

## The Effect of Face Concerns on University Students' Leisure Travel: A Cross-Cultural Comparison

Xiye Wang and Gordon J. Walker  
University of Alberta

### Abstract

Face concern is an indigenous Chinese concept that influences people's behaviors. This study examines the effect of face concern on Chinese ( $n = 352$ ) and Canadian ( $n = 295$ ) university students' leisure travel. Three research questions are addressed: (a) is face concern more important for Chinese students than Canadian students? (b) Does gender affect face concern? And (c) does the interaction between culture and gender affect face concern? Findings indicate that: (a) Chinese students rate mutual- and other-face concern higher, whereas Canadian students rate self-face concern higher; (b) female students rate mutual-face concern higher; and (c) the interaction between culture and gender is not significant. Results contribute to a cross-cultural understanding of face concern and its effects on students' travel.

*KEYWORDS: Chinese, face, student, tourism*

---

Authors Note: Xiye Wang, Ph.D., Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta, Canada. Gordon J. Walker, Ph.D., Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta, Canada. This paper is based on part of the first author's doctoral dissertation.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to: Xiye Wang, 6-08 General Services Building, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6G 2H1. E-mail: xiye@ualberta.ca.

Gordon J. Walker, E-488 Van Vliet Centre, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6G 2H9. E-mail: gordon.walker@ualberta.ca.

“A person needs face (*Lian*) like a tree needs bark (人要脸, 树要皮).”  
—Traditional Chinese saying

Tourism has become one of the most dynamic sectors of the Chinese economy. For example, in 2008, 1.7 billion domestic trips accounted for 875 billion RMB (129 billion USD), while 46 million Chinese tourists traveled internationally, an increase of 11.9% from 2007 (National Tourism Administration of the People's Republic of China, 2009). Moreover, the latter number is expected to double, with the WTO (cited in Li, Harrill, Uysal, Burnett, & Zhan, 2010) estimating there will be 100 million outbound Chinese tourists by 2020. Not surprisingly, given the current and future size of this market, American (U.S. Travel Association, 2008) and Canadian (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2009) tourism authorities have become increasingly interested in attracting Chinese tourists.

Of the various types of tourism that exist, youth (i.e., people between 16 and 29 years old) travel, and more specifically young university students' travel, is of particular interest in this paper. Youth and student travel has grown tremendously in China, Canada, the United States, and other countries (e.g., Cao, 2006; Heung & Leong, 2006; Richards & Wilson, 2003). However, despite the large and growing numbers of young people traveling—as well as the large and growing number of studies examining these travelers' characteristics (e.g., Abdel-Ghaffar, 1992; Hobson & Josiam, 1992; Kak-Yom & Jogaratnan, 2002; Li & Bao, 2000; Pastor, 1991; Schönhammer, 1992; Schott, 2004; Xu, Morgan, & Song, 2009), we did not uncover any studies that examined how Chinese university students might be similar to or different from Canadian students on a leisure trip. To explore these potential similarities and differences we adopt an important Chinese concept called “face concern” and utilize a cross-cultural comparative approach.

## Literature Review

### Face Concern in Chinese Culture

Gilbert and Tsao (2000) claimed that the best way to understand Chinese people's interpersonal behaviors was to first understand their face concerns. Face in Chinese culture has two components: *Mianzi*, which involves externalized social image; and *Lian*, which involves an internalized moral notion (Hu, 2004). These two components, consisting of respect for self and others, help explain different situations related to face. *Lian* restricts behavior against moral standards intrinsically, whereas *Mianzi* is the reputation earned from society. Ho (1976) argued that *Mianzi* is limited to the social situation in which a person is interacting; that is, it exists in the group that a person belongs to and is a relationship that derives from non-personal factors. Thus, *Lian* and *Mianzi* have specific meanings in a specific context. Furthermore, *Lian* and *Mianzi* may explain the true nature of Chinese communication, Chinese culture, and even Chinese social and cultural changes (Jia, 2001).

Research suggests that Chinese consumers who have high “face consciousness” also possess high social needs in regard to consumption. Face consciousness is the “desire to enhance, to maintain, and to avoid losing face in relation to significant

others in social activities” (Bao, Zhou, & Su, 2003, p. 736-737). This implies that face concerns (i.e., face saving, losing, or enhancing) could motivate tourists to consume a travel product. Such social needs make consumers pay more attention to the extrinsic rather than the intrinsic attributes of a product because of their desire to express certain images, positions, or feelings toward group members (Belk, 1988). For example, *Mianzi* plays an important role in East and Southeast Asian (e.g., Mainland China, Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan) societies’ luxury product consumption. Wong and Ahuvia (1998) explained that when East and Southeast Asians consume a product, they may not only consider its intrinsic value but its social value as well. This implies that they may consume a product to enhance their own or others’ face. Similarly, Mok and DeFranco (1999) suggested that shopping, respect for authority, relationship concerns, and brand consciousness during a trip may reflect self-, other-, and/or mutual-face concern more for Chinese people than for Westerners. Finally, Lockyer and Tsai (2004) found that face giving, social status, and harmony with others impacted Taiwanese hotel guests’ dining experiences. More specifically, face-giving service enhances guests’ status by enlarging the social distance between guests and service providers.

### **Face Concern in Western Cultures**

In Western culture, Ho (1976) defined face as:

the respectability and/or deference which a person can claim for himself from others, by virtue of the relative position he occupies in his social network and the degree to which he is judged to have functioned adequately in that position as well as acceptably in his general conduct; ... a function of the degree of congruence between judgments of his total condition in life, including his actions as well as those of people closely associated with him, and the social expectations that others have placed upon him ... the reciprocated compliance, respect, and/or deference that each [interacting] party expects from, and extends to, the other party. (p. 883)

Ho’s (1976) definition suggests that in the West, face is an interactive concept that involves others’ perspective of one’s self. In addition, the meaning of face is close to, but distinct from, behavioral standards, reputation, prestige, status, dignity, and honor (Ho, 1976).

Face in Western culture also refers to a sense of desired social self-image in a relational situation (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001). It is a dynamic concept because face enhancement, maintenance, protection, restoration, and derogation all involve social processes (Ho, 1994). Stover (1962) interpreted face as “other-directed self-esteem.” That is, if others’ remarks are positive, one’s self-esteem increases and, consequently, one has face. Western researchers often explain face behaviors using individualism-collectivism (e.g., preference for self- vs. other-oriented face; Triandis, 1995), self-construal (e.g., preference for self- vs. other-oriented face; Markus & Kitayama, 1991), and power distance (e.g., preference for horizontal- vs. vertical-based facework; Triandis, 1995). Noteworthy too is that

some of these face-related concepts have also been discussed in Western and cross-cultural tourism literature, including prestige (Kurtzman & Zauhar, 2005; Laing & Crouch, 2005), self-esteem (Amendah & Park, 2008; Dunne, Buckley, & Flanagan, 2007; Fall & Knutson, 2001), individualism-collectivism (Litvin & Goh Hwai Kar, 2003), self-construal (Lankford, Dieser, & Walker, 2005), and power distance (Kee-Fu Tsang & Ap, 2007). Having noted the above, however, it is important to add that while a number of face-related concepts have been examined in regard to tourists' behavior, to date no studies have investigated how face concern itself might influence tourists' behavior.

### **Face Concern, Gender, and Culture**

On the one hand, although face concern is of particular importance in Chinese culture, this concern appears to apply across cultures (Ho, 1976; Ting-Toomey, 2005). On the other hand, it is currently unclear whether face concern is equally important for males and females, as well as whether this variance (or invariance) holds true across cultures. Mak, Chen, Lam, and Yiu (2009), for example, suggested that face concern might be invariant in terms of gender, but other face-related concepts have been theorized to differ between males and females (e.g., self-construal; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Thus, given this perceived gap in the literature, in conjunction with tourism (e.g., Gibson, 2004) and leisure (e.g., Henderson, 2009) scholars who have convincingly argued for the inclusion of gender to help address "why" questions, we have chosen to examine both culture and gender in this study.

Based on the literature outlined above, three research questions guide this study: (a) is face concern (i.e., face saving, losing, enhancing) more important for Chinese university students than Canadian students during a leisure trip? (b) Does gender affect face? And (c) does the interaction between gender and culture affect face?

## **Method**

### **Questionnaire**

To answer this study's three research questions, a questionnaire was developed that included: (a) open-ended items concerning study participants' past and future travel (e.g., when and where they planned to go); (b) 13 face concern items (measured using a five-point Likert scale and a "not applicable" option); and (c) various sociodemographic (e.g., age), educational (e.g., current level), and cultural (e.g., primary and secondary languages able to read, write, and speak) items.

Face concern has been examined in a variety of contexts (e.g., *Mianzi* concerns; Ang & Leong, 2000; face preserving; Lee & Dawes, 2005; saving face; Qian, Razzaque, & Keng, 2007; and losing face; Wang & Bozionelos, 2007). However, given the nature of this study, we choose to use Ting-Toomey and Oetzel's (2001) cross-cultural face research to inform our own. Thus, we selected and modified their most appropriate face concern items to fit a tourism context (e.g., "Relationship harmony was important for me" became "Being in harmony with people on a trip is important to me"). We also selected five items from

Driver's (1983) Recreation Experience Preference scales that exhibited relational and social-self elements and then modified these to measure face concern (e.g., "To have others recognize and admire you for doing it" became "I want others to admire my traveling experiences"). Additionally, because some tourists have reported that face-giving increases when service providers display social distance (Lockyer & Tsai, 2004), we developed a new item to measure this aspect of face (i.e., "Respectful and considerate services are important to me during the trip"). Finally, because shopping for gifts may indicate face concern in terms of brand consciousness (Mok & DeFranco, 1999), we also developed three new items to measure this aspect of face (e.g., "Sending brand name gifts to people enhances their pride").

The questionnaire was initially written in English because most of the face concern items we modified were originally reported in English-language journals. We then used double translation (Fowler, 2002) to obtain a Chinese version. Minor editorial changes were made after four Canadian professors and one Canadian and one Chinese student reviewed a draft of the questionnaire.

### **Sample**

Questionnaires were distributed on two university campuses, one in Edmonton, Canada and one in Beijing, China. These two universities were selected based on their similarity in size and disciplinary diversity. Questionnaire distribution occurred between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., thus covering mornings, afternoons, and evenings during weekdays and weekends. Locations included cafeterias, recreational settings, and housing areas, thereby increasingly the likelihood that students from different faculties and departments would participate. Token remuneration (i.e., approximately 1 USD) was provided.

### **Data Analysis**

First, Chinese and Canadian cases with extreme missing data (i.e., more than 50% missing) were excluded, whereas mean substitution was used with cases that had less than 5% of their data missing (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Second, exploratory factor analyses (using varimax rotation) were utilized to determine face concern dimensions. Third, Cronbach coefficient alphas were calculated for each face concern scale, by culture. Fourth, means and standard deviations were calculated for the scale items and complete scales by culture and gender. Fifth, an average score was computed across items and a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) test was conducted that included culture, gender, and their interaction. Finally, follow-up analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were performed when statistically appropriate.

## **Results**

### **Sample Information**

A total of 295 Canadian and 352 Chinese university students participated in the study. Relatively equal numbers of males and females participated, with most being single, and between 17 and 24 years of age (Table 1). All Canadian

respondents described themselves as being Canadians only with no ethnicity being self-identified, while most of the Chinese belonged to the Han majority. A majority of the Canadian students were unilingual, whereas a majority of the Chinese indicated that that English was their second language. Given the commonality of English in Chinese universities as well as the growing Western (and largely English-language) influence on Chinese youth (Sun & Wang, 2010), this finding is not surprising.

*Table 1*

*Sample Distribution*

	<b>% of Canadians</b>	<b>% of Chinese</b>
Gender		
Male	46.1	48.0
Female	53.9	52.0
Age		
17-20	57.8	50.0
21-24	38.0	46.8
25-28	4.2	3.2
Current education (in progress)		
Diploma	2.7	4.5
Undergraduate	95.3	92.6
Graduate	1.7	2.8
Other	0.3	---
Marital status		
Single	73.8	83.4
Married/partner	26.2	16.6
Frequently used language	English	Chinese
Speak	99.7	99.7
Read	99.3	99.7
Write	99.3	99.7
Can use a second language		
Speak	38.8	65.2
Read	34.7	65.0
Write	31.6	56.1
Most used second language	French	English
Speak	67.0	88.7
Read	68.0	96.9
Write	67.0	96.4
Travel patterns		
Traveled in the past 3 months	81.4	57.4
Plan to travel domestically	53.2	95.2
Plan to travel abroad	45.1	4.8
Plan pleasure travel	66.1	88.9
Plan to visit family and friends	33.9	11.1

*Note.* Canadian n = 295, Chinese n = 352.

The majority of respondents had traveled during the three months preceding the study. Spring break and summer vacations were the most popular travel times for the Canadians, whereas summer vacations and the May week-long holiday were the most popular travel times for the Chinese. Slightly over half of the Canadian and most of the Chinese students planned to travel domestically for their next trip. Slightly less than half of the Canadians and only a few of the Chinese planned to travel abroad for their next trip. For the Canadian students, the two most popular domestic destinations were somewhere in Alberta outside of Edmonton, and British Columbia, whereas for the Chinese students, the two most desired domestic destinations were Yunnan province and Tibet.

### Data Analyses

Based on the results of initial exploratory factor analyses: (a) one face concern item was deleted because it had a low factor coefficient (i.e.,  $< .45$ ; Comrey & Lee, 1992); (b) one face concern item was deleted because it had a high correlation with another item (i.e.,  $> .90$ ; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007); and (c) two face concern items were deleted because they were either reported to be “not applicable” by a large number of participants, or they exhibited low correlations with other items, or both. Follow-up factor analyses, by culture, with the nine remaining face concern items indicated three factors existed (using the Kaiser criteria) in both instances, with the identical items loading on each factor above  $.40$  (i.e., 16% overlapping variance).

Cronbach coefficient alphas for the three face scales, by culture, were calculated. Alphas were all above accepted levels (Nunnally, 1967), especially when the number of constructs being examined is taken into account (Cronbach & Gleser, 1965).

Means and standard deviations were calculated for the face scale items, by culture (Table 2), and for the three face scales by culture and gender (Table 3).

A MANOVA (Table 4) revealed that the interaction between culture and gender did not significantly affect students' face concerns, Wilk's  $\Lambda = .99$ ,  $F(3, 641) = 1.85$ ,  $p = .14$ . Culture alone did significantly influence face concerns, Wilk's  $\Lambda = .86$ ,  $F(3, 641) = 36.11$ ,  $\eta^2 = .15$ ,  $p < .001$ , as did gender, Wilk's  $\Lambda = .97$ ,  $F(3, 641) = 6.55$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ ,  $p < .001$ . These results indicate that culture has a medium size effect and gender has a small size effect on face concerns. (For comparative purposes,  $\eta^2$  values of  $.01$  indicate small,  $.09$  indicate medium, and  $.25$  indicate large, effect sizes; Weinfurt, 1995).

Follow-up ANOVAs were conducted separately on culture and gender to determine their effects on each face concern scale. Culture was found to have a significant effect on mutual-face,  $F(1, 643) = 73.76$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .10$ ; other-face,  $F(1, 643) = 16.91$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .03$ ; and self-face,  $F(1, 643) = 14.03$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .02$ . Chinese university students were more concerned with mutual-face ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 0.48$ ) and other-face ( $M = 2.77$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ) compared with Canadian students ( $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = .56$ ;  $M = 2.45$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ , respectively). In contrast, Canadian university students were more concerned with self-face than Chinese students ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = .85$ ;  $M = 3.09$ ,  $SD = .85$ , respectively). Gender had a significant effect only on mutual-face,  $F(1, 643) = 15.81$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .02$ , with female university

Table 2

*Means Scores and Standard Deviations of Face Concern Scales Items, by Culture*

Face Scale	Items	Canadians		Chinese	
		M	SD	M	SD
Other-Face	Sending brand name gifts to people enhances their pride.	2.31	1.04	2.71	1.18
	I like to buy brand name gifts during the trip.	2.57	1.24	2.85	1.15
Mutual-Face	Respectful and considerate services are important to me during the trip.	4.22	.75	4.28	.93
	Being in harmony with people on a trip is important to me.	4.05	.81	4.46	.70
	I am concerned with mutual respect between others and me.	4.12	.78	4.68	.56
	A peaceful resolution to any conflict on a trip is important to me.	4.22	.79	4.58	.64
Self-Face	I want to be proud of myself by taking a new journey.	3.61	1.08	3.42	1.07
	I want others to admire my traveling experiences.	3.05	1.11	2.69	1.26
	I want others to know I have been to such a place.	3.39	1.08	2.98	1.24

Table 3

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Three Face Scales, by Culture and Gender*

Face	Canadians n = 295						Chinese n = 352					
	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
	n = 137	n = 158	n = 158	n = 137	n = 295	n = 169	n = 183	n = 183	n = 169	n = 352		
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Mutual-Face	4.03	.60	4.26	.51	4.15	.56	4.45	.48	4.54	.47	4.50	.48
Other-Face	2.40	1.05	2.49	1.03	2.45	1.04	2.80	.96	2.75	1.03	2.77	1.00
Self-Face	3.21	.88	3.48	.80	3.35	.85	3.08	.83	3.10	.88	3.09	.85



Table 4

*Multivariate and Univariate Analysis of Variance for Face Scales*

Source	Multivariate		Univariate		
	df	F <sup>a</sup>	Mutual-face <sup>b</sup>	Other-face <sup>b</sup>	Self-face <sup>b</sup>
Culture (C)	3	36.11***	73.76***	16.91***	14.03***
Gender (G)	3	6.55***	15.81***	.04	4.73
C x G	3	1.85	2.57	.78	3.41

Note. F ratios are Wilks's approximation of Fs. <sup>a</sup>Multivariate df = 3, 641. <sup>b</sup>Univariate df = 1, 643. \*\*\**p* < .001.

students being more concerned with this type of face than male students ( $M = 4.41$ ,  $SD = .51$ ;  $M = 4.26$ ,  $SD = .58$ , respectively). These results indicate that culture had a small effect on self- and other-face concern, and a small to medium effect on mutual-face concern, whereas gender had a small effect on mutual-face concern (For comparative purposes,  $R^2$  values of .01 indicate small, .06 indicate medium, and .14 indicate large, effect sizes; Cohen, 1988, as cited in Aron & Aron, 1999).

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the potential effect of face concern on Chinese and Canadian university students' leisure travel. Before we discuss our research findings however, two matters must be addressed. First, the three face concerns scales we developed appear to exhibit acceptable construct validity (based on the exploratory factor analyses' results), discriminant validity (based on low correlation results among scales), and reliability (based on the scale Cronbach coefficient alpha results), for both Chinese and Canadian university students. Second, given that the interaction between culture and gender was not significant, (i.e., research question three), our discussion focuses on the effects of culture and gender, separately, on face concern (i.e., research questions one and two, respectively).

### Research Question One: Culture and Face Concern

Of the three face concern dimensions, mutual- and other-face concerns were more important for Chinese university students than Canadian students, whereas self-face concern was the opposite. Overall, these results were generally consistent with our assumptions and previous literature. Individualism-collectivism (Triandis, 1995), for instance, suggests that, generally, self-oriented Canadians will be more concerned with self-face whereas other-oriented Chinese will be more concerned with other-face. Additionally, the self-face concept reflects self-esteem which is based mainly on personal achievement and self-expression. A number of studies

have found that Westerners typically report higher self-esteem levels than East Asians (e.g., Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Spencer-Rodgers, Peng, Wang, & Hou, 2004).

Chinese students' higher mutual-face concerns also reflect the importance of maintaining good interpersonal relationships in a collectivistic culture. Markus and Kitayama (1991), for example, held that interdependent selves (who are more common in collectivist cultures such as China) are better able to put themselves in other people's place. Additionally, in Kwan, Bond, and Singelis's study (1997), self-esteem and harmony in relationships were independent in an individualistic culture whereas, in a collectivistic culture, having good relationships with others (e.g., being in harmony, showing mutual respect, and peacefully resolving conflicts) increased self-esteem. The concept of mutual-face concern incorporates respectful, harmonious, and peaceful relationships, all of which are widely accepted social norms for Chinese people (Hu, 2004). This is consistent with Nelson, Badger, and Wu's (2004) finding that Chinese students are more likely to obey social norms. Finally, in terms of other-face concern, all of the students agreed that gift buying behaviors enhanced others' pride. Therefore, gift buying during a trip reflects not only a gift's product value but also its social value.

### **Research Question Two: Gender and Face Concern**

Of the three face concern dimensions only mutual-face differed by gender, with female university students rating this type of face higher than male students. Overall, these results were generally consistent with previous literature. In terms of self- and other-face concern not differing by gender, for example, our results concur with those of Mak, Chen, Lam, and Yiu (2009) and Zane and Yeh (2002). In terms of mutual-face differing by gender, however, Markus and Kitayama (1991) held that having an interdependent self-construal was not only more common in collectivist than individualist cultures but also with females than males. Because being able to put oneself in another's place is a characteristic of interdependence, it is not unexpected to find that females were also higher on mutual-face. Finally, given that gender's effect on face concern was small in size and only mutual face was affected, whereas culture's effect on face concern was small to medium in size and all three types of face were affected, it must be concluded that of these two variables culture is primary.

Having noted these cultural differences, we would still argue that a universalist perspective is most appropriate. According to Berry, Poortinga, Segall, and Dasen (2002), universalism "adopts the working assumptions that basic psychological processes are likely to be common features of human life everywhere, but that their manifestations are likely to be influenced by culture" (p. 326). In contrast, Berry et al. (2002) stated that relativists assume a general egalitarian stance (e.g., "all people are equal") and explain any differences as being due to cultural contexts that influence people's development. Berry et al. (2002) added that absolutists place little if any value on culture. From a universalist perspective, therefore, we would expect there to be numerous similarities but also either a few culturally influenced differences or many culturally influenced differences but all in the

small to medium effect size range. This is, in fact, what we found in the current study in regard to Chinese and Canadian university students' face concern.

### **Conclusion**

As with any research, this study has limitations. First, the construct validity of the concept of face could potentially be improved through further qualitative research. Second, the face scale items used in this study are new and refinement is needed. Future studies may, therefore, want to use confirmatory rather than exploratory factor analysis. Third, a convenience sample may not be generalizable, so validating study results in different Chinese (e.g., Taiwanese, Hong Kongese) and Asian (e.g., Korean, Japanese) cultures is recommended. Similarly, although Canadian society is often considered to be a combination of American and European cultures (Resnick, 2005)—and therefore we believe a good exemplar of Western culture—validating study results with other Western populations (e.g., Irish, American) is recommended. Finally, given recent calls (Chick, 2009) for the use of cultural consensus analysis, future research on face concern may want to consider this statistical technique as well.

From a theoretical perspective, this study's results pose a new and interesting question: How does face concern "fit" into existing Western theoretical frameworks, such as the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) or leisure constraints theory (Crawford, Jackson, & Godbey, 1991)? In terms of the former, it would be easy to include face as a fourth variable (along with attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control) to determine if it significantly improves our ability to predict a specific behavioral intention (e.g., Chinese tourists' destination choices). Similarly, loss of face could be included with other "traditional" constraints to determine if doing so further explained why Chinese people either preferred not doing a specific leisure activity or felt constrained from doing an activity they already participate in. In both cases inclusion of face concern could lead to the development of more comprehensive theoretical frameworks—and the lack thereof has been identified in tourism (Weed, 2009), leisure studies (Searle, 2000), and mainstream social psychology (Kruglanski, 2001).

In conclusion, this study investigated the effect of a Chinese concept (i.e., face concern) on a specific type of travel (i.e., leisure), with a specific type of adult (i.e., university students), and with members of two cultural groups (i.e., Chinese and Canadians). In doing so, it not only addresses Kleiber, Walker, and Mannell's (2010) concern that there is little evidence of indigenous non-Western leisure social psychologies emerging, but also, by using a comparative cross-cultural approach, it demonstrates how adoption of an indigenous concept can inform mainstream social psychology of leisure. More specifically, our study contributes in at least four ways. First, it provides insight into one of the (if not the most) important factors affecting Chinese people's behavior, experience, and satisfaction: face concern. Second, as we stated in our introduction, the number of outbound Chinese tourists has grown and will continue to grow rapidly. It is therefore critical that Western tourism agencies and employees understand, and when possible foster, Chinese travelers' face. Third, our results suggest that face

may also be an important concept for Western tourists. Finally, Berry et al (2002) proposed, albeit in regard to mainstream psychology, that “by recognizing the limits of our current knowledge ... and by seeking to extend our data and theory through the inclusion of other cultures ... we can reduce the culture-bound nature of the discipline” (p. 9). Building on this sentiment, Walker and Wang (2008) proposed that by conducting cross-cultural comparative research leisure studies too could overcome its disciplinary ethnocentrism. But we would go one step further than they did, and state that, while “seeking to extend our data and theory through the inclusion of other cultures” is beneficial, “seeking out other cultures’ concepts and theories and applying them to our own” is equally so.

### References

- Abdel-Ghaffar, A. (1992) Youth tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 19(4), 792-794.
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179-211.
- Amendah, E., & Park, E. (2008). Consumer involvement and psychological antecedents on eco-friendly destinations: Willingness to pay more. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 17(3/4), 262-283.
- Ang, S., & Leong, S. (2000). Out of the mouths of babes: Business ethics and youths in Asia. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 28(2), 129-144.
- Aron, A., & Aron, E. N. (1999). *Statistics for psychology* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NY: Prentice Hall.
- Bao, Y., Zhou, K. Zh., & Su, Ch. (2003). Face consciousness and risk aversion: Do they affect consumer decision-making? *Psychology & Marketing*, 20, 733-755.
- Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15, 139-168.
- Berry, J., Poortinga, Y., Segall, M., & Dasen, P. (2002). *Cross-cultural psychology: Research and applications* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Canadian Tourism Commission. (December 3, 2009). China grants Canada approved destination status. Retrieved January 15, 2010 from: [mediacentre.canada.travel/print/6091](http://mediacentre.canada.travel/print/6091)
- Cao, J. H. (2006). Travel behavior of college students and marketing tactics at destinations. *Commercial Research*, 24.
- Chick, G. (2009). Culture as a variable in the study of leisure. *Leisure Sciences*, 31, 305-310.
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Comrey, A. L., & Lee, H. B. (1992). *A first course in factor analysis* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Crawford, D. W., Jackson, E. L., & Godbey, G. (1991). A hierarchical model of leisure constraints. *Leisure Sciences*, 13, 309-320.
- Crocker, J., Major, B., & Steele, C. (1998). Social stigma. In D. Gilbert & S. Fiske (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (4th ed., pp. 504-553). Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Cronbach, L., & Gleser, G. (1965). *Psychological tests and personnel decisions* (2nd ed.). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Driver, B. L. (1983). Master list of items for Recreation Experience Preference scales and domains. Unpublished document. USDA Forest Service, Fort Collins, CO: Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station.

- Dunne, G., Buckley, J., & Flanagan, S. (2007). City break motivation: The case of Dublin - A successful national capital. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 22(3/4), 95-107.
- Fall, L. T., & Knutson, B. J. (2001). Personal values and media usefulness of mature travelers. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 8(3/4), 97-112.
- Fowler, F. J. (2002). *Survey research methods* (3rd ed.). CA: Sage.
- Gibson, H. (2004). Moving beyond the "what is and who" of sport tourism to understanding "why". *Journal of Sport Tourism*, 9, 247-265.
- Gilbert, D., & Tsao, J. (2000). Exploring Chinese cultural influences and hospitality marketing relationships. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 12, 45-53.
- Henderson, K. (2009). Just research and physical activity: Diversity is more than an independent variable. *Leisure Sciences*, 31, 100-105.
- Heung, V. C. S., & Leong, J. S. L. (2006). Travel demand and behavior of university students in Hong Kong. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 11(1), 81-96.
- Ho, D. Y. F. (1976). On the concept of face. *American Journal of Sociology*, 81(4), 867-884.
- Ho, D. Y. F. (1994). Face dynamics: From conceptualization to measurement. In S. Ting-Toomey (Ed.), *The challenge of facework* (pp. 269-286). New York: SUNY Press.
- Hobson, J. S. P., & Josiam, B. (1992). Spring break student travel-An exploratory study. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 1(3), 87-97.
- Hu, H. C. (2004). 中国人的面子观 [Face, from a Chinese perspective]. In H. C. Hu, & G. G. Huang (Eds.), *Face: Chinese power games* (pp. 57-83). Beijing: China Renmin University Press.
- Jia, W. (2001). *The remaking of the Chinese character and identity in the 21st century: The Chinese face practices*. Westport, Connecticut: Ablex Publishing.
- Kak-Yom, K., & Jogaratan, G. (2002) Travel motivations: A comparative study of Asian international and domestic American college students. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 13(4), 61-83.
- Kee-Fu Tsang, N., & Ap, J. (2007). Tourists' perceptions of relational quality service attributes: A cross-cultural study. *Journal of Travel Research*, 45(3), 355-363.
- Kleiber, D. A., Walker, G. J., & Mannell, R.C. (2010). *A social psychology of leisure* (2nd ed.). State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- Kruglanski, A. (2001). That "vision thing": The state of theory in social and personality psychology at the edge of the new millennium. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 871-875.
- Kurtzman, J., & Zauhar, J. (2005). Sports tourism consumer motivation. *Journal of Sport Tourism*, 10(1), 21-31.
- Kwan, V. S. Y., Bond, M. H., & Singelis, T. M. (1997). Pancultural explanations for life satisfaction: Adding relationship harmony to self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 1038-1051.
- Laing, J. H., & Crouch, G. (2005). Extraordinary journeys: An exploratory cross-cultural study of tourists on the frontier. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 11(3), 209-223.
- Lankford, S., Dieser, R., & Walker, G. J. (2005). Self-construal and pilgrimage travel. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(3), 802-804.
- Lee, D. Y., & Dawes, P. L. (2005). Guanxi, trust and long-term orientation in Chinese business markets. *Journal of International Marketing*, 13(2), 28-56.
- Li, L. M., & Bao, J. G. (2000). 大学生旅游行为研究——以中山大学为例 [Investigation of university student travel behaviour: A case study in Sun Yat-sen University]. *Journal of Guilin Institute of Tourism*, 11(4), 45-49.
- Li, X., Harrill, R., Uysal, M., Burnett, T., & Zhan, X. (2010). Estimating the size of the Chinese outbound travel market: A demand-side approach. *Tourism Management*, 31, 250-259.
- Lin, Y. (1935). *My country and my people*. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock.

- Litvin, S. W., & Goh Hwai Kar, S.W. (2003). Individualism/collectivism as a moderating factor to the self-image congruity concept. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 10(1), 23-32.
- Lockyer, T., & Tsai, M. (2004). Dimensions of Chinese culture values in relation to the hotel dining experience. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 11, 13-27.
- Mak, W. W. S., Chen, S. X., Lam, A. G., & Yiu, V. F. L. (2009). Understanding distress: The role of face concern among Chinese Americans, European Americans, Hong Kong Chinese, and Mainland Chinese. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 37(2), 219-248.
- Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98, 224-253.
- Mok, C., & DeFranco (1999). Chinese cultural values: Their implications for travel and tourism marketing. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 8, 99-114.
- National Tourism Administration of the People's Republic of China (2009). Major Statistics of China Tourism, Jan. - Dec. 2008. Retrieved January 5, 2010, from <http://www.cnta.gov.cn/html/2009-9/2009-9-28-9-30-78465.html>
- Nelson, L. J., Badger, S., & Wu, B. (2004). The influence of culture in emerging adulthood: Perspectives of Chinese college students. *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, 28, 26-36.
- Nunnally, J. C. (1967). *Psychometric theory* (1st ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Pastor, J. M. (1991). *The nature of youth tourism: Motivations, characteristics and requirements*. World Tourism Organization International Conference on Youth Tourism, New Delhi, India.
- Qian, W., Razzaque, M. A., & Keng, K. A. (2007). Chinese cultural values and gift-giving behaviour. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 24(4), 214-228.
- Redding, S. G. (1982). Cultural effects on the marketing process in Southeast Asia. *Journal of the Market Research Society*, 24, 98-114.
- Resnick, P. (2005). *The European roots of Canadian identity*. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press.
- Richards, G., & Wilson, J. (2003). Today's youth tourists: Tomorrow's global nomads? New horizons in independent youth and student travel. Amsterdam: International Student Travel Confederation and Arnhem: Association of Tourism and Leisure Education. Retrieved March 7, 2005, from [http://www.atlas-euro.org/pages/pdf/FINAL\\_Industry\\_Report.pdf](http://www.atlas-euro.org/pages/pdf/FINAL_Industry_Report.pdf)
- Schönhammer, R. (1992) Youth tourism as appropriation of the world: A psychological perspective. *Phenomenology and Pedagogy*, 10, 19-27.
- Schott, C. (2004) Young holidaymakers: solely faithful to hedonism? In K. A. Smith, & C. Schott (Eds.), *Proceedings of the New Zealand Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference*, 8-10 December, (pp. 364-376). Wellington.
- Searle, M. (2000). Is leisure theory needed for leisure studies? *Journal of Leisure Research*, 32, 138-142.
- Spencer-Rodgers, J., Peng, K., Wang, L., & Hou, Y. (2004). Dialectical self-esteem and East-West differences in psychological well-being. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30, 1416-1432.
- Stover, L. E. (1962). *"Face" and verbal analogues of interaction in Chinese culture: A theory of formalized social behaviour based on participant-observation of an upper-class Chinese household, together with a biographical study of the primary informant*. Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, No.62-5199.
- Sun, J., & Wang, X. (2010). Value differences between generations in China: A study in Shanghai. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 13, 65-81.
- Tabachnick, B., & Fidell, L. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

- Ting-Toomey, S. (2005). The matrix of face: An updated face-negotiation theory. In W.B. Gudykunst (Ed). *Theorizing about intercultural communication* (pp. 71-92). CA: Sage.
- Ting-Toomey, S., & Oetzel, J. G. (2001). *Managing intercultural conflict effectively*. CA: Sage.
- Triandis, H. (1995). *Individualism & collectivism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- U.S. Travel Association. (January 11, 2008). Groundbreaking study to examine Chinese leisure travel preferences. Retrieved January 5, 2010, from [www.ustravel.org/nes/press-releases](http://www.ustravel.org/nes/press-releases).
- Walker, G. J., & Wang, X. (2008). A cross-cultural comparison of Canadian and Mainland Chinese university students' leisure motivations. *Leisure Sciences*, 30, 179-197.
- Weed, M. (2009). Progress in sport tourism research? A meta-review and exploration of futures. *Tourism Management*, 30(5), 615-628.
- Weinfurt, K. (1995). Multivariate analysis of variance. In L. Grimm & P. Yarnold (Eds.), *Reading and understanding multivariate statistics* (pp. 245-276). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Wang, L. & Bozionelos, N. (2007). An investigation on the attitudes of Chinese workers towards individually-based performance related reward systems. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(2), 284-302.
- Wong, N. Y., & Ahuvia, A. C. (1998). Personal taste and family face: Luxury consumption in Confucian and Western societies. *Psychology & Marketing*, 15, 423-441.
- Xu, F, Morgan, M., & Song, P. (2009). Students' travel behaviour: a cross-cultural comparison of UK and China. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 11(3), 255-268.
- Zane, N., & Yeh, M. (2002). The use of culturally-based variables in assessment: Studies on loss of face. In K. Kurasaki, S. Okazaki, & S. Sue (Eds.), *Asian American mental health: Assessment theories and methods* (pp. 123-140). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic.