PREVALENCE OF 'FACE CONCEPT' AMONG SOUTH ASIAN CONSUMERS.
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF UNFOLDING THE FACETS IN DECISION MAKING PROCESS OF BUYING BEAUTY PRODUCTS

SHAHINA PERVIN
Dublin City University, Ireland

Abstract

The focus of this paper is to explore the level of importance of the term 'face concept', consumers transfer in their purchase decision of beauty products. The author intends to study differences in the consumption behaviour of highly collectivists Bangladeshi consumers' compare to the highly individualistic UK consumers. Concept of face is acknowledged in every culture. However, the term 'face' is characterised differently according to one's cultural setting; for example, 'face' represents the interpersonal relationship between the individual and groups in Asian society. On the other hand, from a European perspective face may represent stronger personal self and assertion. In this paper the author tends to identify the contributing factors to 'face concept' of Bangladeshi female consumers in their pre, actual and post-purchase behaviour of cosmetics products compared to the British female consumers. A structured questionnaire survey was conducted among female Bengali consumers in the capital city of Dhaka in Bangladesh and female British consumers in Southwest London in the United Kingdom. The research has compared the degree of face concept and its impact on decision making process of female consumers in the UK and the Bangladesh by using factor analysis. Five factors were extracted from factor analysis: 'thoughts in cosmetics', 'brand link to social recognition and prestige', 'skin colour link to authority in society', 'group conformity' and 'personal-self'. It was noticed in the labelling process of the five factors that the extracted components were not exactly the same for both Bangladesh and the United Kingdom.

1. Introduction

In cross-cultural research, concept of face has been studied largely in East Asian context. However there has been very little study relating to 'face' and consumption behaviour in

South Asian context. Although the concept of face is acknowledged in every culture, the term 'face' is characterised differently according to one's cultural setting; for example, in Asian Society 'face' represents the interpersonal relationship between the individual and groups. In China 'lien' (moral integrity) and 'mien-tsu' (prestige and reputation based on personal effort) are the depictions of face (Yau, 1994).

There have been several studies addressing face and face-related issues (Brown and Levingstone, 1987; Holtgraves, 1997; Kim 1994; Leung and Chan et al., 2003; Schutte and Ciarlante, 1998) on negotiation, decision-making and conflict management; however how face influences consumption remains unclear, and its conceptualisation requires further clarification and investigation (Li and Su, 2007). The concept of face is also important in western society, in the conduct of inter-personal relationships and in cultural development, but perhaps is less obvious and more subtle, appearing to be not important when actually it is (Hofstede, 2001).

This paper seeks to identify how 'concept of face' influences the attitudes of consumers towards the purchase of cosmetics in a cross-country environment. This paper intends to explore the following two objectives:

1. To investigate the nature and influence of 'concept of face' among Bangladeshi consumers in their purchase decision of buying beauty products.
2. To identify the key factors underpinning the precedence of 'concept of face' in consumption behavior between East (Bangladesh) and the West (UK, amongst the white British woment).

2. Literature Review

The aim of this literature review is to investigate the cultural elements and to identify the key factors impacting consumers' preference to choose and purchase beauty products at different stages of their buying decision.

Bangladesh considers to be one of the 20 Markets of the future that will offer the most opportunities for consumer goods companies globally. The country is one of the fastest growing and most promising economies in Asia-Pacific (Euromonitor International, 2012). Euromonitor 2012 also reported that, growing disposable income and an expanding urban middle class also bolstered sales of non-essential items. As a result, categories such as beauty and personal care products (CAGR 15% over 2009-2013), home care (CAGR 12%) and tissue and hygiene (CAGR 20%) also performed strongly. This research intends to outline the underlying factors in decision making process of buying cosmetics from a cross-cultural point of view.

2.1. *Dimensions of Culture*

Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions are widely used in international cross-cultural studies, the dimensions model is based on quantitative research and provides scores for 75 countries. Hofstede's (1984, p. 78) cultural dimensions approach is characterised as a national culture in terms of its average pattern of beliefs and values. Consequently, countries are divided on the basis of their scores on the five dimensions into cultural areas, and in some cases it is possible to find historical reasons for the cultural differentiation between the areas. Hofstede's (1980, 1984) Cultural Dimensions Model differentiates cultures according to:

- Power distance (PDI)
- Individualism/ Collectivism (IDV)
- Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)
- Masculinity/ Femininity, and (MAS)

- Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Orientation (LTO)
- Indulgence versus Restaint (IND)

Although Hofstede initially proposed the four main cultural dimensions, he later has added another two dimensions, Long term vs short term Orientation, initially known as Confusian dynamism, that describes the time horizon and attach greater importance to the future. The second one is called Indulgence versus Restaint (IND), the extent to which member of a society try to control their desires and impulses.

To briefly define, power distance is the societal acceptance of hierarchy; uncertainty is the cultural tolerance of ambiguity; individualism-collectivism is the societal predilection for inter-dependence; and masculinity is the culture's desire for sex-role differentiation (Milner, Fodness and Speece, 1993). Since this phenomenal beginning, Hofstede (1982; 1983a, b, c; 1984a, b, c; 1985; 1987) and others (e.g., Mooij, 2003; England, 1983; Hortum and Muller, 1989; Jensen, White, and Singh, 1990; Kim, Park, and Suzuki, 1990; Lebas and Weigenstein, 1986) have validated and expounded on his initial insights.

Although Hofstede (1980, 1984) proposes five cultural dimensions, the researchers intend to focus on three dimensions, Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV), Power Distance (PDI) and Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI), to identify the relevance of cultural dimensions to consumer purchase behaviour in a cross-national environment. Mooij (2003) stated that dimensions of national culture provide excellent variables that can be employed to analyse cross-cultural consumer behaviour. Mooij further suggested that together with national wealth Hofstede's cultural dimensions can explain more than half of the differences in consumption and consumer behavior.

2.2. *Individualism/Collectivism (IDV)*

The individualism and collectivism dimension at the culture level relates to how one values the individuals relative to the group (Gregory and Munch, 1996). Hofstede (2001, p.210) states: "The relationship between the individual and the collectivity in human society is not only a matter of ways of living together, it is intimately linked with societal norms (in the sense of value systems of major groups of the population)". In an individualistic culture, the "I" consciousness is central, which articulates private opinion and self-actualisation. Conversely, in a collectivistic society, the "we" term incorporates the identity and harmony with in-group members, and that it is important not to lose 'face' (Mooij, 2003, p.34).

2.3. *Power distance index (PDI)*

According to Hofstede (2001), power distance is the extent to which less powerful members of the society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. Hofstede argues that this inequality is usually formalised in boss-subordinate relationships. The power distance index was derived from the country's mean score or percentage on three survey questions (Hofstede, 2001), which related to the perceptions of subordinates, fear of disagreeing with the superior and of the superior's actual decision-making style, and with the decision-making styles that subordinates preferred in their bosses. From the survey it has been found that the 'power distance norm' as a value system is held by the majority of a country's middle class group. Hofstede (2001) argues that the correlation of the PDI with geographic, economic and demographic country indicators and consideration of historical factors leads to a suggested casual chain for the origins of national differences.

2.4.   Uncertainty avoidance index (UAI)

Hofstede identifies the degree of uncertainty avoidance in different social contexts. As uncertainty is a basic fact of human life we try to cope with it through the rules of technology, law and religion (Hofstede, 2001). Uncertainty avoidance is "the extent to which members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain and or unknown situations" (p. 161). Hofstede (2001) suggests that uncertainty avoidance should not be confused with risk avoidance (p. 161). In strong uncertainty avoidance cultures people believe that rules and formalities shape living patterns. On the other hand weak uncertainty avoidance cultures feel that there should be as few rules as possible (Hofstede, 2001).

3. Evaluation of Hofstede's Cultural dimensions

Although Hofstede's cultural dimensions have been criticised on methodological issues and conceptual matters, his work has been applied extensively in the field of business culture. Some Social scientists (e.g., Sampson, 1997; Smith 1978; Waterman, 1981) have disagreed on if individualism or collectivism is a desirable characteristics of humans, however they have talked past one another as they referred to very different things with terms such as 'Individualism' and collectivism (Hui and Triandis, 1986).

Research efforts based on comparisons between cultural groups at the country level should consider the limitations associated with extending culture-level correlations to individual-level behaviour. Hofstede's culture-level measurements are based on the sums of individual characteristics and may have limitations when extended to individual behaviour (e.g., beliefs, evaluations and intentions). Many refer to this phenomenon as an ecological fallacy (Gregory and Munch 1996). Beyond these shortcomings, however, Hofstede's research on work-related values in a cross-cultural context does seem applicable to consumptive behaviour in a cross-cultural context (Milner, Fodness and Speece, 1993). Schwartz (1996) suggests that in order to better understand how differences between individuals' beliefs, evaluations and intentions are related to individual differences in value priorities, that researchers examine the individual-level value types that underlie the individualism-collectivism construct.

4. Consumer Behaviour and Culture

According to Zaltman (1983, p.5), "Consumer behaviours are acts, processes, and social relationships exhibited by individuals, groups, and organisations in the obtainment, use and consequent experience of products, services and other resources". "The behaviour that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using evaluating and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs" (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004, p. 8). Usunier and Lee (2005) explain consumer behaviour theory from a variety of perspectives concerning cultural consumer behaviour theory such as a global perspective, an imported perspective, an ethnic consumption perspective and a cultural meaning perspective.

Bodley (1994) states that culture involves at least three components: what people think, what they do, and the material products they produce. Hofstede (1980, p.19) defines culture as the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a group's response to its environment. Hofstede (2005) also describes culture as the collective mental programming that distinguishes the member of one group or category of people from others. Usunier (2000) explains the impacts of cultural differences on selected aspects of perception, motivation, learning and memory, age, self-concept and group influences, social class, sex roles, attitude changes, decision making, and purchase and post purchase behaviour. Despite the multiplicity of cultures in Asia, there are many characteristics that are more or less common across many Asian cultures (Schutte and Ciarlante, 1998).

4.1.   Fundamental Diversity between Bengalis and the British

Schutte and Ciarlante (1998) argue that in order to describe Asian consumer behaviour accurately we must follow two premises: first, consumer behaviour is strongly influenced by culture and second, Asian culture is distinctly different from Western culture. Therefore, it is essential to establish the basic societal and cultural background in which behaviour takes place in order to bring to light the differences in consumer behaviour between the UK and Bangladesh. From the study of cultural dimensions it is clear that Bangladesh belongs to the culture-type that is described as collectivistic whereas the UK belongs to the culture-type described as individualistic. Bangladesh also falls in the category of high PDI and high UAI society; on the other hand UK is characterized as low PDI and low UAI society.

Hofstede's dimensions' raw scores (Figure 1) confirm the differences in culture between Bangladesh and the United Kingdom.

Figure-1: Differences in culture between Bangladesh and the UK (Hofstede, 2014)
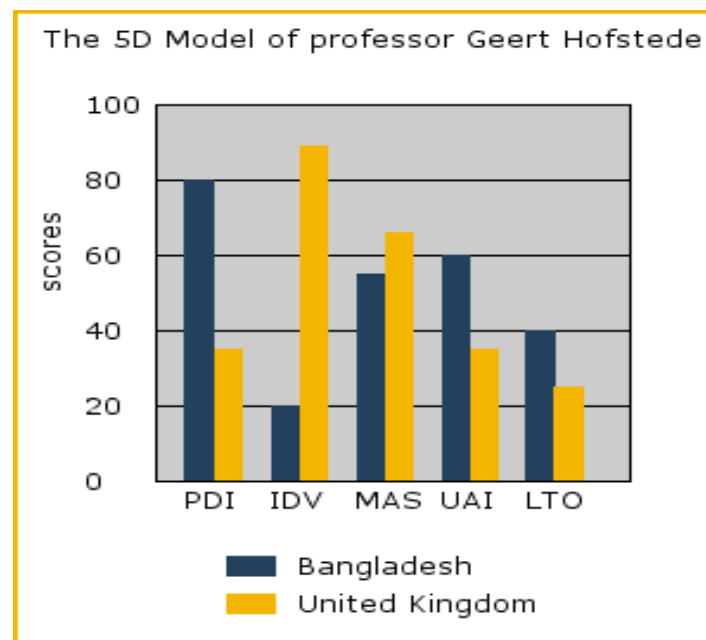
4.2.   The Concept of Face in Bengali Culture

Face represents as an important role in the way a culture pursue its values which can be varied according to different country perspective. In a collectivistic society face is regarded as the medium of expression of respect, moral integrity, personal image, wealth, social status, prestige, level of education and the conformity to society's traditional values. In Asian culture the terms "gain face" or "face-saving" indicate that someone has good social reputation within the community and is reliable, dependable and safe to build up a relationship with. On the other hand losing face is referred to as an act of aggression (Yau, 1994).

Chinese individuals who are collectivistic in nature are mindful about the need to maintain a high degree of moral control, at least publicly, and carefully assess the possible effects of their actions on others before embarking upon a course of action (Schutte and Ciarlante, 1998). It has been argued that people in collectivistic cultures are conscious about not losing face; rather they endeavour to gain face for the family through the accumulation of wealth, prestige, status power and so on (Schutte and Ciarlante, 1998).

The concept of face is relatively similar among the Asian cultures in terms of family relationship, status priority, and conformity etc. As a part of Asia, Bangladesh shares the concept of face in the way as do China, India, Thailand, and Indonesia among others, however, to what extent, may vary. In Bengali society 'Mukh' (face) represents a social mirror in which a person can be observed by his or her performance, relationships and the acceptance within society, as well as level of conformity, and is able to earn admiration as a result. For a collectivistic society, to gain face 'mukh rakha', or to lose face 'mukh harano' form the essence of life for Bengalis because of the control the community has over the individuals.

To gain face in Bengali culture can be characterised by being honest and educated, and of high rank or social class which consequently provides power and authority in society. Loss of face symbolises embarrassment, and shame in Bengali society. As a collectivistic society, it is imperative for Bengalis to project the right image as being classy, up-market and prestigious by securing the term 'face-saving' where Bengalis rank high in a power distance society. According to Hofstede (1984), in high power distance societies, differences in power are expected to translate into visible differences in status.

In contrast, the existing concept of face in Bengali culture is likely to be absent in British culture because of its individualistic nature. Just as the collectivistic nature of the culture makes Bengalis attached to the family and conform to group decisions which is ignored in British culture, preservation of face and loss of face are related to the perception of the individual self in Britain. As Chiappini and Harris (1997) state: "In an individualistic culture individuals are free to choose the image they project to others". Thus the gain of face is not influenced by the desire of society or conformity; rather it is very much independent and controlled by individual aspirations. According to Hofstede (1984), in high power distance societies, differences in power are expected to translate into visible differences in status.

From the literature review it was established that there are several key factors linked to the 'concept of face' in Asian culture, such as the status priority and the acquisition of branded goods, kinship and family relationship, attitudes to skin colour, and concept of self. Most importantly, the extent of the authority of these factors on the decision making process is dependent on how a society practices its cultural values. For example, in a collectivistic culture with a high power distance society the need for achievement and affiliation is the basis of power. As a collectivistic culture the high level of interdependence among Bengali individuals corresponds with lesser personal attachment to material objects and a greater attachment to human beings. Indeed the conspicuous consumption may seem to clash with traditional characteristics of Asian culture such as pragmatism, collectivism and modesty in self-presentation; however, the explanation lies in the fact that the luxury products symbolise status and face-giving in the Asian culture (Schutte and Ciarlante, 1998).

5. Research Methodology

As mentioned earlier, this paper seeks to identify how 'concept of face' influences the attitudes of consumers towards the purchase of cosmetics in a cross-country environment. A questionnaire survey method was selected for data collection. A two country comparison was performed in order to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of concept of face.

Over 300 questionnaires were posted in Bangladesh using personal contacts and viral messaging. Approximately 1,500 were posted in the UK by using Royal Mail service. From Bangladesh, 150 fully completed questionnaires were returned and 142 from the UK, providing a total viable sample of 292 questionnaires.

5.1.   Sampling

In order to determine a valid sampling frame or a mailing list, The Royal Mail UK's Address Management Software was used to select the target population in the Hampshire area. In Bangladesh a valid Postal Address Book was used to select the target audience. As the mailing list contains millions of addresses, systematic sampling was considered applicable in order to avoid extra costs and time in comparison to simple random sampling.

5.2.   Research Hypothesis

A research Hypothesis was formulated to test that, '*female Bengali consumers are more influenced by the concept of face-saving than their female counterparts in the UK*. Several variables and scales were constructed to test the hypothesis.

5.3.   Measurement and Scaling Procedure

According to Malhotra (1999) scaling involves creating a continuum on which measured objects are located. In a collectivistic society face is regarded as the medium of expression of respect, moral integrity, personal image, wealth, social status, prestige, level of education and the conformity to society's traditional values. The 18 statements of face were asked in the questionnaire survey. In order to meet research objective, which aim to explore the perceptions of face concept and its influences on the decision making process of buying cosmetics, the variables and scales were constructed using with 5-scale Likert measurement (1= strongly agree, 2=agree, 3= neither agree nor disagree, 4= disagree and 5 =strongly disagree). The attitudes towards face concept were simplified and reduced into composite variables by the factor analysis technique.

5.4.   Factor Analysis

There are two primary functions of factor analysis – one is to identify underlying constructs in the data and the second is simply to reduce the number of variables. Factor analysis procedures attempt to retain as much of the information as possible and make the remaining variables meaningful and easy to work with (Field, 2009).According to Hamilton (1992), factor analysis provides a basis for combining variables, (p.263). Bryman and Cramer (2005) describe that factor analysis is primarily concerned with "describing the variation or variance which is shared by the scores of people on three or more variables" (p.327). Hair et al. (2010) suggest that, in order to examine the underlying pattern or relationship for a large number of variables and determine if the information can be condensed or summarised in smaller set of factors or components, a factor analysis can be utilised (p.233). A factor analysis explains underlying meanings and the correlation among a set of variables (Malhotra and Birks, 2009).

5.5.   Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO)

The alternative and in fact most popular method of examining the correlation is the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO), developed by Kaiser in 1970. The KMO can be calculated for individual and multiple variables and represents the ratio of the squared correlation between variables (Field, 2009). The KMO statistics vary between 0 to 1. A value of 0 indicates that the sum of the partial correlation is large relative to the sum of correlation, indicating distribution in the pattern of correlations (thus, the factor analysis is likely to be inappropriate). A value close to 1 indicates that patterns of correlation are relatively compact and so factor analysis yields distinct and reliable factors (Kaiser, 1974). Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999) recommend accepting that values of KMO greater than 0.5 are barely acceptable, values between 0.5 and 0.7are mediocre, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good, values between 0.8 and 0.9 are great and values above 0.9 are excellent.

Table 1 – KMO and Bartlett's test on the Statement of Attitudes

KMO and Bartlett's Test[a,b]		Bangladesh [a]	UK [b]
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.743	.772
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1503.950	.947.876
	Df	153	153
	Sig.	.000	.000

a. Only cases for which Nationality = Bangladeshi are used in the analysis phase.
b. Only cases for which Nationality = British are used in the analysis phase.

A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted on the 18 items with varimax. Table-1 shows that the overall value of KMO for the set of 18 variables was .743 for Bangladesh and .772 for the UK which shows that the correlation is quite large and verifies the sampling adequacy for the analysis. The approximate chi-square test was 1503 (Bangladesh) with degrees of freedom of 153, which is significant at the level of .05 levels. Bartlett's test sphericity for Bangladesh is X^2 (153) = 1503 and for UK X^2 (153) =.948. A significant test tells us that R matrix (correlation matrix) is not an identity matrix and therefore there are some relationships between variables. The result for Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for both countries was highly significant, $P<.001$, and therefore factor analysis is appropriate on the set of variables.

5.6.   Reliability:
The Cronbach's reliability coefficient alphas for the Bangladesh sample fall between .776 and .888 (Table-2); on the other hand, those for the UK sample are between .721 and .858 (Table-3). The reliability tests of both samples suggest that the reliability is adequate and acceptable. A 5-point Likert scale was developed to measure the constructs in all five factors (1= strongly agree, 2=agree, 3= neither agree nor disagree, 4= disagree, 5=strongly disagree).

5.7.   Selection of Rotation Procedure
By using the rotation, the relationship between the variables becomes much clearer and the interpretability of factors can be improved through rotation. Rotation maximises the loading of each variable on one of the extracted factors whilst minimising the loading on all other factors (Field, 2009).

5.8.   Naming the Factor Loadings
Variables with higher loadings are considered more important and have greater influence on the name or label selected to represent a factor (Hair et al., 2010). The ability to assign some meaning to the factors, or to interpret the nature of the variables becomes an extremely important consideration in determining the number of factors to extract (Hair et al., 2010). The process of naming the factors involves substantive interpretation of the pattern of factor loadings for variables, including their signs. Hair et al. (2010) suggested that before interpretation, a minimum acceptable level of significance for factor loading must be selected. The factor solution was derived from component analysis with Varimax rotation. The cut off point was set somewhat low - factor loadings ±.5 or above in order to illustrate the factor interpretation process with as many significant loadings as possible.

5.9.   *Rotated Component Matrix - Bangladesh*

From Table 2 below we can see that five discrete factors have emerged from the set of variables and each one has an underlying meaning concerning the attitudes towards face concept. Factor 1 represents that there are four components that have high factor loadings (shown in bold type), factor 2 represents five components, factors 3 and 4 represent three components and factor 5 represents two components. In order to name the factors it is necessary to recognise the significant loadings; and the variables with higher loadings influence to a greater extent the name or label selected to represent a factor (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 2 – Rotated component matrix for Bangladesh by five factor solution

Components	Rotated Component Matrix[a,b] Component					Mean for individual item
	1	2	3	4	5	
CHOSINGCOS	.875					1.69
THOUGHTINCOS	.841					1.80
IMPORTCOS	.801					1.92
UNSUITPUROFCOS	.791					1.79
BRANDSOCIALRECOG		.773				2.34
BRANDSOPH		.724				2.19
BRANDFASHION		.659				2.14
IMPORTREF		.645				2.97
IMPORTREF		.634				2.93
BRANDPERSONSAT						1.70
FAIRSKIN			.952			2.27
FAIRSKIN			.943			2.32
FAIRSKIN			.628			2.40
GROUPCONFO				.845		2.31
GROUPCONFO				.839		2.43
GROUPCONFO				.693		2.29
PERSONALSELF					.801	1.61
PERSONALSELF					.769	1.57
Reliability measurement (Cronbach's coefficient)	.888	.776	.841	.792	.832	
Variance%	29.708%	16.355%	10.007%	7.866%	6.726%	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.
   a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.
   b. Only cases for which Nationality = Bangladeshi are used in the analysis phase

5.10. *Rotated component matrix – UK*

The Table-3 below represents the rotated components matrix for the United Kingdom by four factor solution. Five factors have been extracted from the 18 statements of attitudes. The sample size of 142 (usable questions) is shown in Table 3. The factor loadings greater than ±.50 were considered statistically significant. From Table 3 it can be seen that for factor 1

there are four components with high factor loadings; for factor 2 - three components, for factor 3 - four components, and two components for both factors 4 and 5.

Table 3 – Rotated component matrix for UK by five factor solution

Components	Rotated Component Matrix[a,b] Component					Mean for individual item
	1	2	3	4	5	
BRANDPERSONSAT	.828					3.14
BRANDSOCIALRECOG	.797					3.66
BRANDSOPH	.674					3.36
BRANDFASHION)	.624					2.14
UNSUITPUROFCOS						2.54
TANNEDSKIN		.878				3.93
TANNEDSKIN		.866				3.56
TANNEDSKIN		.709				3.98
GROUPCONFO						4.19
GROUPCONFO			.859			4.30
IMPORTREF			.757			4.09
GROUPCONFO			.718			4.38
IMPORTREF			.602			4.27
THOUGHTINCOS				.846		3.08
CHOSINGCOS				.789		3.33
IMPORTCOS						3.61
PERSONALSELF					.915	1.93
PERSONALSELF					.904	1.87
Reliability measurement (Cronbach's Alpha)	.858	.833	.811	.721	.852	
Variance %	33.440%	13.265%	9.763%	7.349%	5.789%	

Table 4 – The labels of five extracted factors within the two countries

Countries	City	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Bangladesh	Dhaka	Thoughts in cosmetics purchase	Brand link to social recognition and prestige	Skin colour link to authority in society	Group conformity	Personal-self
United Kingdom	Hampshire	Brand link to personal satisfaction	Skin colour link to authority in society	Group conformity	Thoughts in cosmetics	Personal-self

In Table 4 above there are five factors related to face consumption: thoughts in cosmetics, brand link to social recognition and prestige, skin colour link to authority in society, group conformity and personal-self, which have been identifed for both Bangladesh and the UK. For Bangladesh, Factor 1 represents 'thoughts in cosmetics' whereas for the UK it represents

'brand link to status'. Factor 2 for Bangladesh emerged as 'brand link to social recognition' whereas 'skin colour link to authority' emerged as the second factor for the UK. 'Skin colour link to authority' was the third factor for Bangladesh, while for the UK 'group conformity' was the third factor. 'Group conformity' appeared as the fourth factor for Bangladesh while for the UK 'thoughts in cosmetics' emerged. Factor 5, 'personal-self' has emerged for both countries.

It has been argued that female Bengali consumers are more influenced by the concept of face than their female counterparts in the UK. On the factor 'process of thoughts in cosmetics' Bengalis females scored m=1.801, whereas British females scored m=3.354, which represents a significant difference, t= 7.8394, $P < .001$. The second factor, 'brand link to social recognition', indicates that Bengali females m=1.376 more strongly relate brands to their social face (i.e., social recognition, sense of being sophisticated and fashionable and social recognition of the choice of purchase) than British females m=3.394, (t=11.2539, $P < 0.001$) which therefore represents a significant difference. The third factor, 'skin colour link to authority in society', represents that Bengali consumers (m= 2.320) are more likely to consider fair or lighter skin as associated with prestige and authority in society than the way British consumers negatively associates (m= 3.882) tanned skin with prestige and authority in society, t=7.6032, $p < .001$. The fourth factor 'group conformity' indicates that the purchase decision of female Bengali females (m= 2.355) are strongly influenced by the family members' and peers' opinions whereas British females (m=4.310) are strongly opposed to the group conformity influence in their purchase decision which shows a significant difference t=9.2609, $P < 0.001$, between the two groups.

On the fifth factor, 'personal-self', both Bengali (m=1.610) and British females (m=1.855) scored low which indicates that there is no significance difference, (t=1.5924, $p > .05$, ns) between the two nations in terms of the influence of personal-self on purchase decision.

6. Results of hypothesis testing

The results in Table 5 represent all four factors (apart from 'personal-self' which scored high among both nationalities) showed significant differences between Bangladesh and the UK. Therefore, based on this evidence, the first hypothesis *'Female Bengali consumers are more influenced by the concept of face-saving than their female counterparts in the UK'* is accepted.

Table-5: Results of hypothesis testing

Construct	Bangladesh (n=150) (Mean)	United Kingdom (n=142) (Mean)	*t* value	*p* value
1. Process/thoughts in cosmetics	1.801	3.254	7.8394	0.000
2. Brand link to social recognition	1.376	3.398	11.2539	0.000
3. Skin colour link to authority	2.320	3.882	7.6032	0.000
4. Group conformity	2.345	4.410	9.2609	0.000
5. Personal self	1.610	1.855	1.5924	0.112

7. Conclusion

The 'concept of face' is an important value in a high collectivistic society in which people's thinking process, shopping behaviour, brand perceptions and overall lifestyle are strongly connected with the notions of having respect for others, gaining face in society by achievement and power, greater importance of considering the opinions of important referent others (IROs) and judging the 'self' through IROs which are tremendously involved in the process of controlling people's behaviour in society. International and multinational companies with an intention to enter, operate and market their products in Bangladeshi market, when endeavouring to understand Bengalis' behaviour from cultural point of view for a sustainable business and to segment their target customers with the right approach, should seriously consider the propensity of 'face-saving' and its enormous impact within Bengali society.

References

1. Bryman, A., Cramer, D. (2005). *Quantitative data analysis with SPSS 12 and 13: A guide for social scientists.* Rutledge.
2. Chiappini, F.B., Harris, S. (1997). *The language of business: An international perspective*. Edinburgh University Press. 257.
3. England, G.W., (1983). Japanese and American Management: Theory Z and Beyond. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 13(2), 131-142.
4. Field, A., (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS: (and sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll).* 3rd ed. London: SAGE.
5. Gregory, G.D., Munch, J.M. (1996). Reconceptualising individualism-collectivism in consumer behaviour. *Advance in Consumer Research*, 23, 104-110.
6. Hair, J.F., (2010). *Multivariate data analysis: a global perspective*. 7th ed. N.J: Pearson.
7. Hofstede, G., (1980). *Culture's Consequences*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
8. Hofstede, G., (1982). Cultural Pitfalls for Dutch Expatriates in Indonesia: Lessons for Europeans, Part 1. *Euro-Asia Business Review*, 1(1), 37-41.
9. Hofstede, G., (1983a). Dimensions of National Cultures in Fifty Countries and Three Regions, in Expiscations in., J.B. Deregowski, S.Dziurawiec, R.C. Annis (eds.), *Cross-Cultural Psychology* Lisse, Netherlands: Swets & Zeitlinger, 335-355.
10. Hofstede, G., (1983b). The Cultural Relativity of Organizational Practices and Theories. *Journal of International Business Studies*. 14(2), 75-89.
11. Hofstede, G., (1983c), "Cultural Pitfalls for Dutch Expatriates in Indonesia: Lessons for Europeans, Part 2 & 3. *Euro-Asia Business Review*, 2(1), 38-47.
12. Hofstede, G., (1984). Cultural dimensions in management and planning. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 1(2), 81-99.
13. Hofstede, G., (1984a). The Cultural Relativity of the Quality of Life Concept. *Academy of Management Review*, 9(3), 389-398.
14. Hofstede, G., (1984b). Cultural Dimensions in Management and Planning. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, January, 81-99.
15. Hofstede, G., (1984c). *Culture's consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values*. (Abridged Edition), Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
16. Hofstede, G., (2001). *Culture's consequences comparing values, behaviours, institutions and organizations across nations.* 2nd ed. London: Sage.
17. Holtgraves, G., (1997). Style of language usage: individual and cultural variability in conversational indirectness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 624-37.
18. Hortum, M., Muller, L.H. (1989). "Management and Culture. *Supervision*. 50(1), 14-17.

19. Jensen,T.D., White, D.D., Singh, R. (1990). Impact of Gender, Hierarchical Position, and Leadership Styles on Work-Related Values. *Journal of Business Research*, 20(2), 145-152.

20. Kim, M.S., (1994). Cross-cultural comparisons of the perceived importance of conversation constraints. *Human Communication Research*, 21, 128-51.

21. Kinnear, P.R., Gray, C. D. 2010. *PASW statistics 17 made simple*. Psychology Press

22. Lebas, M., Weigenstein, J. (1986). Management Control: The Roles of Rules, Markets and Culture. *Journal of Management Studies*, 23(3), 259-272.

23. Leung, T.K.P., Chan, R.Y. (2003). Face favour and positioning-a Chinese power game. *European Journal of Marketing*, 37(11/12), 1575-598.

24. Li, J.J., Su, C. (2007). How face influences consumption: a comparative study of American and Chinese consumers. *International Journal of Market Research*, 49(2), 237-56.

25. Malhotra, N.K., Birks, D. F. (2009). *Marketing Research: Applied science*. 3rd ed. Pearson Education Limited.

26. Malhotra, N.K., (1999). *Marketing research: an applied orientation*. 3rd ed. NJ: Prentice Hall.

27. Milner, L.M., D. Fodness, Speece, M. W. (1993). "Hofstede's research on cross-cultural work-related values: implications for consumer behavior", in W. Fred Van Raaij, Gary J. Bamossy *(eds.), European Advances in Consumer Research,* Volume 1, Provo, UT, *Association for Consumer Research*, 70-76.

28. Mooij, D., (2003). *Consumer behaviour and culture: consequence for global Marketing and advertising*. CA: Sage: Thousand Oaks.

29. Schutte, H. and Ciarlante, D. (1998). *Consumer Behaviour in Asia*. Macmillan Press Limited.

30. Usunier, J.C., (2005). *Marketing across cultures*. Prentice Hall.

31. Yau, O.H.M., (1994). *Consumer Behaviour in China*. London: Routledge.