Cultural Variation in Australia: Ethnicity, Host Community Residence, and Power-Distance Values

Diane Sivasubramaniam[a],[*] ; Jane Goodman-Delahunty[b]

[a]Faculty of Health, Arts and Design, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia.
[b]School of Psychology and Australian Graduate School of Policing, Charles Sturt University, Australia.
[*] Corresponding author.

Abstract

Effective communication within a multicultural society necessitates an understanding of how people's values might vary according to their cultural background and immigration history. Etic approaches to the study of culture have indicated that national cultures are differentiated on the dimension of power-distance. Power-distance refers to the degree of inequality or hierarchy that people believe to be appropriate in societal and organisational authority structures. Recently, researchers have begun to investigate power-distance at an individual level. However, psychologists have not yet investigated systematic variation in power-distance within multicultural communities. This study examined whether power-distance varies within Australian society according to race/ethnicity. Based on previous research, we hypothesised that systematic variation in power-distance values would emerge within a university sample surveyed in Sydney, Australia. Results indicated that participants' power-distance values varied across ethnic groups, but did not always correspond with power-distance indices of participants' reported racial/ethnic backgrounds, qualified by length of residence in Australia. The power-distance variations described in this paper are discussed in terms of their implications for multicultural communities, and in particular, the way that people of different ethnic backgrounds within Australian society comprehend and evaluate their interactions with authority figures, such as employers.

Key words: Acculturation; Power-distance; Cultural values

1. CULTURAL VARIATION IN AUSTRALIA: ETHNICITY, HOST COMMUNITY RESIDENCE, AND POWER-DISTANCE VALUES

Effective communication in multinational or multicultural organisations requires an in-depth understanding of the ways in which cultural variation in personal characteristics and values affect people's interactions with one another, as well as their perceptions of authorities' behaviour and decision making (Chevrier, 2009). Psychologists have engaged in such in-depth study, documenting the ways in which value dimensions vary across cultures, as well as the behavioural consequences of this cross-cultural variation in value dimensions. In 1980, Hofstede collected data from over 100,000 participants in 40 countries, and developed a model that identified four primary value dimensions on which national cultures may be differentiated. They were: power-distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 1980). Subsequent data collected from 23 countries resulted in the addition of a fifth value dimension: long-versus short-term orientation (Hofstede, 2001). Although those data may be considered relatively old, and while some have disputed the addition of the fifth value dimension (e.g., Fang, 2003), the comparative standings of cultures on the original Hofstede variables have remained generally stable for over twenty years (Hofstede & Peterson, 2000), with a recent meta-analysis incorporating 598 studies of these variables (Taras, Kirkman, & Steel, 2010).

Notably, the definitions of these cultural variables and relationships between them have grown increasingly complex with further research. For example, Gelfand, Triandis and Chan (1996) suggested that individualism and collectivism were not opposite poles of a continuum. Using multidimensional scaling, they found that participants perceived authoritarianism as the opposite of individualism, whereas collectivism was orthogonal to individualism. Furthermore, Triandis and Gelfand (1998) found theoretical and empirical support for the notion that individualism and collectivism are polythetic constructs, and can be more precisely defined in terms of horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism. In recent years, the Hofstede (1980) dimensions have generated an enormous body of literature that has investigated these variables with increasing specificity.

Complexity is also increasing in the frequency and kinds of interactions between members of different cultural groups. Interethnic contact within countries is rapidly becoming more prevalent, with increasing migration and information-sharing creating more highly diverse multicultural societies (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994). Therefore, while Hofstede's (1980, 2001) cultural value indices inform us of cross-national variation in cultural values, the increasing ethnic diversity within many modern national cultures prompts us to examine whether cultural beliefs vary systematically within one such culturally diverse society.

1.1 Cultural Diversity in Australia

The Australian community is linguistically and culturally diverse, consisting of 105 different ethnic groups (Chan, 1995). The Census of Population and Housing (2011) found that 31.4% of people in New South Wales reported being born in more than 200 countries and territories outside Australia. Over one-quarter of the population of New South Wales (27.5%) reported speaking a language other than English at home. Over 250 languages other than English were spoken in New South Wales homes, the most common being Arabic (2.7%), Cantonese (2%), Mandarin (2%), Greek (1.3%) and Vietnamese (1.3%). This study investigated whether this ethnic diversity in the Australian community reflects systematic variation in cultural values within Australia.

1.2 Power-distance Variation Within Cultures

Power-distance has emerged as an individual difference dimension that tends to vary both within and across cultures (Hofstede, 1980；2001). Power-distance values reflect beliefs about the appropriate power relationship between authorities and their subordinates. People who are high on power-distance believe that societies and organisations function better when there is a more clearly defined, hierarchical structure of power, whereas people who are low on power-distance believe that there should be a more consultative relationship between authorities

and those they seek to govern or manage. Since power-distance is one cultural dimension that provides standards for "perceiving, believing, evaluating, communicating and acting" (Triandis, 1996, p.408), variation in power-distance values within a single society may have important implications for the way in which citizens perceive and interact with each other, and, in particular, in the behaviours and attitudes that citizens construe and expect from authority figures, such as police and employers.

Research has established that high and low power-distance people have quite different expectations about the behaviours of authority figures. For example, voice, or process control, refers to the level of input that people have in decision-making procedures (such as hiring, performance review, or layoff procedures). Voice has strong effects on people's perceptions of procedural justice (Thibaut & Walker, 1975; 1978), which in turn has important consequences for their satisfaction with the outcomes they receive from those decision making procedures, and their beliefs about the authority figures who enact those decision making procedures (specifically, the perceived legitimacy of those authority figures, their willingness to comply with the instructions of those authority figures in future, and their willingness to co-operate with those authority figures in future; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). The relational model of authority (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992) postulates that individuals value voice (and other signals of respect) by group members and authority figures, because voice allows individuals to draw inferences about their standing in the social group, and signals of secure group membership engender feelings of self-worth in the individual. However, power-distance moderates these effects: Voice has weaker effects on procedural justice judgments among high power-distance people than among low power-distance people (Tyler, Lind, & Huo, 2000). Due to their different beliefs about appropriate power structures within society, high and low power distance people differ in their beliefs about the cues to respectful treatment that they expect to receive from authority figures. Low power-distance people expect to be allowed voice, or to be consulted in decision-making procedures, and therefore perceive disrespect when they are not consulted. However, high power-distance people, who expect that authorities will make fair decisions unilaterally, do not expect consultation and voice, and therefore do not perceive disrespect when the opportunity for voice is not extended to them.

Power-distance, therefore, has important implications for the governance and management of members of multicultural communities. As noted by Huq, Tyler, and Schulhofer (2011), members of some ethnic groups might perceive a particular interaction with an authority figure as fair and satisfactory, whereas a member of a different ethnic group perceives the same interaction

quite differently, in accordance with their different power-distance values and expectations of authorities' behaviour. In this way, ethnicity and culture can be seen to mediate individual, attitudinal outcomes of a social interaction.

While past studies have often used value scores to identify the characteristics of entire cultures (e.g., Loh, Rastubog, & Zagenczyk, 2010; Triandis, 1989), researchers have also recognised that value orientations can reflect the characteristics of individuals (Betancourt & Lopez, 1993). Although Hofstede originally intended the variables to be applied at the level of nations, not individuals (Hofstede, 1980), a recent review documented 87 individual-level studies using Hofstede's variables (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006). Organisational and social psychologists in particular have begun to use the Hofstede (1980) variables as individual difference variables, and have found that measures of power-distance at an individual level are significant predictors of social behaviours, such as responses to conflict resolution procedures (e.g., Earley, 1993; Tyler, Lind & Huo, 2000), reactions to transformational leaders (Kirkman et al., 2009), and perceived organisational support in the workplace (Farh, Hackett, & Liang, 2007). In fact, Farh et al. (2007) suggest that researchers should measure cultural values (and power-distance specifically) at the individual level of analysis, and Kirkman et al. (2009) suggest that individual-level cultural variables offer a better assessment of culture than do societal-level measures. Such a psychological analysis is more sensitive to the behaviour of particular people than are analyses that treat all of the people at a single site as the same (Tyler et al., 2000).

1.3 Power-Distance: Systematic Variation Within Cultures?

While many researchers have found cross-cultural variation in power-distance as well as power-distance variation within cultural groups (e.g., Tyler et al., 2000), few researchers have attempted to integrate these findings to determine whether power-distance variation within sites is systematic. Hofstede (2001) noted that power-distance is, to a considerable extent, societally determined. However, in a multicultural society such as Australia, in which young people are exposed to a range of values and norms, power-distance beliefs are likely to be influenced by many different societal sources.

1.4 Socialisation

A considerable body of research has addressed the ways in which personal values, beliefs and attitudes may be shaped by normative social and environmental pressures (e.g., Bandura, 1986; Festinger, 1954). In an early theory of socialisation, Festinger (1954) proposed that humans have an innate desire to evaluate their own opinions and abilities, and in the absence of objective means to undertake this self-evaluation, rely extensively upon social

comparison processes regarding the opinions and values of others. This theory of normative social-comparison processes gained early support in a range of studies demonstrating that members of a given group show significant tendencies towards altering vs. solidifying privately formed opinions and judgements based on data about consensus group opinions or ability (e.g., Dreyer, 1953; Festinger, Gerard et al., 1952).

Expanding upon this early work, Bandura (1986) described a social-cognitive theory of learning, which proposed that most human behaviours are learned through modelling the observed behaviour of others. In this way, "people can learn approximately what to do through modelling before they perform any behaviour, [and] they are spared the costs and pain of any faulty effort" (Bandura, 1986, p.47). A key predictor of the types of behaviours which will be imitated are the observed consequences, and individuals are therefore particularly likely to model behaviours that have been observed to lead to positive reinforcement, or that are otherwise socially adaptive. Bandura noted that this type of social learning may take many forms, including, "new behaviour patterns, judgmental standards, cognitive competencies, and generative rules for creating behaviours" (1986, p.49). Bandura (1986) noted that several studies have documented the role of social observation in the formation of individual values, attitudes and behaviours.

In a similar vein, Guerra et al. (1995) suggested that normative beliefs, such as power-distance, are formed through a process of evaluative socialisation, in which individuals evaluate information about socially approved or prohibited behaviours. This evaluative process is influenced by individual differences in values or identification with different groups.

Together, these perspectives on socialisation suggest that power-distance will display trends across cultures or nations, with individual variation within cultures or nations. Further, in light of the considerable effects of socialisation upon attitudes and values, individuals emigrating from their country of origin may reasonably be expected to undergo a degree of social adjustment in line with the prevailing socio-cultural norms of their adopted countries, but moderated by the socio-cultural norms of their culture of origin. The current study therefore investigates the way in which minority groups in a multicultural Australian society have integrated and adopted Australian socio-cultural norms in construction of their social identity.

1.5 The Present Study

This study investigated the relationship between power-distance and minority group membership within the context of an Australian multicultural community. Some previous research has examined variation in other culturally-relevant behaviours and attitudes between different ethnic groups, and has inferred systematic

variation in underlying cultural values within Australia (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994). This study extended this line of research by specifically and directly investigating variation in power-distance scores between different ethnic groups within Australia. Furthermore, whilst some previous studies have examined power-distance variables at an individual level, the present study extended earlier findings on power-distance variation by examining whether power-distance (measured at the individual level) varies systematically according to minority group membership, and also by examining whether power-distance variations may be influenced by the socialising influences of an individual's home culture, as well as Australian culture.

Based on the foregoing research review, we hypothesised that power-distance variation would exist within the sample surveyed, and that this variation would correspond to cross-national variation on Hofstede's (1980, 2001) power-distance index. That is, participants self-reporting ethnicity consistent with a nationality high on Hofstede's (1980, 2001) power-distance index (e.g., Chinese/China) would display higher power-distance scores, on average, than those displayed by participants self-reporting ethnicity consistent with a nationality low on Hofstede's (1980, 2001) power-distance index (e.g., Australian/Australia). Furthermore, consistent with the evaluative socialisation mechanism proposed by Guerra et al. (1995), we hypothesised that acculturation factors, such as period of residence in Australia, would affect power-distance scores of minority groups; the longer the participants' period of residence in Australia, the lower their power-distance scores would become.

2. METHOD

2.1 Design

Survey data were collected over three years, across three cohorts of participants, in March, 2003, March, 2004, and March, 2005, respectively. Demographic characteristics (e.g. age, gender, and race/ethnicity) were measured. Power-distance was measured using the power-distance scale developed by Tyler et al. (2000). Self-reported race/ethnicity in this analysis was a grouping variable, used to determine whether power-distance differed across racial/ethnic categories.

2.2 Participants

Participants were psychology students from a university in Sydney, Australia, who received course credit for their participation. Surveys were distributed to all students in the first year of the undergraduate psychology course. A total of 1,296 students provided survey responses across the three cohorts. Of these, 876 (67.6%) were female, 386 (29.8%) were male, and 34 (2.6%) participants failed to report their gender. The mean age of the total sample

was 19.86 years (SD = 4.48), with ages ranging from 16 to 59 years. The response rate was 65.37% for cohort one, 62.96% for cohort two, 49.52% for cohort three, and 59.31% overall.

2.3 Materials

Participants responded to a paper survey that measured two categories of dependent variables: (a) demographic characteristics, and (b) power-distance.

2.3.1 Demographic Characteristics

Participants provided open-ended answers regarding age, country of birth, self-reported race/ethnicity, the length of time that the participant had resided in Australia, and parental race/ethnicity. Participants designated their gender.

2.3.2 Power-Distance

The power-distance scale used in this study was developed by Tyler et al. (2000), and consisted of four items adapted from Hofstede's (1980) international work survey and two items (on social power and authority) from the Schwartz (1992) value survey. A factor analysis conducted by Tyler et al. (2000) indicated that the six items formed a single factor (α = 0.66). While the internal reliability of the scale was low (Lind, personal communication, March 4, 2003), the reliability of this scale exceeded that of the scales used in subsequent studies by Tyler et al. (2000). Therefore, the present study adopted this power-distance scale, and statistical analyses were conducted to monitor its reliability.

2.4 Procedure

A written questionnaire, distributed as a take-home instrument to be completed within a 2-3 week period, was administered in 2003 and 2004. In 2005, the survey was administered online. Conversion to an online format may have decreased the response rate for 2005 (49.52%) compared to 2003 (65.37%) and 2004 (62.96%).

3. RESULTS

3.1 Demographic Characteristics

3.1.1 Race/Ethnicity

In response to the open-ended question on race/ethnicity, participants identified 126 different racial/ethnic categories. The most commonly cited categories were Australian (20.3%), Caucasian (20.3%), Chinese (19%), Asian (6.9%), Indian (2.3%) and Korean (2.2%; Sivasubramaniam & Goodman-Delahunty, 2008).

3.1.2 Country of Birth

In total, respondents in this sample listed 67 different countries of birth. By far, the most common was Australia (58.2%), and sizeable groups were born in Hong Kong (10.4%), China (5.4%), Singapore (2.2%), Malaysia

3.2 Power-Distance

3.2.1 Power-Distance Across the Sample

Power-distance was normally distributed across the total sample. Internal consistency of the power-distance scale was moderate, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.59. To test whether power-distance varied systematically across ethnic groups, scores for the four largest national self-identified groups in this study were included in analyses, namely: Australian, Chinese, Indian and Korean. (Caucasian and Asian groups were excluded, as these are racial, not national markers.)

The mean age of participants in these four categories was 19.55 (SD = 3.85), with no differences in age across the four groups (F (3,542) = 2.02, p = 0.11). Overall, there were higher proportions of males in the Korean (39.3%) and Chinese (33.5%) groups in this sample than there were among the Australian (22.7%) and Indian (22.2%) groups (χ^2 (3, n = 544) = 9.28, p = 0.03).

3.2.2 Period of Residence in Australia for Racial/Ethnic Groups

Reflecting a large international student population in this particular sample, 44.4% of participants born outside Australia had lived in Australia for five years or less. A one-way between-groups ANOVA revealed a significant difference in period of residence in Australia across the four categories (F (3, 546) = 151.29, p < 0.001). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the Australian group (M = 19.39, SD = 5.01), on average, had resided in Australia for significantly more years than the Korean (M = 13.6, SD = 6.15), Indian (M = 12.39, SD = 6.32) and Chinese (M = 8.07, SD = 6.68) groups. The Korean and Indian groups had, on average, resided in Australia significantly longer than the Chinese group. There was no significant difference in the average number of years that the Korean and Indian groups had lived in Australia.

3.2.3 Race/Ethnicity and Power-Distance

According to Hofstede (2001), power-distance indices for these four countries follow this order (from lowest to highest): (a) Australia; (b) Korea; (c) India; (d) China. Due to differences across the four ethnic groups in period of residence in Australia, a one-way between groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to test whether the Hofstede (1980, 2001) power-distance rankings accounted for current variation in individuals' power-distance scores, while controlling for period of residence in Australia. Given the unequal group sizes in this sample, preliminary checks were conducted to ensure that there were no violations of the assumption of homogeneity of variance (p = 0.05). Even after controlling for period of residence in Australia, there was a significant effect of race/ethnicity on power-distance scores across these four

racial/ethnic categories in this sample (F (3, 524) = 12.81, p < 0.01, partial eta squared = 0.07), with the Australian (M = 2.89, SD = 0.90) and Indian (M = 2.52, SD = 1.16) groups displaying lower power-distance scores than the Chinese (M = 3.35, SD = 0.90) and Korean (M = 3.65; SD = 1.02) groups. Period of residence in Australia also significantly affected power-distance scores F (1, 524) = 11.03, p < 0.01, partial eta squared = 0.02.

3.2.4 Period of Residence in Australia and Power-Distance Values

The relationship between power-distance and period of residence in Australia was investigated among the different ethnic groups, using the Spearman Rank Order correlation coefficient (since period of residence in Australia was non-normally distributed among participants born outside Australia). Among Chinese (r = -0.14, n = 231, p < 0.05) and Australian (r = -0.22, n = 243, p < 0.05) participants, there was a small, significant, negative correlation between years of residence in Australia and power-distance, but for the Korean group there was no significant correlation between these variables (r = -0.21, n = 28, p = 0.28), and for Indian participants this correlation was significant in the opposite direction, with power-distance increasing as the number of years in Australia increased (r = 0.38, n = 27, p = 0.049).

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Ethnic Diversity in the Sample

Participants reported 67 different countries of birth, and membership of 126 racial/ethnic groups, indicating that the sample reflected the considerable ethnic diversity in the Australian community. However, it is important to note that the responses of participants regarding their race/ethnicity did not comprise solely a racial categorisation, but also a social categorisation. The elicitation of free-responses regarding race/ethnicity of participants was deliberate, as it had implications for social identity. Social identity theory purports that self-identification consists of multiple levels, and the categories with which any person identifies might vary across social contexts (Hogg & Abrams, 1993). Participants' descriptions of their ethnic identity may therefore not only reflect racial variation in the sample, but also variation in levels of social identification with the majority culture. For example, as indicated by the significant negative correlation between time spent in Australia and power-distance values among participants describing themselves as "Australian", living in Australia might cause some participants to make an "Australian" categorisation a more important part of their social identity, and thus adopt Australian cultural beliefs (e.g., lower power-distance), as well as describing themselves as "Australian" rather than as a member of their original culture.

4.2 Power-Distance

Even after controlling for period of residence in Australia, Hofstede's (1980, 2001) power-distance rankings significantly predicted current power-distance scores. For some ethnic groups, power-distance variations were consistent with expectations derived from Hofstede's (1980, 2001) power-distance index rankings. The power-distance scores of Chinese participants in the sample were higher than those of Australian participants, and the power-distance scores of Chinese and Australian respondents tended to decrease with longer periods of residence in Australia. This negative correlation between period of residence in Australia and power-distance scores may represent socialisation into the dominant low power-distance culture over time for Chinese and Australian participants.

However, the relative power-distance standings of the Korean and Indian groups did not vary as expected, and the number of years in Australia did not reconcile discrepancies between actual and expected power-distance rankings of the Korean and Indian groups. Findings regarding these two groups should be interpreted with extreme caution, as these groups were considerably smaller than the Chinese and Australian groups. However, the association between power-distance and time in Australia among Indian participants was strong enough to produce a significant positive correlation. If the discrepancies in this study do reflect a real difference between the Korean and Indian groups and the Australian and Chinese groups in power-distance values and their relationship to time spent in Australia, then these discrepancies raise two important questions.

First, the power-distance rankings of ethnic groups within Australia suggested that the values of people who migrated to this low power-distance society differed from those who remained in their culture of origin. While the power-distance values of individuals in the culture of origin may tend towards a particular position in Hofstede's (2001) rankings, the mean power-distance scores of the Korean and Indian groups in this sample, in conjunction with the correlations between period of residence in Australia and power-distance scores among these two groups, indicated that Korean immigrants in Australia were higher on power-distance than were Korean residents of Korea, and that Indian immigrants in Australia were lower on power-distance than were Indian residents of India.

Second, these data indicated differential effects of exposure to Australian culture on power-distance values across different ethnic groups. It appeared that the Indian group was resisting or reacting against this aspect of socialisation into the new dominant culture, whereas the Chinese participants were approaching Australian participants over time in their power-distance beliefs. While it is well established that migrants may adapt to the host culture in a number of ways (e.g., assimilation, acculturation, fusion, alternation and multiculturalism; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993), these data suggested that there was systematic variation in the acculturation paths taken by different ethnic groups in Australia, with respect to their power-distance values. These findings warrant further investigation, as they imply that etic approaches to culture, comprising systematic investigation of general cultural values such as power-distance, may be qualified by emic considerations, such as the responses of specific ethnic groups to particular aspects of the acculturation process.

4.3 Implications of Findings for Cross-Cultural Research

The Hofstede (1980) variables were originally designed to assess cross-cultural variation in value orientations, and have been used extensively in cross-cultural research (e.g., Loh et al., 2010; Huq et al., 2011). They have also been widely extended to studies of individual variation within cultures (e.g. Earley, 1993; Tyler, Lind, & Huo, 2000; Farh et al., 2007; Kirkman et al., 2009). However, this is the first known study to examine the variation on the Hofstede variables on both a cross- and within-cultural level. The findings of this study indicated that the effect of culture on the individual was, to some extent, systematic. It appeared that home culture/ethnicity shapes starting points for value dimensions (such as power-distance), and may also contribute to patterns of acculturation and adaptation to a host culture. The current findings regarding systematic variation across and within cultures would urge a reconsideration of the empirical approach to the Hofstede variables, and a potential fusion of the cross- and intra-cultural perspectives that have heretofore been characterised by their fragmentation.

4.4 Limitations and Future Directions

A cautionary note is appropriate regarding statistical limitations in some analyses conducted in this study. Due to the non-normal distribution of the number of years participants had resided in Australia, the correlation between years resident in Australia and power-distance values had to be calculated using Spearman's rho, rather than Pearson's r. The use of the Spearman's rho analysis presented two limitations. First, it was not possible to calculate a partial correlation to control for a third variable in the correlation analyses. While power-distance was found to decrease with longer periods of residence for Australian participants, period of residence among this group was confounded with age, but it was not possible to establish whether the relationship between years of residence in Australian culture and power-distance remained significant when controlling for age. Similarly, other demographic differences between the groups could impact the correlations reported. Second, with Spearman's rho, it was not possible to test whether the differences

between correlation coefficients across the four ethnic groups were significant. The correlations between years of residence in Australia and power-distance may be statistically significant in some groups and non-significant in others due to differences in the size of the groups. In particular, findings regarding the Indian and Korean participants in this sample should be interpreted in light of the small size of the groups (relative to Australian and Chinese participants in this sample); while our findings could reflect a way that Indian people in Australia differentiate themselves from the dominant culture, this finding may also reflect biases in a small sample.

Thus, the findings regarding differences between groups in acculturation patterns over time should be interpreted with caution, as we are unable to establish statistically whether these differences are due to period of residence in Australia, or whether the differences across groups in acculturation patterns are significant in this sample. In light of these statistical limitations, the findings regarding differences between groups in acculturation patters should be viewed as interesting but preliminary results, and future research should pursue these findings with a more targeted sample of particular ethnic groups, such as Indian people in Australia.

A cautionary note is also appropriate regarding what Hofstede termed "the ecological fallacy": statements about individuals should not be confused with statements about societies. Hofstede (2001) noted that power-distance was, to a considerable extent, societally determined, but recognised that, since his analysis measured and reported on the characteristics of social systems, individual subjects would exhibit a pattern of within-country variation around the central tendency that constitutes their power-distance country index. However, this does not automatically lead to the assumption that, when participants from particular countries are tested individually on power-distance, the variations in their scores will average around the central tendency of their country index (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994). Hofstede's caution on this point is directly pertinent to our finding that the values of people who migrated (either permanently or temporarily) to a low power-distance society differed from those who remained in their culture of origin. Emigration may constitute a type of attrition, where some members of a culture with particular constellations of cultural values inconsistent with their culture of origin are more likely to move away from that cultural environment.

Along this line, it is also important to consider the reasons that people have moved away from the culture of origin. One possibility is that the particular sample surveyed in the study limited the generalisability of our findings, because intent to move to Australia and stay in Australia may affect the level of acculturation in which people engage. In this study, we did not measure participants' reasons for their initial move to Australia, or their intentions to stay in Australia beyond the duration of university study, so we could not test whether intention to move to/remain in the host culture moderated acculturation patterns in this sample. Future research should test whether intention to move to/remain in the host culture affects adoption of the host culture's power-distance values and other acculturation behaviour across different ethnic groups.

While we deliberately elicited free responses from participants on the question of race/ethnicity, this open response format posed particular issues. As noted earlier, the responses of participants regarding their race/ethnicity did not comprise solely a racial categorisation, but also a social categorisation. However, in this study, we did not examine the extent to which respondents considered their racial or ethnic background as relevant to their social identity, either in an absolute sense or relative to their self-identification as a member of a particular ethnic group. It is possible that those participants who were not Australian-born but identified more strongly with Australian culture may have power-distance beliefs more similar to Australians, and less similar to individuals from their respective countries of origin. Furthermore, these participants may or may not have chosen to identify in this study as "Australian". Future research should investigate specific factors that lead people to select particular racial/ethnic descriptor categories, and could also investigate whether power-distance and other cultural values are moderated by social identification with the host culture within particular ethnic groups.

The study was also limited in only including university students, with a similar educational and age profile, a sample which was not representative of the community at large, and which is also inconsistent with the sample of working adults originally studied by Hofstede (1980). However, this sample was chosen because it offers very wide variation in the cultural backgrounds and Australian residency patterns of participants. High variance in these sample characteristics is essential to test the fundamental research questions explored in this paper: the variation of cultural value dimensions within a single site. The findings regarding these fundamental research questions have important implications for cross-cultural communication within a society or nation, and provide a basis for extrapolating these results to inform cross-cultural management and governance practices. External validity of the results could be further established by replicating these effects in more specific organisational or governance contexts (e.g., exploring cultural variation in value dimensions within a single site of a diverse company). The cultural diversity of this undergraduate sample in the current study suggests that it is an appropriate forum for studying cultural variation within a single national site, and also suggests that recent criticisms of undergraduate participants as homogenous and WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic; Henrich, Heine & Norenzayan, 2010) may need to be tempered by acknowledging the growing

cultural diversity of contemporary undergraduate psychology populations in Western countries.

The original power-distance measure developed by Hofstede (1980; 2001) was administered to over 100,000 participants in 63 countries. The ecological fallacy remains an issue in the absence of the administration of the original Hofstede (1980; 2001) batteries to all respondents (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994), and Fisher (2009) outlined the many challenges in measuring cultural variables at the individual level, primarily due to the assumption that individual-level and cultural-level dimensions are isomorphic. However, the scale that we used in this study was adapted for individual measurement by Tyler, Lind and Huo (2000), who combined items from Hofstede's original (1980) measure with those from a values survey by Schwartz (1992). In their study, data from 774 participants indicated that the six items on the new scale formed a single factor, and power-distance values measured according to the new scale varied as expected according to Hofstede's (1980) national power-distance indices. The power-distance scale used by Tyler et al. (2000) predicted individuals' responses to treatment by authority figures. Our findings using this scale revealed variation in individuals' power-distance scores that corresponded with participants' self-reported racial/ethnic affiliation. If power-distance does, in fact, predict such socially important behaviour, it is important to determine the exact nature of its variation within a single national site, and to address the questions raised aboveregarding power-distance values and their development among specific ethnic groups.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Criticism has been levelled at simplistic notions of cultures as discrete units or the unspoken assumption that "culture" maps unproblematically onto a geographical territory (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992). This is a problematic assumption because of regional variation, urban-rural differences, hybrid identities, and migration, including seasonal or temporary migration. Hofstede cautioned that there was likely to be significant diversity within nations (Hofstede, 1980), and that the nation and culture were not isomorphic: "the nation becomes a surrogate for more suitable units" (Hofstede, 1998, p.18). Hybrid identities, virtual identities, and migration all confound static and all-encompassing views of culture (Lee, 2010). Migration studies document patterns of temporary migration, and in-between states of residence such as the phenomenon of satellite and astronaut families, particularly within the internationally mobile, modern workforce. These suggest that culture is less attached to territory. In place of static analyses of all-encompassing "cultures", where culture is a set of rules to be adhered to, theories of culture have moved towards viewing culture as more fluid, and

composed of both beliefs and practice (Bourdieu, 1977).

The findings of this study indicated systematic variation in power-distance across different ethnic groups within a single multicultural society. These data regarding cultural values may have important implications for the way in which members of those groups perceive and interact with each other and with authority figures in the host culture, such as employers and lawmakers. Developing our understanding of variation in power-distance and other cross-cultural variables in future would improve our ability to communicate effectively in the governance and management of multi-cultural communities and companies.

REFERENCES

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2011). *Census of population and housing.* Canberra, ACT: Author.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Betancourt, H., & Lopez, S. R. (1993). The study of culture, ethnicity, and race in American psychology. *American Psychologist, 48,* 629-637.

Bochner, S., & Hesketh, B. (1994). Power-distance, individualism/collectivism, and job-related attitudes in a culturally diverse work group. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 25,* 233-257.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chan, J. (1995). Police accountability in a multicultural society. *Criminology Australia, 6*(4), 2-6.

Chevrier, S. (2009). Is national culture still relevant to management in a global context?: The case of Switzerland. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, 9,* 169-184.

Earley, P. C. (1993). East meets west meets mideast: Further explorations of collectivistic and individualistic work groups. *Academy of Management Journal, 36,* 319-348.

Fang, T. (2003). A critique of Hofstede's fifth national culture dimension. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, 3,* 347-358.

Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations, 7,* 117-140.

Festinger, L., & Gerard, H. et al. (1952). The influence process in the presence of extreme deviates. *Human Relations, 5,* 249-272.

Farh, J. L., Hackett, R. D., & Liang, J. (2007). Individual-level cultural values as moderators of perceived organizational support–Employee outcome relationships in China: Comparing the effects of power distance and traditionality. *Academy of Management Journal, 50*(3), 715-729.

Fisher, R. (2009). Where is culture in cross cultural research? An outline of a multilevel research process for measuring culture as a shared meaning system. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, 9,* 25-49.

Gelfand, M. J., Triandis, H. C., & Chan, K. S. (1996). Individualism versus collectivism or versus authoritarianism? *European Journal of Social Psychology, 26,* 397-410.

Gelfand, M. J., et al. (2011). Differences between tight and loose cultures: A 33-nation study. *Science, 332*, 1100-1104.

Guerra, N. G., Huesmann, L. R., & Hanish, L. (1995). The role of normative beliefs in children's social behavior. *Review of Personality and Social Psychology, 15,* 140-158.

Gupta, A., & Ferguson, J. (1992). Beyond "culture": Space, identity, and the politics of difference. *Cultural Anthropology, 7,* 6-23.

Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 33*, 61-135.

Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related attitudes.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Hofstede, G. (1998). A case for comparing apples with oranges, *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, *39*, 16-31.

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hofstede, G., & Peterson, M. F. (2000). Culture: National values and organizational practices. In N. M. Ashkanasy, C. P. M. Wilderon, & M. F. Peterson (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational culture and climate* (pp. 401-415). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hogg, M. A., & Abrams, D. (1993). Toward a single-process uncertainty reduction model of social motivation in groups. In M. A. Hogg & D. Abrams (Eds.), *Group motivation: Social psychological perspectives.* New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (Eds). (2004). *Culture, leadership and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Huq., A. Z., Tyler, T. R., & Schulhofer, S. J. (2011). Why does the public cooperate with law enforcement? The influence of the purposes and targets of policing. *Psychology, Public Policy and Law, 17,* 419-450.

Kirkman, B. L., Chen, G. L., Farh, J. L, Chen, Z. X., & Lowe, K. B. (2009). Individual power distance orientation and follower reactions to transformational leaders: A cross-level, cross-cultural examination. *Academy of Management Journal*, *52* (4), 744-764.

Kirkman, B. L., Lowe, K. B., & Gibson, C. B. (2006). A quarter century of c*ulture's consequences*: a review of empirical research incorporating Hofstede's cultural values framework. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *37***,** 285–320.

LaFromboise, T., Coleman, H., & Gerton J. (1993). Psychological impact of biculturalism: Evidence and theory. *Psychological Bulletin, 114*(3), 395-412.

Lee, Y-t. (2010). Home versus host – identifying with either, both or neither? The relationship between dual cultural identities and intercultural effectiveness. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, 10,* 55-76.

Loh, J. M. I., Restubog, S. L. D., & Zagenczyk, T. J. (2010). Consequences of workplace bullying on employee identification and satisfaction among Australians and Singaporeans. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 41*(2), 236-252.

Pike, K. L. (1967). *Language in relation to a unified theory of the structure of human behaviour*. The Hague: Mouton.

Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 25,* 1-65.

Sivasubramaniam, D., & Goodman-Delahunty, J. (2008). Ethnicity and trust: Perceptions of police bias. *International Journal of Police Science and Management, 10*(4), 388-401.

Shweder, R., & LeVine, R. A. (1984). *Culture theory: Essays on mind, self and emotion.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, P. B. (2011). Levels of analysis in cross-cultural psychology. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, Unit 2.* Retrieved from *http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/orpc/vol2/iss2/3*

Sunshine, J., & Tyler, T. R. (2003). The role of procedural Justice and legitimacy in shaping public support for policing. *Law & Society Review, 37*(3), 513-548.

Taras, V., Kirkman, B. L., & Steel, P. (2010). Examining the impact of *Culture's Consequences*: A three-decade, multi-level, meta-analytic review of Hofstede's cultural value dimension*s. Journal of Applied Psychology, 95,* 405-439.

Thibaut, J., & Walker, L. (1975). *Procedural justice: A psychological analysis.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Thibaut, J., & Walker, L. (1978). A theory of procedure. *California Law Review, 66,* 541-566.

Triandis, H. C. (1989). The self and social behavior in differing cultural contexts. *Psychological Review, 96*, 506-520.

Triandis, H. C. (1996). The psychological measurement of cultural syndromes. *American Psychologist, 51*, 407-415.

Triandis, H. C., & Gelfand, M. J. (1998). Converging measurement of horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74,* 118-128.

Tyler, T. R., & Lind, E. A. (1992). A relational model of authority in groups. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental and social psychology* (Vol.25, pp.115-191). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Tyler, T. R., Lind, E. A., & Huo, Y. J. (2000). Cultural values and authority relations: The psychology of conflict resolution across cultures. *Psychology, Public Policy, & Law December, 6*, 1138-1163.