1981; Tangney, Miller, Flicker, & Barlow, 1996) and is likely to be accompanied by blushing, smiling, or feelings of foolishness (Buss, 1980). During a face-threatening context of embarrassment, a disturbance of the assumptions people make about one another in social transactions could potentially occur (Gross & Stone, 1964).

**Level of Analysis**

This study was part of a larger study testing all of Hofstede’s (2001) cultural dimensions conducted operationalizing cultural dimensions on the cultural level by country and the individual level by Hofstede’s Value Survey (Hofstede, 1994). The countries corresponding to varying levels of PD from high to low were applied as indicated by Hofstede in six countries: Hong Kong, Japan, Chile, USA, Sweden, and Israel. However, in this study in order to evaluate cross-cultural facework on the individual level, Hofstede’s Value Survey results were reported. Nine facework strategies originally tested were direct, indirect, distancing, leveling, harmony, ritualism, hostility (aggression), self-attribution, and consultation expectations for structural change. Each of the nine strategies originally tested corresponded to each of Hofstede’s different cultural dimensions according to Hofstede’s (1980) theoretical predictions. This particular study is reporting on the strategies specifically related to PD, i.e., cooperative, indirect, and direct strategies as elucidated by Hofstede. The other strategies tested in the overall study related to other dimensions of cultural variability than PD.

**Face and Facework**

We try to present a respectable front to other individuals when managing different relationships. According to Goffman (1967, p. 5), face is “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself [or herself] by the line others assume he [or she] has taken during a particular contact”. Face is similar to a negotiated identity. Feelings are attached to one’s self, and one’s self is expressed through face (Goffman, 1955). Thus, our face is connected to our innermost identity and its maintenance in interpersonal relationships is of utmost importance.

Facework consists of actions taken to support desires to maintain or gain face. Goffman (1967) defined facework as “actions taken by a person to make whatever he [or she] is doing consistent with face” (p. 12). When a person’s face is threatened, facework is the necessary actions taken to restore one’s desired identity. Facework researchers (e.g., Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003) have tended to look at particularly face-threatening contexts (e.g., requests, conflict, embarrassment) in order to study the facework strategies people use to manage such situations.
Facework and Culture

Culture shapes how the context or situation is perceived in that it helps determine one’s self and, in turn, one’s corresponding face (Hofstede, 2001; Inkeles & Levinson, 1997). Even though the situation plays a part in the strategies people use to present their face, the range of strategies from which people choose is limited by their cultural values.

Goffman (1955) refers to facework as the rules that people follow in enacting their face. It is these rules that vary according to culture (Hofstede, 1991; Imahori, 1994; Matsumoto, 1988; Morisaki & Gudykunst, 1994; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Sueda, 1995). Individuals have predominant facework strategy choices (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2003). Cultural factors have an indirect effect on facework strategy choices when mediated by individual-level factors (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Kim, Sharkey, & Singelis, 1994; Singelis & Brown, 1995); cultural factors also have a direct effect on facework strategy choices (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003). The focus of this study is on the direct effect of culture on individual-level facework strategy choices.

Tracy (1990) states that while concern over face may be universal; the particular aspects of face that are valued and pursued are highly influenced by the cultural context. Face researchers have contemplated how cross-cultural face is conceptualized (Brown & Levinson, 1978; Holtgraves & Yang, 1992; Oetzel et al., 2001; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). These varying notions of cross-cultural face led researchers to investigate further the facework strategies people use.

Facework strategies used within a face-threatening context that varies by culture include (but are not limited to) cooperative strategies, in which the actors accommodate their communication towards the other, indirect strategies, which are roundabout and diverge from a direct course, and direct strategies, which are straightforward and candid. Hofstede (2001) described these strategies as characteristics varying according to one’s level of PD. Because human groups organize, direct, and pattern their behavior through culture (Kim, 1993), varying cultural dimensions influence human behavior (Arrindell et al., 2004; Hofstede, 1980; Marsella, 1985; Merkin, 2004; Rosaldo, 1984; Shackleton & Ali, 1990; Triandis & Albert, 1987).

There is a historic tradition that cultural values indicate preferred modes of behavior in a given culture (Kapoor, Hughes, Baldwin, & Blue, 2003). Hofstede (2001) has been one proponent of this method linking cultural values to goal-directed behaviors. Unlike ethnomethodological (Goffman, 1967) and sociolinguistic (Brown & Levinson, 1987) studies, face-negotiation theorists (Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994; Merkin, 2004, 2005; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1988, 2005) began studying facework in cross-cultural contexts using the more culturally universal approach advocated by Hofstede (1980, 2001). Following this approach, this article aims to extend facework research by analyzing facework cross-culturally within a conceptual framework conceived with intercultural interactions in mind—specifically, Hofstede's (2001) theory of cultural dimensions.
Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede’s (2001) four cultural dimensions explained the differences in shared views individuals acquire by growing up in a particular country. These dimensions provide a useful framework for analyzing the influence of culture on the expression and interpretation of face in intercultural interactions. Hofstede’s dimensions have been widely used in analyses of phenomena pertaining to different cultures (e.g., Arrindell et al., 2004, Arrindell, Steptoe, & Wardle, 2003; Burgoon, 2005; Chang & Holt, 1994; Gudykunst et al., 1996; Hirokawa & Miyahara, 1986; Vishwanath, 2003). Hofstede’s four cultural dimensions are: (a) power distance, (b) uncertainty avoidance, (c) individualism-collectivism (IC), and (d) masculinity-femininity. Most discussions of cultural dimensions focus on IC (Gudykunst & Lee, 2000; Gudykunst et al., 1996; Hui & Triandis, 1986; Kapoor et al., 2003; Merkin, 2000; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998; Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002; Triandis, 1995).

“Individualism stands for a society in which everyone is expected to look after him/herself and her/his immediate family only. Collectivism stands for a society in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 225). Hofstede explained that individualistic cultures stress individual goals, whereas collectivistic cultures stress group goals. Facework strategy choices cultural members carry out in face-threatening situations are influenced by IC values (Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994; Gudykunst et al., 1996; Holtgraves & Yang, 1992; Imahori, 1994; Merkin, 2000; Oetzel et al., 2001; Singelis & Brown, 1995; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Ting-Toomey et al., 1991).

Power Distance and Individualism-Collectivism

“Power distance (PD) is the extent to which the less powerful individuals from institutions expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 98). People in large-PD cultures believe that power should be distributed unequally while people in small-PD cultures believe that power should be distributed relatively equally (Oetzel et al., 2001). Accordingly, this study currently examines PD and facework framed by Hofstede’s (2001) conceptualization of PD characteristics relating to: obedience, verbal expression, and injustice. Such aspects of PD should influence cross-cultural facework.

Power Distance and Obedience

Obedience is not common among individuals from small-PD cultures. This is because they value participation in decision making. They also question authority and challenge the status quo for the sake of being fair (Ohbuchi et al., 1999). Furthermore, in small-PD cultures, they do not mind creating face-threatening conflicts while expressing themselves for the sake of clarity. Such independent attitudes can be face threatening, however, to people from large-PD cultures who
believe that any intervention that challenges authority or that threatens with the need to open up and confront conflict is not appropriate (Westwood, Tang, & Kirkbride, 1992).

Unlike individuals from small-PD cultures who believe power should be used only when it is legitimate, culture members possessing large PD grant authority and social inequality (Hofstede, 1980). Hofstede (2001) also explained that together with seeing power as a basic societal fact, individuals from large-PD cultures stress coercive or referent power. Thus, people from large-PD cultures accept coercive autocratic power, obediently following orders more than individuals from small-PD cultures (Mann, 1980). This is because power is a basic fact of society and its legitimacy is irrelevant in large-PD cultures (Hofstede, 2001). Consequently, in large-PD cultures, defiance of autocratic power is face threatening.

Acquiescence and PD are positively correlated (Johnson, Kulesa, Cho, & Shavitt, 2005; Smith, 2004). This may explain why in large-PD cultures, people are afraid to deviate from what is expected of them and fear approaching, disagreeing, and communicating with their superiors (Hofstede, 1980). Moreover, individuals from large-PD cultures are reluctant to trust each other (Smith et al., 1998).

Cultures high in PD tend to stress conformity and submissiveness and be more authoritarian societies (Hofstede, 2001). Therefore, when it is necessary for people from large-PD cultures to interact with others, they engage in obedient, peaceful, cooperative communication strategies that compromise or collaborate with others (Kirkbride, Tang, & Westwood, 1991). Cooperative strategies are soothing, extra-considerate communications employed to show deference, reverence, and respect in an effort to smooth over potentially face-threatening events. One manner in which obedience might be expressed is via deferential or acquiescent cooperative communication strategies.

It is widely known that a preference for obedient, conforming, and cooperative communication is also related to collectivism (Hofstede, 2001; Offermann & Hellmann, 1997). Hofstede scores for collectivism and PD have predictive validity in relation to social behavior (Smith et al., 1998). Given Hofstede’s description of the preference of large-PD cultures for cooperative interactions and large-PD’s positive correlation with collectivism, it is reasonable that individuals from large-PD cultures would also prefer using cooperative facework strategies to smooth over difficult face-threatening situations. Thus, the following hypothesis was tested:

**H1:** Individuals from large-PD cultures are more likely than individuals from small-PD cultures to use cooperative facework strategies.

Just as PD and collectivism are correlated, there are also similarities between their effects. In particular, collectivists mainly favor large PD (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Just as collectivists are expected to “read each other’s mind” during communication, large-PD members use messages that are indirect and dependent on hints (Hofstede, 2001) because they are more concerned with face issues than their small-PD counterparts (Chi-Ching, 1998; Roougrensuke & Chansuthus, 1998).
For example, Brew and Cairns (2004) found that Australians (small PD) prefer direct, explicit communication strategies in managing conflict, whereas Singaporeans and Thais (large PD) skirt around problematic issues and prefer indirect communication strategies because they have a need to avoid embarrassment for both themselves and others. Ohbuchi et al. (1999) found the Japanese (large PD) to be concerned with relationships and to use more avoidance tactics than their US (small PD) counterparts, who are more concerned with fairness and assertiveness. Similarly, in Oetzel et al.’s (2001) study of individuals’ perceptions of PD, results showed that large-PD participants would be more likely to use avoiding facework in conflict situations than small-PD participants.

Furthermore, persons from large-PD cultures also tend to accept passively discrepancies between the public versus private selves of individuals to a much higher extent than do individuals from individualistic small-PD cultures (Iwao & Triandis, 1993). This passive acceptance is sometimes expressed with indirect communication that acts to smooth over difficult face-threatening encounters.

Although the above findings relate to how individuals from large-PD cultures passively accept conflicting self-presentations of others and employ indirect communication during the face-threatening context of conflict, to distinguish if Hofstede’s (2001) prediction, that individuals from large-PD cultures use more indirect communication strategies, also applies to facework strategies in an embarrassing face-threatening situation, the following hypothesis is posed:

H2: Large-PD culture members are more likely to engage in indirect face-saving strategies than their small-PD counterparts.

Power Distance and Verbal Expression

In large-PD cultures people generally foster a lower verbal expression of negative emotions (Fernández, Carrera, Sanchez, Paez, & Cardia, 2000). Likewise, Matsumoto (1989) found that individuals from large-PD cultures gave lower intensity rating to negative emotions than individuals from small-PD cultures. The overt expression of emotion (particularly the emotional demonstration of aggressiveness and anger) is viewed as generally inappropriate. For example, Japanese and Koreans (large PD) show more concern for politeness and use less confrontational communication styles than small-PD Americans (Steil & Hillman, 1993). Furthermore, in large-PD Japan, confrontation often leads to a loss of face (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Therefore, it appears to be less likely for people from large-PD cultures to express themselves directly.

According to Hofstede (2001), respect and formal deference to authority (e.g., elders) is valued in large-PD cultures. This deference is expressed by maintaining a significant emotional distance separating individuals of different status groups such as subordinates from superiors (Basabe et al., 2002). Moreover, status differences are more pronounced, accepted, and promoted than in large versus small-PD societies (Gudykunst, 2005; Leung, 2001).
People from large-PD cultures even forgo their normal display rules of lower emotional expression of negative emotions to foster and legitimize status differences (Ferna´ndez et al., 2000). Furthermore, despite social norms to keep emotions under control, findings show that people from large-PD cultures also have a low affect balance. This may be why Oetzel et al. (2001, 2003) found that people from large-PD cultures use more dominating facework than individuals from small-PD cultures. Such findings indicate that when status differences are present, typical communication styles can vary.

**Power Distance and Injustice**

Hofstede (2001) found that PD was negatively correlated with injustice. Large-PD cultures like Japan, for example, are not troubled by unjust terms (Kublin, 1987). In large-PD cultures, where inequality and injustice are taken for granted, direct communication would not seem to be a response to perceived injustice; unlike Americans (small PD), whose experience of participating in direct communication against perceived injustice gives rise to satisfying feelings of solidarity and mutual validation (Martin & Varney, 2003).

On the other hand, individuals from large-PD cultures, receive more social support for conformity and acceptance of injustice (Basabe et al., 2002) and aim to preserve existing structures. For example, they maintain taller organizational structures than their lower PD counterparts (Hofstede, 2001). This is because in large-PD cultures, the hierarchical structure to which people belong preserves their face. Face is preserved because when roles are structured and formalized, associated behaviors are prescribed and acted out without surprises arising. Moreover, when behaviors are prescribed, face-threatening challenges regarding who a person is or what authority a person has are also not likely to occur. Conversely, any breakdown or threat of breakdowns in such a hierarchy is face threatening.

The acceptance of injustice in large-PD society is highlighted by the fact that PD is significantly and positively correlated with beliefs that the world is unjust (Furnham, 1993). For example, the societal members possessing the highest unjust world beliefs were from Greece (with large PD) and the lowest unjust world beliefs were from Israel (with very small PD). If people accept the world as unjust, they are less likely to experience anger over relationships reflecting inequality and/or injustice. In fact, findings show that people from collective large-PD cultures experience less intense emotions than people from individualistic small-PD cultures (Markus, Kitayama, & Heimain, 1996; Scherer, 1988).

In contrast, people from small-PD cultures view the world as just (Furnham, 1993). Injustice is not expected in small-PD cultures (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Matsumoto, 1989). For these reasons, people from small-PD cultures do not simply accept the status quo, but rather engage in more active communication, feeling more in control of their fate (Fetchenhauer, Jacobs, & Belschak, 2005).

People from individualistic small-PD cultures believe in individual freedom of expression (Matsumoto, 1989) and emphasize clarity because it indicates integrity
(Fry, 1991); they value equal power distributions across different social roles (Ting-Toomey, 2005); and they assume that equals can communicate directly with each other. Furthermore, they say what is on their minds, even if it risks damaging the relationship (Kim et al., 1994; Triandis, 1995). For example, Olekalns (1999) describes low PD Australians as egalitarian individualists who care about honesty, truth, and transparency, and who, therefore, tend to be direct and blunt in their speech acts, favor argument, and can be confrontational if necessary, none of which need be damaging to the relationship. Hofstede (2001) points out that people from small-PD cultures tend to be verbally direct and clear. Thus, the following hypothesis is posed:

H3: Individuals from small-PD cultures are more likely than individuals from large-PD cultures to respond to a face-threatening situation with direct strategies.

Method

Participants

The participants were as follows: 92 students primarily from Hong Kong Baptist University (n = 60), and secondarily from the Chinese University of Hong Kong (n = 32); 98 students from Tezukama College in Nara, Japan; 70 Chilean students primarily from two universities: the University of Chile and Universidad Diego Portales; 241 USA students from a high Midwestern university; 92 Swedish student participants primarily from three universities: the University of Lund, the University of Hogsokan Trollhattan-Uddevalla, and the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm; and 81 Israeli student participants from three universities: Haifa University, Bar Ilan University, and Tel Aviv University. A total of 649 participants took part in this study (216 males and 443 females).

This study predicted that PD would influence cooperative, indirect, and direct facework strategies during a face-threatening situation. Hofstede (2001) specified that the best way to operationalize culture is to use matching samples. This is because if subjects are matched on as many characteristics (i.e., age, education, sex) as possible, such factors could not act as competing effects with the calculation of cultural effects. For the most part, participants in this study were matched. They were all college students between the ages of 18 and 23, with 13–15 years of education, and broke up into similar ratios between men and women with women dominating the samples (see Table 1).

Instrumentation

PD was operationalized on the individual level using Hofstede’s (1994) Value Survey Module (VSM 94). The actual calculations from Hofstede’s VSM 94 measure were employed for this study (see Table 2). Hofstede developed the VSM 94 in order to measure cultural dimensions from actual population data. The VSM 94 is made up of
five four-item questionnaire segments used to compare culturally determined values between people from different countries. Each four-question set allows for an index score calculation. The four questions measuring PD were employed for this investigation. All of the questions were scored on five-point scales. The total scores were derived from the mean scores on the questions for national samples of respondents.

A few studies have recalculated the reliability and validity of the dimensions of the VSM 94. For example, using the VSM 94, Earley and Stubblebine (1989) found the reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) for UA subscale to be 0.75. Shackleton and Ali (1990) retested the factor structure of Hofstede’s dimensions for four countries and confirmed the same factors (dimensions) as Hofstede (1980). This established further construct validity for the VSM 94. Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) established the VSM 94’s convergent validity by finding a number of correlations in their predicted direction.

Cooperative strategies were operationalized in this study by using the Cooperative/Competitive Strategy Scale (CCSS; Simmons, Tucker, & King, 1988), which measures the motivation to use competitive, cooperative, and/or avoidance strategies to achieve success. This is a 24-item scale containing three independent subscales.

Table 1 Demographic information about test participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Chile</th>
<th>Israel</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Hong Kong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>21.04</td>
<td>23.32</td>
<td>19.15</td>
<td>23.26</td>
<td>19.52</td>
<td>17.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>10.85</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>11.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean education</td>
<td>15.49</td>
<td>14.11</td>
<td>13.04</td>
<td>14.70</td>
<td>14.25</td>
<td>14.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Males</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% males</td>
<td>28.60</td>
<td>24.70</td>
<td>32.70</td>
<td>33.70</td>
<td>33.70</td>
<td>27.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. females</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% females</td>
<td>71.40</td>
<td>75.30</td>
<td>64.30</td>
<td>64.10</td>
<td>64.10</td>
<td>72.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SD = standard deviation.

Table 2 Multivariate analysis of power distance as a predictor of facework strategies: Cooperative, indirect, and direct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power distance</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Wilk’s λ</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>$\eta^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multivariate tests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9, 614</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Univariate tests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power distance Sum of squares</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>1,625</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>1,623</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1,625</td>
<td>7.51</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the CCSS was scored by adding all responses within the three subscales and computing the aggregate average for each subscale, this study employed only the cooperative subscale. Test–retest reliability for the Cooperative subscale has been reported at 0.75 (Simmons et al., 1988). Construct validity was also established by Ward (1993), who confirmed the factor structure of the Simmons et al. scale with an independent sample of employed adults. This scale was first pilot tested and yielded the reliability of 0.82 for the cooperative subscale. The factor structure of the cooperative strategies was also confirmed in this study as being one factor.

This study employed Cocroft’s (1992) construction of response items for indirect and direct strategies because Cocroft (1992) and Cocroft and Ting-Toomey (1994) successfully utilized these response items with Japanese and USA respondents. There seemed to be too few indirect strategy items, so a few similar additional ones were constructed to boost reliability. Reliability of such response items were tested in a pilot test of over 200 students. In this study reliabilities for the indirect strategy scale were: Hong Kong = 0.81; Japan = 0.72; Chile = 0.75; USA = 0.78; Sweden = 0.76; Israel = 0.79.

The Crowne and Marlowe (1960) Social Desirability Scale was included to avert the possible problem of response biased by social-desirability concerns. Results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed that the different cultural responses to appear more socially desirable did not differ from each other. Therefore, social-desirability effects did not need to be controlled for.

Scenario

According to face-negotiation theorists (Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998), the concept of “face” is especially problematic in vulnerable interpersonal situations. Thus, the researcher’s first goal was to find a previously tested situation to represent an embarrassing situation according to most people around the world. Therefore, six hypothetical situations from previous research were pilot tested for this study. Of the six hypothetical situations tested, two were derived from Cocroft’s (1992) examples and one situation was derived from a critical incident in Brislin, Cushner, Cherrie and Yong’s (1986) Intercultural Interactions. The remaining three situations were based on Miller’s (1992) categories of embarrassing social predicaments.

After presenting 50 students with the six situations, these situations were considered in focus group discussions until the situation most face threatening to US respondents became apparent. The situation that most respondents regarded as representative of a face-threatening situation was Situation 2, which was derived from a critical incident in Brislin et al. (1986).

A panel of experts in intercultural communication also believed that the situation chosen during the pretest would be the most appropriate for testing responses to an embarrassing situation internationally. Thus, the scenario chosen originally came from intercultural specialists. Two follow-up judgments were made by a student
pretest, and an expert panel served as a basis for the decision to use the following scenario in this study:

Imagine that you are in a foreign country as a tourist and you are currently visiting with an acquaintance from this foreign country (you met this afternoon in the museum). This acquaintance invites you out for dinner. While dining in a fancy restaurant, you accidentally knock over your red wine. It shatters and your drink goes everywhere, including onto your acquaintance’s white shirt. Everyone in the restaurant sees this.

Procedure

Facework researchers (Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1988) tend to look at particularly face-threatening contexts (e.g., requests, conflict, embarrassment) in order to study the facework strategies people report using to manage such situations. In keeping with this practice, the students were requested by their professors, in classes in their home countries, to respond to questions requesting them to read the above hypothetical face-threatening situation. They were then asked to indicate on a five-point Likert scale the extent to which they would use each strategy. US respondents and—because they were bilingual—respondents from Hong Kong, Sweden, and Israel received questionnaires in English. Japanese respondents received questionnaires in Japanese, and Chilean respondents received theirs in Spanish. Both Japanese and Chilean questionnaires were back translated to assure that they had been translated correctly. When students were finished, their professor collected their questionnaires.

Results

Data Reduction Analysis

To determine whether cooperative, indirect or direct or strategies measured a similar, separate, or higher construct, a principle components analysis was carried out. A 0.50/0.30 inclusion criterion (i.e., the item had to have a loading of at least 0.50 on the primary factor and no loading higher than 0.30 on a secondary factor) was applied.

The cooperative scale was part of one bipolar instrument including competitive items on the other pole. Factor analysis initially divided this instrument into two factors before varimax rotation procedures. After rotation five factors emerged. Factor 5 (Eigenvalue $= 1.44$), which accounted for 8.02% of the variance, was eliminated because only one item loaded on the factor. One other item loaded negatively on all factors except for Japan and brought down reliabilities; thus, it was deleted. Two other factors (Factor 2: Eigenvalue $= 2.28$ with 12.69% of the variance and Factor 4: Eigenvalue $= 1.81$ with 10.07% of the variance loaded on either cooperative or competitive items exclusively and thus, were retained. The other two factors (Factor 1: Eigenvalue $= 2.38$ with 13.25% of the variance accounted for and
Factor 3: Eigenvalue = 2.19 with 12.17% of the variance) had both positive and negative loadings in the direction of the respective constructs. Two items loaded heavily on both factors (i.e., items 52 and 55) and decreased the reliabilities of the scales, thus, they were deleted. In short, I deleted four items from the analysis of the cooperative/competitive scale, leaving the cooperative scale with six items. The items were summed and averaged.

The indirect scale split into two factors. The first factor had four items and explained 33.13% of the variance (Eigenvalue = 2.65); the second factor contained four items and explained 18.18% of the variance (Eigenvalue = 1.46). Upon further examination of the questionnaire, it was apparent that items in the second factor were all placed together in a different section of the questionnaire which appeared to affect participants’ responses. The second factor also had low reliabilities (between 0.11 and 0.66). Thus, the items contained in the second factor were dropped and the four items in Factor 1 were summed and averaged to represent indirect strategies. Reliabilities ranged from 0.72 to 0.81. Factor loadings ranged from 0.67 to 0.84.

The direct scale factor analysis after rotation indicated the presence of two factors (see Table 4). Factor 1 consisted of four items and Factor 2 contained the fifth item. Factor 1 (Eigenvalue = 1.63) accounted for 32.54% of the variance. Factor 2 (Eigenvalue = 1.54) contained one item and accounted for 30.73% of the variance. Cronbach alphas for all five items were the same across all countries except for Japan. Because, for the most part, the one item in the second factor boosted the scale’s reliability, I decided to keep the scale intact and summed and averaged the five items for further use in factor analyses.

Multivariate Multiple Regression Analysis

A multivariate multiple regression analysis using general linear analysis in SPSS (see Table 2) was conducted to simultaneously test the relationship among PD and three facework strategies: cooperative, indirect, or direct. In these analyses, the partial \( R^2 \) is reported for each predictor variable in Table 2; it is similar to an \( R^2 \) term from a regression analysis and serves as an indicator of effect size (Weinfurt, 2000). PD is significant at the multivariate level, Wilk’s \( \lambda(9, 614) = 0.95, p < 0.0001 \). At the univariate level, PD is a significant predictor of cooperative, indirect, and direct strategies (see Table 2).

Discussion

Findings in Relation to Hypotheses

This research investigated how the cultural influence of PD influences interpersonal facework. This test, based on Hofstede’s (2001) theory of national cultures, was carried out partly to see if PD operates similarly to Hofstede’s conclusions in another sample and context because Hofstede’s conclusions were drawn from a sample of IBM employees exclusively and extant facework studies have tested the context of
conflict exclusively. The other objective of this inquiry was to achieve a greater understanding of how PD influences individual level facework strategy choices to help guide our communication with others during intercultural interactions.

The underlying reason for testing H1 was to see whether Hofstede’s description of cultural members having deference and obedience as large-PD values would be expressed communicatively by using cooperative extra-considerate communication to smooth over a potentially face-threatening event. This prediction was substantiated. Findings showed that cooperative strategies are more likely to be employed by individuals from large-PD cultures than their small-PD counterparts.

Corresponding with this study’s findings that individuals from large-PD cultures are more likely to actively employ cooperative strategies, H2 showed that large-PD culture members are also more likely to engage in indirect face-saving strategies than their small-PD counterparts. The PD values of obedience appear to be expressed among large-PD cultural members through more cooperative and indirect facework strategies.

H3 predicted that people from small-PD cultures would be more likely to display direct communication than people from large-PD cultures in face-threatening situations. Contrary to expectations individuals from large-PD cultures were more likely than small-PD culture members to use direct facework strategies in response to a face-threatening situation.

Direct and Indirect Facework Strategies

The following elucidations might help to explain the counterintuitive finding in H3. In general, higher status individuals tend to use more direct strategies because it is not considered inappropriately impolite (Brown & Levinson, 1978). For example, in a study of large-PD hosts and small-PD expatriates, the hosts were more likely to react to the status of the expatriates by choosing to be more indirect with superiors and more direct with subordinates (Brew & Cairns, 2004). On the other hand, Steil and Hillman (1993) found that regardless of cultural group or participant sex, direct strategies were reported as first choice strategies, whereas indirect strategies were cited as strategies of last resort.

Moreover, Steil and Hillman (1993) point out that American, Japanese, and Korean participants were more similar than different on measures of perceived power and frequency of direct strategy use. Direct strategies also varied in a study with preschool girls’ and boys’ verbal conflict strategies in the United States and China (Kyratzis & Guo, 2001). In their examination of linguistic strategies used by which middle-class preschool girls and boys (aged three–five years) from the USA and Mainland China, in same-sex groupings, Chinese girls and USA boys used the most direct strategies while Chinese boys used a combination of direct and indirect conflict strategies. Hence, it could be possible that individuals from large-PD cultures use both direct verbal strategies and less emotional indirect communication strategies depending on the situation.
Implications

Cooperative facework strategies
The underlying reason for testing H1 was to see whether the large-PD values of conformity and obedience described by Hofstede (2001) would be expressed by cooperative communication that allows others to regain face during a face-threatening event. Cooperative strategies assist both parties to regain composure during interactions that ensue after a face threat. Results provided support for this hypothesis. Findings showed that large-PD culture members were more likely to respond to a face-threatening situation using cooperative strategies than their large-PD counterparts. Therefore, if face-threatening events occur during cross-cultural interactions, it would be important not to be too blunt or prickly about the face-threatening event when interacting with people from large-PD cultures because this could exacerbate the situation. On the other hand, a frank discussion or direct joke about face-threatening events could be an appropriate appreciated strategy when interacting with large-PD culture members who indicated that they prefer to also use direct strategies to save face.

H1 results suggest that large-PD values of obedience to authorities and deference are reflected in the greater reported use of cooperative strategies. This result substantiated that Hofstede’s (2001) conclusions about organizations also hold in an interpersonal facework context. This conclusion also demonstrates the importance of abiding by accepted cooperative practices when communicating with people from large-PD cultures. Abiding by tacit hierarchical understandings (as expressed through cooperative communication) can help to save face for large-PD interactants.

Indirect facework strategies
Hypothesis 2, that large-PD culture members would use more indirect facework than their small-PD counterparts, was supported. Apparently individuals from large-PD cultures prefer indirect communication because it is affirming, pleasant, and agreeable. If people are in a face-threatening situation with large-PD culture members, it might be helpful to initiate a cooperative indirect statement to reduce tension others might feel.

Moreover, in large-PD cultures where status distinctions reign, hierarchical distinctions can actually be communicated indirectly. For example, a person may indicate his or her higher status by not answering another’s inquiry about a topic because the acceptable amount of personal disclosure in conversations varies by relational status distinctions. Thus, if one desires to show consideration to a high status person in a large-PD culture, one could make indirect references to the status of that person.

In general, because facework is often performed when people first meet one another, people first present their preliminary face. According to the reception they receive, people then amend their subsequent facework. Because facework is interactive, people also have reactions to the others’ facework. During potentially
face-threatening situations, one might consider reacting more indirectly with large-PD culture members because this communication style appears to put them at ease.

**Direct facework strategies**

Contrary to expectations, H3, which predicted small-PD versus large-PD culture members would report that they would be more likely to display direct facework strategies in response to face-threatening situations was not substantiated. Individuals from large-PD cultures were more likely than small-PD culture members to use direct facework strategies in response to a face-threatening situation. The question can then be asked, how can one implement both direct and indirect facework?

It could be that direct or indirect strategies should be chosen based on the different kinds of messages communicated. For example, one could use indirect facework when delivering negative messages and use direct communication style when delivering positive messages. Another explanation is offered by Steil and Hillman (1993), who found that regardless of cultural group or gender of the participants, direct strategies were reported as a first choice when communicating, whereas indirect strategies were cited as strategies of last resort.

Yet another explanation could be that this finding exemplifies how direct communication is used in large-PD cultures to express the underlying latent conflicts between the powerful and the powerless as described by Hofstede (2001). Direct communication is considered to be less polite, yet can be more appropriately used by higher status individuals (Brown & Levinson, 1978). Therefore, while individuals from large-PD cultures may actually use or prefer more direct facework strategies, it is also likely that they are also in control of their emotions and ensuing communication as Hofstede described.

Hofstede states that a large PD is associated with an acceptance of an unjust world: “On the large PD side there is a basic mistrust that may never explode but is always present” (p. 97). This acceptance and consequent obedience may be accompanied by pent up emotions, which appear to be contained and not expressed during potentially face-threatening situations. On the other hand, depending on the situation, in particular what status considerations are present, direct strategies might be more appropriately used by large-PD individuals.

While individuals from small-PD cultures do not mind if their use of direct communication destroys the relationship, individuals from large-PD cultures, have social solidarity needs, and, therefore, find the destruction of relationships to be face threatening (Fu, Watkins, & Hui, 2004). In Zimmerman’s (1985) book about the high PD Japanese, he suggests that Americans (low PD) negotiate conflict, a face-threatening context, by using both direct and indirect communication simultaneously. Specifically, Zimmerman suggests “to coax the Japanese into appreciating one’s point of view . . . is to adopt a self-effacing and humble role while at the same time being quietly forceful whenever necessary or appropriate” (p. 97). This suggestion points out how both indirect and direct facework strategies could be communicated at the same time. Therefore, it is possible that individuals from
large-PD cultures express both direct and indirect strategies simultaneously. Thus, communicating directly and indirectly could act to lessen the blow of the direct communication that needs to be used to get points across.

**Limitations**

This study employed self-reports which have limited external validity. While self-reports have the advantage of discovering cognitive intentions, they also have the disadvantage of not representing an active relationship. Ideally, self-report studies should have triangulated results. Future studies could test the relationships in this study using a complementary method of analysis, such as behavioral observation, to confirm conclusions arrived at in this investigation.

Differences between what a person reported and what a person might actually do cannot be totally controlled. A social desirability check was undertaken to rule out social desirability effects. The half-hour questionnaire used in this study was considered somewhat long to administer and the entire data collection process from start to finish took approximately one year.

Ideally, this study would have tested the scenario chosen with samples from many cultures. Also, more than one scenario would have been tested to eliminate the question that responses are due to a unique scenario (Jackson, 1992). However, given the vast proportions of the larger study that this one was taken from and the questionnaire’s length, this was not possible. On the other hand, the scenario was based on a universal previously tested critical incident (Brislin et al., 1986), was pilot-tested, and three communication experts were consulted as to the representativeness of the situation. Thus, strong attempts at attaining a representative face-threatening scenario were made.

Finally, in this study the researcher did not personally control the administration of the questionnaires. Professors administered the questionnaires in their native countries. It is unknown if the samples used in this study could have affected results. Possibly the respondents had hidden characteristics that could bias their responses. Strong attempts were made in this study, however, to assure the most representative controlled sample possible. Since participants completed the questionnaires in their native country, they were more representative of their culture than, for example, foreign students studying abroad, thus creating greater external validity.

**Future Directions**

This investigation serves as an individual level examination of facework employing Hofstede’s (1980) PD based on data from a different sample, i.e., college students than IBM employees and in a different context, i.e., a face-threatening situation. Future researchers should go on to determine similarities and differences between other cultures and other contexts such as requests. This study contributes to the intercultural literature by identifying and supporting previously untested relationships between Hofstede’s (1980) PD cultural dimension and cooperative, indirect, and direct facework strategies. Now that the cultural-based facework responses have
been identified, such understanding can help people to improve future intercultural interactions in this more global age.

References


