

This study examined cultural differences in preferences for conflict resolution styles using the dual-concern model. It was found that students in a collectivistic culture (Mexico) preferred conflict resolution styles that emphasized concern for the outcomes of others (accommodation and collaboration) to a greater degree than did students from an individualistic culture (United States). Consistent with this greater display of concern for others, the Mexican students scored significantly higher than the U.S. students on scales measuring interdependence of the self. However, they also scored higher on a scale measuring the independence of the self, suggesting that independence of the self and interdependence of the self may be separate dimensions, rather than representing a continuum. Correlational findings suggested that for interpersonal conflicts, avoidance may reflect a concern for others, rather than a lack of concern for others, as postulated by the dual-concern model.

PREFERRED STYLES OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Mexico and the United States

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Some of the most severe problems in intercultural relations arise as a consequence of interpersonal conflicts. Understanding the ways in which people from different cultures approach resolving conflicts is, therefore, of great importance. Although a number of theories address this problem, only a limited number of empirical studies have examined how or why cultural differences affect people's preferences for styles of conflict resolution (e.g., Gire & Carment, 1992; Leung, Bond, Carment, Krishnan, & Liebrand, 1990; Pearson & Stephan, in press; Trubisky, Ting-Toomey, & Sung-Ling, 1991).

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To further our understanding of the intercultural conflict resolution process, it may be valuable to examine the similarities and differences in the conflict resolution styles used by people from different cultures. Cultural differences in values may determine how individuals prefer to deal with conflicts (Leung & Wu, 1990).

In this study, we attempted to address some of these issues by comparing the conflict resolution styles people from an individualistic culture (Americans) and people from a collectivistic culture (Mexicans) prefer to use when dealing with interpersonal conflicts. To do so, we employed the most widely researched theoretical model of conflict resolution styles, the dual-concern model (Barnlund, 1989; Brislin, 1981; March, 1988; Pruitt & Carnavale, 1993; Rubin, 1992; Rubin & Brislin, 1991). In the study to be presented here, the conflict resolution styles represented by this model were linked to two frequently studied variables in intercultural research: individualism-collectivism and masculinity-femininity.

DUAL-CONCERN MODEL OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Research on the dual-concern model indicates that people have characteristic styles of managing interpersonal conflict (Pruitt, 1982, 1991; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994). According to the dual-concern model, individuals' styles of conflict resolution are determined by their concern for their own outcomes and their concern for the outcomes of others. Combining the two dimensions of the dual-concern model yields four basic styles of conflict resolution: accommodation, collaboration, avoidance, and competition.

Accommodation, as depicted in Table 1, is high in concern for others and low in concern for self. This style of conflict resolution involves sacrificing one's own goals to satisfy the needs of others. Avoidance is a strategy that is low in concern for self and others. In this style, individuals allow conflicts to go unresolved or permit others to take responsibility for solving the problem. Competition is a conflict resolution style that is high in concern for self, but low in concern for others. In competition, people attempt to maximize their own outcomes while disregarding costs to others. Conflict is viewed as a win-lose proposition. Collaboration is a win-win style that is high in both concern for self and concern for others. Once it is recognized that a conflict exists, individuals who are oriented toward collaboration will try to integrate the needs of both parties into a solution that will maximize the interests of both. Although the roots of the dual-concern model are largely American, it has been employed in a number of cross-cultural studies (Pruitt & Carnavale, 1993).

TABLE 1
Dual-Concern Model

<i>Concern for Others' Outcomes</i>	<i>Concern for Own Outcomes</i>	
	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
High	Accommodation	Collaboration
Low	Avoidance	Competition

INDIVIDUALISM-COLLECTIVISM AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLE

The emphasis on concern for one's own outcomes and concern for others' outcomes in the dual-concern model mirrors individualism-collectivism, one of the key dimensions used to describe cultural differences. Individualism-collectivism describes the relationships individuals have to the social collectivity. People in individualistic cultures view themselves as unique entities, separate from others (Hofstede, 1980; Spence, 1985; Triandis, 1989). Individualistic cultures instill values that serve to promote the individual's needs and separate the individual from the group (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988; Triandis, Brislin, & Hui, 1988; Triandis, Leung, Villareal, & Clack, 1985). In contrast, people in collectivistic cultures view their own outcomes as being tightly intertwined with the outcomes of others (Hui & Triandis, 1986). Thus, collectivism emphasizes a concern for other people and relationships, whereas individualism emphasizes self-concern (Hui & Triandis, 1986). In an international study of IBM employees in 39 countries (Hofstede, 1980), the United States ranked the highest in individualism, whereas Latin American countries in general and Mexico in particular were more collectivistic than the United States.

Several studies suggest that people in collectivistic cultures have a tendency to prefer harmony-enhancing strategies of conflict resolution, whereas people in individualistic cultures prefer more competitive strategies (Barnlund, 1989; Berman, Berman, & Singh, 1985; Kashima, 1987; Leung, 1987; Leung et al., 1990; Mann, Radford, & Kanagawa, 1985). These studies have used primarily Asian samples to represent collectivistic cultures. Different results have sometimes been reported when non-Asian collectivistic cultures have been used to examine cultural differences in conflict resolution strategies. For instance, Gire and Carment (1992) found that Canadians (an individualistic culture) preferred harmony-enhancing styles of resolving conflict, although Nigerians (a collectivistic culture) had an equal preference

for both harmony-enhancing and competitive styles. Gire and Carment suggested that it may not be reasonable to use Asian cultures as a template to understand other kinds of collectivistic cultures. The results of their study reflect a general trend recognizing the complexity of the concepts of individualism and collectivism (Kim, Triandis, Kagitçibasi, Choi, & Yoon, 1994).

It is possible that Latin American collectivism may possess different qualities than Asian collectivism (Triandis, 1990). It is widely accepted that Asian forms of collectivism place pressure on individuals to avoid disagreements of any kind (Barnlund, 1989; Chua & Gudykunst, 1987; Leung, 1987; Leung & Iwawaki, 1988; Leung & Lind, 1986; Trubisky et al., 1991; Wheeler, Reis, & Bond, 1989). In Asian cultures, a feeling of harmony is highly valued and the happiness of the other may be seen as more important than one's own comfort. Barnlund (1989) argues that the Japanese manage conflicts through avoidance or accommodation and use collaboration infrequently because collaboration often requires the expression of different views.

Although Latin American collectivism reflects some of these preferences fairly closely, there appear to be some important differences. Kras (1989) suggests that although Mexican executives value a friendly, relaxed atmosphere free from conflict and confrontation, they are competitive with each other in indirect ways. Another set of investigators argue that Mexicans strive for harmony whenever possible (Triandis, Marín, Lisansky, & Betancourt, 1984), but that despite their desire to avoid outright competition, they compete with one another by manipulating relationships, forming alliances, or ingratiating themselves with people who have power (Knight, Kagan, & Martinez-Romero, 1982). It has also been observed that in business situations, Mexicans may compete in personal terms, but usually not openly. This competition may be focused not on specific job-related abilities, but rather on who is perceived to be the best person (Condon, 1985). Condon believes that this competition occurs because Mexicans value the uniqueness of the individual, much as Americans value individualism. However, Mexicans also value traits that are not directly evidenced in actions or achievements, the usual index of an American's worth (Condon, 1985).

It appears that this Mexican element of individualism exists within a collectivistic framework and does not conflict with identifying heavily with ingroups. In fact, Mexicans may show more loyalty to and identification with their ingroups (usually the family) than do the Japanese (Hofstede, 1980). Mexican collectivism also seems to differ from Asian collectivism due to a stronger need to build rapport and develop close friendships in Mexico (Díaz-Guerrero, 1967). The development of close friendships is often accomplished by accommodating the wishes of others—Mexicans would rather lose

an argument than lose a friend (Americans, Díaz-Guerrero notes, prefer to win the arguments).

In Latin American collectivistic cultures, such as Mexico, striving to maintain harmonious relationships with others while subtly pursuing some personal goals should lead to collaborating with others or accommodating their needs. Because Americans are individualistic, they would be expected to put their own needs above the needs of others, and this should be reflected in preferences for competitive and collaborative styles of conflict resolution.

MASCULINITY-FEMININITY AS A CULTURAL DIMENSION

Another cultural dimension that Hofstede (1980) found to be important in his international study of IBM employees was masculinity-femininity. Hofstede argued that all societies define behaviors that are more suitable for males or for females. From the behaviors typical of males and females in many cultures, there emerges a pattern of male assertiveness "that is associated with autonomy, aggression, exhibition, and dominance," and female nurturing "that is associated with affiliation, helpfulness, and humility" (Hofstede, 1980).

In Hofstede's (1980) study, the United States and Mexico both scored above the mean on masculinity in a comparison of 39 countries. Although the differences were not large, Mexico had a higher masculinity score than the United States in his study. Other research has also found that Mexico emphasizes masculinity more than the United States (Díaz-Loving, Díaz-Guerrero, Helmreich, & Spence, 1981). Mexico has historically been considered a masculine culture because of its emphasis on machismo, "a need for ostentatious manliness" (Stevens, 1973, as cited in Hofstede, 1980). Hofstede argues that not all Latin American countries are masculine, but that the countries that are close to the Caribbean, such as Mexico, appear to be more masculine than others.

Leung et al. (1990) hypothesized that masculine cultures would emphasize confrontational strategies of conflict resolution, whereas feminine cultures would emphasize harmony-enhancing strategies of conflict resolution, but their results provided little support for these predictions when comparing Canada and the Netherlands (see also Leung, Au, Fernández-Dols, & Iwawaki, 1992). Their hypotheses stemmed from the idea that masculine cultures encourage individual decision making, competitiveness, and personal recognition, whereas feminine cultures encourage nurturing behavior, friendly relations, and interpersonal cooperation. Because Mexico has been found to be higher on masculinity than the United States, it is possible that Mexicans would prefer competition more than Americans and that Americans

would display a greater preference for accommodation and collaboration than Mexicans.

The predictions based on masculinity-femininity directly contradict those based on individualism-collectivism. However, these two cultures appear to diverge along the individualism-collectivism dimension to a greater extent than they do along the masculinity-femininity dimension. If this is indeed the case, hypotheses concerning the individualism-collectivism dimension are more likely to be supported in this study than those based on masculinity-femininity.

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

Participants in this study were 103 college students from a state-funded university in Mexico and 91 college students from a state-funded university in the southwestern United States. There were 51 males and 40 females in the Mexican sample and 49 males and 54 females in the American. Very few gender effects emerged in the analyses. Although students from Mexico may not be as representative of their culture as American students are of theirs (because a smaller population of students attend university in Mexico than in the United States), student samples were employed in an attempt to create samples that were as closely matched as possible.

MATERIALS

All of the measures were included in a questionnaire consisting of three sections. The questionnaire was first written in English and then translated to Spanish. The accuracy of the translation was independently checked by Spanish-English bilinguals to ensure meaning equivalence.

The first section consisted of 25 questions concerning the independence-interdependence of the self (Kitayama, Markus, Tummala, Kurokawa, & Kato, 1991), a measure used in this study to assess individual differences in an aspect of individualism-collectivism that appears to be conceptually related to preferences for conflict resolution styles. People with independent self-construals tend to be dominated by self-serving motives, whereas people with interdependent self-construals tend to be dominated by other-serving motives (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In this section of the questionnaire, participants were asked to indicate how well each of the 25 statements described them on an 8-point scale. The endpoints of the scale were *doesn't*

describe me at all and *describes me completely*. There were four subscales in this measure, two measures of interdependence (Maintaining Self-Other Bonds and Concern With Others' Evaluations) and two measures of independence (Self-Other Differentiation and Self-Knowledge). A typical Maintaining Self-Other Bonds statement is "It is important to me to maintain harmony in the group," whereas a typical Concern With Others' Evaluation statement is "I automatically tune myself in to other people's expectations of me." "I am unique, different from others in many ways" is an example of a Self-Knowledge statement, whereas an example of a statement concerning Self-Other Differentiation is "I am always myself, I do not act like other people." Cronbach's alpha for the overall scale was .82 when both Mexican and American samples were combined (comparable reliabilities were obtained by Stephan, Stephan, & Cabezas de Vargas, 1996).

The second section of the questionnaire consisted of 16 questions measuring individual differences in masculinity-femininity (Spence & Helmreich, 1978). Masculinity and femininity, as defined by Spence and Helmreich, describe the extent to which a person has adopted typical sex-role behaviors. Masculinity is associated with competitiveness, activity, dominance; independence and femininity is associated with emotionality, sensitivity, nurturance, and concern for others. The questionnaire consisted of Masculinity and Femininity subscales containing bipolar questions asking subjects to rate themselves on an 8-point semantic-differential scale. Sample items included *Not at all aggressive* to *Very aggressive* (for the Masculinity subscale) and *Not at all helpful to others* to *Very helpful to others* (for the Femininity subscale). Cronbach's alpha for the combined samples was .62 for the Masculinity subscale and .79 for the Femininity subscale.

The final section of the questionnaire assessed individual differences in preferences for different styles of conflict resolution. In accordance with the dual-concern model, the targeted styles were competition, collaboration, avoidance, and accommodation. The 20 questions used were adapted from the *Negotiating Style Profile* (Glaser & Glaser, 1991). In the present study, the students were asked to think about how they dealt with conflicts with their friends, family members, and coworkers. All three of these ingroups were mentioned at the same time because research suggests that similar conflict resolution styles are used across different ingroups (Sternberg & Dobson, 1987). They were told to consider such interpersonal conflicts as disagreements over what movie to attend, where to go to eat, or how to spend the evening. The original questions were designed to assess the preferences of business negotiators. For the present study, these questions were modified to reflect interpersonal conflicts; for example, "When I negotiate, my interests must prevail" became "When I am trying to resolve an interpersonal conflict,

my interests should prevail" (an example of a competitive style). Examples of statements for the other conflict resolution styles are "I try to identify shared principles to use as a basis for resolving interpersonal conflicts" (collaboration), "You have to make concessions to the other person to build relationships" (accommodation), and "I often let others take responsibility for solving the problem" (avoidance). The students were asked to rate these items on an 8-point scale running from *not at all characteristic of me* to *completely characteristic of me*. Cronbach's alphas for this section were broken down into the four different styles of conflict resolution for the combined samples; the alphas for the competition, collaboration, accommodation, and avoidance styles were .63, .58, .54, and .52, respectively. Although these alphas are somewhat low, this is partly due to the small number of items included in each subscale. A study using an expanded version of this scale obtained alphas running from .73 to .88 (Pearson & Stephan, in press).

PROCEDURE

The questionnaire was administered to students in their native languages, in average-sized classrooms (usually about 25 students), during normal class periods. The students used machine-scorable answer sheets to record their responses. They were told that the questionnaires were completely anonymous and were asked to answer honestly. They were not told that their answers would be compared to those of students from another country. When the entire class finished, the materials were collected and the class was debriefed about the purpose of the study.

RESULTS

ANALYSES OF CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

Four ANOVAs were used to examine differences between the American and Mexican samples on the four subscales of the independence-interdependence of the self measure (Concern with Others' Evaluation, Maintaining Self-Other Bonds, Self-Knowledge, and Self-Other Differentiation; see Table 2). The analyses indicated that the Mexican sample scored higher than their American counterparts on Concern With Others' Evaluations, $F(1, 188) = 12.09, p < .005$; Self-Knowledge, $F(1, 188) = 18.26, p < .0001$; and Maintaining Self-Other Bonds, $F(1, 190) = 19.28, p < .0001$. The Mexican sample also scored slightly higher than the American sample on Self-Other Differentiation, but this difference was not statistically significant, $F(1, 187) = .79, p < .52, ns$.

TABLE 2
Cultural Differences in Independence-Interdependence Subscales

	<i>Mexico</i>	<i>United States</i>
Maintaining self-other bonds	5.98	5.12**
Concern with others' evaluations	4.68	4.02**
Self-knowledge	5.75	4.95**
Self-other differentiation	4.29	4.16

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

This pattern of results indicates that although the Mexicans see themselves as more closely interconnected to others than Americans do, they also place a greater emphasis on knowledge of their own unique qualities than Americans do.

One-way ANOVAs comparing the means of the American and Mexican samples on masculinity and femininity produced one reliable difference. Students from the United States scored higher on femininity ($M = 5.27$) than the Mexicans did ($M = 4.98$), $F(1, 190) = 4.05$, $p < .05$.

It should be noted that the pattern of results obtained for the two countries on the independence-interdependence and masculinity-femininity measures suggests that response sets were probably not a problem in this study because the Mexicans scored higher on some measures, whereas the Americans scored higher on other measures, and they had nearly equivalent scores on still others.

ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLE PREFERENCES

The data for the four styles of conflict resolution were analyzed in terms of the dimensions that define the dual-concern model, Concern for One's Own Outcomes and Concern for Others' Outcomes. This resulted in a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ ANOVA design. The first factor, Country, was between subjects (Mexico vs. the United States), and the second two factors, Concern for Others' Outcomes (high vs. low) and Concern for Own Outcomes (high vs. low), were within subjects (see Table 3).

As predicted, Concern for Others' Outcomes interacted with Country, $F(1, 181) = 8.57$, $p < .0001$. Mexicans' scores for styles of conflict resolution reflecting a high Concern for Others' Outcomes ($M = 5.40$) were higher than the Americans ($M = 4.70$), but there was little difference in scores for styles reflecting a low Concern for Others' Outcomes (Mexican $M = 3.24$, American $M = 3.11$).

TABLE 3
Means for Dual-Concern
Model Analysis of Conflict Resolution Styles

<i>Concern for Others' Outcomes</i>	<i>Concern for Own Outcomes</i>			
	<i>Mexico</i>		<i>United States</i>	
	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
High	Accommodate 5.38	Collaborate 5.42	Accommodate 4.65	Collaborate 4.75
Low	Avoid 3.46	Compete 3.02	Avoid 3.16	Compete 3.05

To follow up on this interaction, the data were analyzed separately for each conflict resolution style (see Table 3). The Mexicans scored significantly higher than the Americans on two of the four conflict resolution styles: accommodation $F(1, 185) = 20.10, p < .0001$, and collaboration $F(1, 185) = 15.38, p < .0001$. There were no significant differences for avoidance or competition between countries.

A significant interaction between Concern for Others' Outcomes and Concern for Own Outcomes, $F(1, 181) = 6.78, p < .01$, also emerged in the $2 \times 2 \times 2$ ANOVA. It indicated that among conflict resolution styles high in Concern for Others, collaboration was slightly preferred over accommodation, whereas among styles low in Concern for Others, avoidance was preferred over competition. In addition, a significant main effect for Concern for Others' Outcomes was obtained, $F(1, 181) = 379.48, p < .001$, indicating that subjects from both countries preferred styles that were high in Concern for Others more than those that were low in Concern for Others (see Table 3). Country also had a significant main effect, $F(1, 181) = 12.53, p < .001$. Mexicans scored higher across the conflict resolution styles ($M = 4.31$) than Americans did ($M = 3.90$). No other effects from this analysis were significant.

WITHIN COUNTRY CORRELATIONAL ANALYSES

The hypotheses in this study were formulated and tested at the country level of analysis. However, because individual difference measures were employed to assess each of the variables, it was also possible to analyze the relationships among the variables within countries. For this purpose, a correlation matrix including the four subscales of the independence-interdependence measure, masculinity, femininity, and the four styles of conflict resolution was run for each country separately. In these analyses, we

TABLE 4
Correlations for Conflict Resolution Styles,
Independence-Interdependence, Masculinity, and Femininity

	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Collaboration</i>	<i>Accommodation</i>	<i>Avoidance</i>
Concern with others' evaluations				
Mexican	.16	.17	.30**	.22**
American	.17	.16	.29**	.46**
Self-other differentiation				
Mexican	.18	.11	.03	.00
American	-.03	.09	-.17	-.32**
Self-knowledge				
Mexican	-.06	.24*	.15	.02
American	.02	.31**	-.01	-.14
Maintaining self-other bonds				
Mexican	-.05	.24**	.28*	.05
American	.18	.20	.42**	.35**
Masculinity				
Mexican	.07	.46**	.28**	.23*
American	.11	.27*	.05	-.15
Femininity				
Mexican	-.06	.37**	.42**	.05
American	-.17	.31**	.41**	.12

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

were primarily interested in the correlates of the four conflict resolution styles (see Table 4). Although these correlations may have been attenuated by the modest reliabilities of several of the measures, there was a substantial number of significant correlations among the variables.

For both cultures, none of the cultural dimension variables (the subscales of independence-interdependence, masculinity, and femininity) was correlated with competition. For collaboration, significant correlates in both cultures were masculinity, femininity, and Self-Knowledge. Maintaining Self-Other Bonds was also correlated with collaboration, but only for the Mexican sample. Accommodation also had three common correlates in both cultures: Concern With Others' Evaluation, Maintaining Self-Other Bonds, and femininity. The Mexican sample had an additional correlate for this variable, masculinity, that was not shared with the American sample. Avoidance had one common correlate in the two cultures, Concern With Others' Evaluation. The Mexicans had one additional correlate, masculinity, whereas the Americans had two: Self-Other Differentiation was negatively correlated with avoidance, whereas Maintaining Self-Other Bonds was positively correlated with avoidance.

DISCUSSION

Consistent with previous research suggesting that Mexico is a collectivistic culture (Hofstede, 1980), the Mexican sample in this study scored significantly higher than the American sample on both measures of interdependence (maintaining self-other bonds and concern with others' evaluations). However, the Mexicans also scored higher than the Americans on one measure of independence (self-knowledge). Thus, although the Mexicans displayed a high degree of interdependence, they also seemed to be more self-analytical, a finding that differs from traditional concepts of collectivism (Condon, 1985; Triandis, Bontempo, et al., 1988). The unanticipated findings for self-knowledge suggest that independence and interdependence are separate dimensions and being high on one dimension does not preclude being high on the other (Gire & Carment, 1992; Singelis, 1994).

In accord with the finding that Mexicans scored higher than the Americans on the measures of interdependence, the Mexicans showed a greater preference for the two styles of conflict resolution that are high in concern for others' outcomes—accommodation and collaboration. These results support previous research that has found that people in collectivistic cultures prefer to resolve conflicts with the least animosity possible (Leung, 1987, 1988; Leung & Lind, 1986; Pearson & Stephan, in press) and in ways that will be most likely to save face for the other person (Ting-Toomey, 1988).

Our results also indicated, somewhat surprisingly, that Americans and Mexicans did not differ significantly in preferences for the use of competition as a conflict resolution style. Both cultures preferred collaboration and accommodation over avoidance and competition. These findings are inconsistent with the idea that people from individualistic cultures prefer competitive styles of conflict resolution (Barnlund, 1989). One possible explanation for this unexpected finding is that Americans are not competitive when resolving interpersonal conflicts, but are competitive in many other contexts.

In the introduction, it was suggested that Asian collectivism may differ from Latin American collectivism. The results do suggest some possible contrasts between the two types of collectivism, but they also indicate some important parallels. One apparent contrast is that this study found that the Mexicans regarded collaboration as highly self-descriptive of their approach to interpersonal conflict. Brazilians displayed a similar preference in another recent study (Pearson & Stephan, in press). Barnlund (1989) has argued that the Japanese do not favor collaboration because it can disrupt harmony by leading to the open expression of opposing views.

At the beginning of this article, Mexicans displayed a strong tendency to avoid conflicts that seems to mirror the Asian preference for conflict avoid-

ance (Leung, 1987; Leung & Iwawaki, 1988). Likewise, Asian collectivistic cultures and Latin American culture (as represented by Mexico in this study) both favor accommodation as a conflict resolution style. In addition, the Mexicans regarded competition as their least favored approach to conflict resolution, a ranking that is also likely to characterize Asian cultures. Clearly, what is needed now is research comparing Asian and Latin American countries that would explore these potential differences and similarities.

There were no differences between the Mexicans and the Americans in masculinity scores. However, the Mexicans did score lower than the Americans on femininity, a finding that is conceptually consistent with the expected differences between cultures. The Americans' higher levels of femininity were not associated with their preferences for conflict resolution styles in the between country comparisons, a finding that parallels Leung et al. (1990) and Leung et al. (1992). The lack of a relationship between cultural femininity and preferences for conflict resolution styles supports the suggestion made earlier that independence-interdependence would be a more important determinant of conflict resolution styles than masculinity-femininity in the two cultures included in this study.

The within-country correlational results, however, indicated that both femininity and masculinity were related to conflict resolution styles. The femininity scale was significantly correlated with accommodation and collaboration in both cultures—the two styles of conflict resolution that are high in concern for others. Masculinity was also found to be significantly correlated with collaboration in both cultures. In addition, masculinity was found to be related to accommodation and avoidance in Mexico, but not in the United States. These surprising findings for the Mexicans may have occurred because Mexican masculinity includes an emphasis on using strength and power in a paternalistic way to protect and care for others. Subscribing to this type of masculine concern for others apparently leads to a preference for styles of conflict resolution such as collaboration, accommodation, and avoidance. Thus, in this study both femininity and masculinity were related to conflict resolution styles, but these relationships occurred within cultures, rather than between cultures.

The correlational results also indicated that accommodation and avoidance were correlated with concern with others' evaluations in both cultures. The findings for accommodation support the idea that accommodation reflects a high concern for the outcomes of others. However, the findings for avoidance suggest that avoidance may not reflect a low concern for others' outcomes, as postulated by the dual-concern model. Instead, avoidance may be used as a technique of maintaining interpersonal relationships because it reduces the possibility of open conflict by not creating it. It is possible that

avoidance may serve a different function in interpersonal contexts than it does in other types of situations, such as business negotiations.

This study attempted to clarify the preferences that people from an individualistic culture (the United States) and people from a collectivistic culture (Mexicans) have for resolving interpersonal conflicts within their respective cultures. Further research is needed to assess whether intracultural conflict resolution style preferences are mirrored in intercultural encounters. If this is indeed the case, then the results have some important implications for conflicts between Mexicans and Americans, and perhaps more generally for conflicts among people from individualistic and collectivistic cultures.

The fact that the Mexicans prefer accommodative and collaborative styles of conflict resolution to a greater degree than Americans could set the stage for misunderstandings concerning the resolution of interpersonal conflicts in cross-cultural settings. Mexicans who attempt to take the other person's interests into account during a conflict may find that their efforts are not readily reciprocated by Americans, leading to confusion and frustration. Americans confronted with a Mexican counterpart who is highly collaborative or accommodative, may see the action as it is intended to be seen—as a hospitable attempt to resolve the conflict—but they might also be attempted to exploit it, given their relatively low concern for the outcomes of others.

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