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Welcome to the proceedings CD for the ANZIBA 2007.

The 2007 ANZIBA conference is hosted by the Research Institute for Organisational and Institutional Performance, Faculty of Business and Law, University of Newcastle, Australia.

A key feature of the annual meeting of the Australia and New Zealand International Business Academy has been the participation of internationally renowned scholars as keynote speakers. Continuing th   adition, this year's keynote speaker is Udo Zander, (Stockholm School of Economics, Sweden).

Conference program

We would like to thank the stream chairs and the international panel of reviewers for their efforts in the blind review process, and the authors of papers and panels for the contributions. We also acknowledge the Research Institute for Organisational and Institutional Performance, University of Newcastle, for supporting two sponsored events: The Research Students Colloquium and the Conference Welcome Reception.

Enjoy the conference

Best regards,
Beth

Elizabeth L. Rose
President of ANZIBA
Conference Co-Chair of 2007

Greg

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Face Values and Managerial Practice Preference in China

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Abstract

Social face values are found to have influence on the willingness of sharing information within cultural contexts. Face values profoundly penetrate the whole Chinese society, reflecting a high collectivist and large power distance culture. In such culture, members stress greater mutual-face and other's face than member in individualistic cultures, which express more self-face maintenance. Previous studies address the face issues from diverse disciplines. However, there is limited research on how face issues influence on managerial behavior in manager-subordinate relationships through an empirical examination. We explore the extent to which a manager's superior face saving is related to their sharing information with subordinates and inviting their initiatives. The findings of the study indicate that superior face-saving is negatively associated with sharing information with subordinates.

Introduction:

Sharing information with subordinates and encouraging their initiatives are highly stressed in contemporary management. This is not only because they are critical for participative leadership style, which is positively related to employees' job satisfaction and performance (Kim, 2002), but also due to a fact that they are key components for knowledge creation (Christensen, 2007). Managers need to develop their consciousness and skills associated with these managerial practices to play their leadership role effectively. However, it is argued whether a manager would like to share information with subordinates depends on their social value system, that is, it depends on the willingness of the manager to do so (Wofford, Calabro, & Sims, 1975).

Social face values are found to have influence on the willingness of sharing information within cultural contexts {Chow et al., 1999; Bond and Hwang, 1995; Ting-Toomey, 1994} and hierarchical system of organization (Tynan, 2005). From a personal perspective, *face is* defined as the positive public image that a person claims for him/herself in terms of positive social values (Goffman, 1967; Lim, 1994). From an interpersonal perspective, it is a claimed sense of self-respect in an interactive situation and viewed as social status (Ting-Toomey, 1994). Power-based status leads to the relative rank one has over the other in the given organization (Lim, 1994). Taking advantages of position-based power, managers could exert power of legitimacy to save their own face by ignoring subordinates' face-wants {Lim, 1994; Tynan, 2005} and by not granting them a chance to share organizational information and creatively participate in organizational operation.

Face values profoundly penetrate the whole Chinese society, reflecting a high collectivist and large power distance culture. In such culture, members stress greater mutual-face and other's face than member in individualistic cultures, which express more self-face maintenance (Morisaki & Gudykunst, 1994). It believes that a person's face, a public image, should be defined according to her/his status within the hierarchically social system. Manager's desire to share information and encourage initiatives of employees is argued to be affected by face values in the Chinese culture (Ting-Toomey, 1994; Chow et al., 1999). Sharing the information with subordinates may be viewed as an indication of the equal

status between managers and subordinates in terms of organizational involvement and also be seen to provide subordinates with a chance to question, challenge and criticize the management. If managers believe that saving superior's competence-face is a key to solidify their managerial position, then it is likely that they do not prefer to share information with subordinates.

Previous studies address the face issues from diverse disciplines such as the cross-cultural negotiation process (Ting-Toomey, 1988), communication for dispute resolution online {Brett et al., 2007}, seeking feedback of students (Hwang, Ang, & Francesco, 2002) and Chinese business in general {Wang et al., 2003}. However, there is limited research on how face issues influence on managerial behavior in manager-subordinate relationships through an empirical examination. How face values play their role in manger-subordinate relationships in the public sector in China, therefore, is warranted to be investigated.

To fill the gaps, this study investigates how a manager's face values are related to their willingness to involve subordinates in China's public sector. Specifically, we explore the extent to which a manager's superior face saving is related to their sharing information with subordinates and inviting their initiatives. Understanding of face issues in the public sector in China provides knowledge of the psychological reasons behind the managerial operation in China's bureaucratic system.

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

Face values and social context

Empowerment is important for organizational effectiveness. It involves management to provide subordinates chances to participate in the decision-making process and increasing their self- worth (Neilson, 1986; Wang, 2003). In doing this, managers need to share organizational information with subordinates and further to encourage subordinates' initiative for a purpose of high productivity. It is found that transformational leadership is a determinant of subordinates' information inquiry {Madzar, 2005}, which indicates that the level of sharing information between managers and subordinates is dependent on managers' preference. Generally, whether managers want to share information with

others involves their concern with social status in interaction in two directions including self face and other's face within the particularly cultural context (Chow et al., 1999; Hwang et al., 2003). Although face saving and its social effect have been widely documented (Ting-Toomey, 1994: Lim, 1994; Chow et al., 1999; Tynan, 2005), their impact on management practice has not been explored empirically. The psychological reasons behind on intention or reluctance of sharing information and encouraging initiatives may be caused by mangers' face concerns, based on their power distance values.

Lim and Blower (1991) propose that there are three basic types of face from a cultural-universal perspective. They are *autonomy-face,* persons' image that they are in control of their own fate, that is, they have the virtues of a full-fledged, mature, and responsible adult, *fellowship-face,* person's image that they are worthy companions, and *competence-face.* Manager-subordinate interactive work relations in this regard are inevitably involved with face issues. Of three type of face, this study takes competence-face values as a focal issue, as which is applicable and linked with information sharing and initiative encouragement within an organizational context.

*Competence-face i*s the image of a person of ability. It is concerned with past accomplishments, the present good reputation and the capabilities to perform successfully in the future. This type of face-claims emphasize such values as " knowledgeable", " intelligent," wise," experienced," "influential," "prosperous," " accomplished," "attractive ," and distinguished,". When persons claim these values for themselves, they want others to acknowledge their success and capabilities. Thus competence-face produces the want that one's abilities to be respected {Lim, 1991}.

Face (*mian-zi* in Mandarin) is not a self-defined image; instead it refers to one's projected image which is reflected by other's assessment (Lim, 1994). To gain, protect, maintain and enhance one's face (that is, a positive image) within a context, a person usually engages in facework in their interactive relationships. Facework is broadly defined as the actions taken to deal with the face-wants of one and/or the other (Lim, 1994). Facework, therefore, includes the actions oriented toward one's own face

as well as the actions oriented toward the other's face. In the Chinese culture, facework requests to take into consideration personal needs of not only about self image and but also others (Goffman 1967; Lim, 1994). Superior face-saving in the current study refers to behavior that subordinates should not challenge and criticize his/her superior's ideas and decisions publicly in order not to embarrass her/him. Superior face-enhancing is defined as behavior that a subordinate should praise and give positive comments to his/her superior's ideas and decisions in order to please him/her.

Face and managerial practice

Managers' face concern is related to a desire to have a positive and consistent self-image appreciated by their superiors, peers and subordinates. Their facework aims to gain and even promote their competence-face within their organization. Such image is projected by these multiple-direction interactive relationships. Subordinates' projection on their image is an important dimension for the competence-face. The ways they interact with subordinates not only represent their leadership style, but is also part of their facework. To save and enhance their competent face, a manager would engage in the facework toward subordinates based on their face values.

Featured with cultural-universal and cultural-specific aspects (Ting-Toomey, 1994), a face sense is embedded in particular cultures. It is highly sensitive to the cultural context, as any social value can be an element of face. Face is as complex as the values system of a society {Lim, 1994}. The *independent* construal of self predominates in individualistic cultures and the *interdependent* construal of self predominates in collectivistic cultures {Morisaki et.al., 1994}. The cultural differences on construal of self lead to various definitions of face values in management issues across cultures. It is argued that the calculative involvement with the organizational and the emphasis on self associated with individualist cultures arise as a factor impeding information sharing in those same contexts{ Chow et al., 1999 }. Interestingly, theory of the moral involvement with the organizational associated with collectivist cultures emerges from the literature as a factor facilitating sharing of organizational information does not unravel the reality in such cultures (Chow et al., 1999). The importance of face in collectivist and power distance cultures, like Chinese culture, complicates interpretation of the issues, as in that it

emerges from the literature as a factor impeding information sharing (Chow et al., 1999; Wang and Clegg, 2002).

Face values are likely to have a significant impact on Chinese managers' practice of sharing information and encouraging subordinate initiatives in the public sector. In the public sector in China, performance, initiative, creativeness and aggressiveness are discouraged. Instead, obedience to, agreeableness with, ready acceptance and enhancement of the superior's domination are regarded as the merits of employees (Li & Kleiner, 2001). Existence and prosperity of public sector in China are not based on how much profits they gain. As a result, promotion does not solely depend on individual performance or department performance, but is subject to various subjective factors, such as supervisors' personal perception and judgment. In the hierarchically oriented organizations, since these subjective factors related to superiors' intention play an influential role on employees' appraisal and promotion, satisfacing superiors has become crucial parts demonstrating these 'merits' within such particular context (Li et al., 2001).

Saving superior's face is likely to be related to the administration in the context of the public sector in China. The administrative system in public sector in China is excessive centralization and run based on bureaucratic and traditional values {Straussman, 2001}. Chinese managers in this extremely hierarchical system are less democratic and more autocratic oriented (Li and Kleiner, 2001). Apart from constriction of bureaucratic system, face values explain the psychological reasons for the bureaucratic-oriented management style in the public sector. These Chinese managers' the extent of sharing information with subordinates and encouraging subordinate initiatives reflect their face concern, as management style is also shaped by specific cultural values (House et al., 2004).

While hierarchical gaps between system layers are emphasized, psychological gaps of hierarchy between managers and subordinates are also stressed in the Chinese public sector, which is deeply imprinted by the traditional Chinese culture, highlighting power distance. On the one hand, to get superiors' acceptance, managers in the public sector need to pay a great deal of attention to facework in favorite to superiors. On the other hand, as a superior to their subordinates, they believe that their

subordinates should follow suit as the same approaches and attitudes as themselves towards superiors. To gain, maintain and promote their own competence-face, they exercise practice that their subordinates should not be encouraged to criticize them by not giving their face, a chance to share knowledge of what is going on in the organization and be able to actively participate in the management process. Instead, subordinates should always save managers' face by obeying what they are requested.

Face saving attempts to avoid giving threat to other's public image and sensitivity. Individual who highly values face saving have a low threshold for having a negative effective reaction to fact threat. If a manager believes that saving superior's competence-face, which is about the want that their abilities not to be challenged, is a key to solidify their managerial position, then it is likely that they will not prefer to share information with subordinates, which may bring a opportunity for subordinates to give criticism on management. Likewise, encouraging initiatives may indicate that themselves lack of ideas and that subordinates are having better ideas of how to run business and operate than themselves. Rather, they would expect subordinates to save their face by not questioning them and not making any negative comments on what themselves have agreed and approved. It is likely that managers with strong superior face-saving will not prefer to share organizational information with subordinates and have limited motive to encourage subordinates' initiatives. Openly expressing a contrary view is implying a criticism of others and invokes the concern without saving face of others in the Chinese culture {Chow et al., 1999}. We, thus, hypothesize that in the public sector in China

H1: Chinese managers' superior face-saving is negatively related to their desire to share information with subordinates.
H2: Chinese managers' superior face-saving is negatively related to their desire to encourage subordinate initiatives.

Method

Sampling and procedure

The data collected from a diverse sample of Chinese managers in public sector. They were mostly middle to

senior level managers in difference functions and from 10 difference provinces cross China. While enrolled

in training programs, they were invited to respond to the questionnaires during recess time. They were

ensured that their participation was voluntary and their responses were anonymous and confidential. One

hundred and thirty-five questionnaires were completed and returned. Table 1 showed

their demographic profiles.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics for Managers in Public Sector in China.

Variable				
Gender	Male	Female		
	116 (85.9%)	16 (12.1%) 135		
Age	20-30 yrs	31-39 yrs	40-49 yrs	50 o yrs Over
	8 (5.9%)	65(48.1%)	57 (42.2%)	5 (3.7%)
Education	Elementary school	Jr. high or high school	Undergraduate or college	Postgraduate
	1(0.7 %)	2 (1.5 %)	106 (79.1%)	25 (18.7 %)
Mgt. year	Under 2 years	2-5 years	5-10 years	11-20 years; over 20 years
	7 (5.2%)	18 (18.7%)	35 (26.1 %)	56 (41.8 %); 18(13.4%)
Mgt. position	Top management	Senior managers	Middle managers	First-line managers
	8 (5.9 %)	56(41.5%)	43 (31.9%)	10 (7.4%)

Measures

Existing measurement scales were identified through a review of prior research. The subjects were asked

to express their level of agreement with a given statement via a seven-point Likert-type scale, with the

response ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The items with a negative meaning were

reversed in the analysis.

Dependent variables

Information sharing with subordinates and encouraging initiative of subordinates were measured with scales adopted from the literature (Hemphill, 1957; Wang and Satow, 1994). Sharing Information with subordinate was measured using the scale developed by Wang and Satow (1994). It tests the extent to which a manager shares organizational information with subordinates. Encouraging subordinate initiative was measured using Hemphill and Coon's (1957) scale. It tests the extent which managers encourage subordinates to initiate new activities and practice and ideas.

Independent variables

Superior face-saving was developed based on the literature on face and facework (e.g. Bond, 1991; Lim, 1994; Chow et al., 1999). As few published empirical research efforts exist pertaining to superior face-saving, we reviewed theoretical discussions surrounding face and facework to develop multi-item scales to operationalise the construct. Superior face-saving was measured by a two-item scale assessing a manager's value that a superior's ideas and request should not be questioned and rejected by subordinates publicly.

Control variables

Managers' demographic background may have potential effects on their development of trust. Gender and managerial position were controlled because research suggests that these variables have effects on the acquisition of social values { e.g Triandis, 1995}. Within a hierarchical organizational structure, values, beliefs and their functions will vary across different position levels {e.g. Thomas, 2001}.

Validity

First, the questionnaire was translated from an English version, as the original items were all derived from the English-language literature. The versions in Mandarin and English were made equivalent in meaning, refining the questions through backwards-forwards translation. Second, to minimize social desirability effects, the respondents were promised anonymity and confidentiality. Third, all items were tested for common method variance using the approach of Harman's one-factor test (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003), since there are four or five items for each tested variables in an original measurement.

All the variables used in the current study were entered into an unrotated factor analysis, in terms of their categories, to determine the number of factors. If a single factor emerged from the factor analysis, this would indicate that the data suffered the problem of common method variance. On the basis of factor loading 0.40 as the criterion for inclusion, factor 1 (totaling 2 items) was constructed from sharing information with subordinate, factor 2 (totaling 3 items) was formed from encouraging initiatives and factor 3 (totaling 2 items) were from superior face-saving. The other items were abandoned because of their low factor loading. Finally, the chosen items yielded a reliable Cronbach's alpha. The results of factor analysis provided confidence that common method variance was not an issue in the current study.

Analyses and Reliability

The analysis involved regression on dimensions, with scales based on 135 Chinese managers in the public sector in China, *encouraging subordinate initiatives* (Cronbach's alpha = 0.82) and *sharing information with subordinates (*Cronbach's alpha = 0.70) as dependent variables, and *superior face-saving* (Cronbach's alpha = 0.80) as independent variables.

Prior to statistical analysis, the codes of the responses to a number of items were reversed, so that all of the items measured with a higher score represented a higher level of preference on the scale. In the hierarchical regression analysis, *sharing information* and *encouraging initiatives were* regressed on gender, age, working years and management position variables (Step 1); and *superior face-saving* (Step 2).

RESULTS

The means, standard deviations and Pearson correlations for demographic variables, sharing information and encouraging initiative variables and face variables (superior saving-face and enhancing-face) were conducted. The correlations indicate that there are negatively significant relations between *superior face-saving* and *sharing information* ($r = -0.18$, $p < .05$) and *encouraging initiatives (r* = 0.32, p <.01).

The results of hierarchical regression in Table 2 indicate that *superior face-saving* has a negative direct relationship with *sharing information* (p<0.05). Therefore, H1, stating that Chinese managers' superior face-saving is negatively related to sharing information with subordinates, is supported. However, there is no significant relation between superior face-saving and encouraging initiative of subordinates. H2, stating that Chinese managers' superior face-saving is negatively related to their encouraging subordinate initiatives, is rejected.

Table 2. Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Saving and Enhancing Superior Face on Sharing Information with Subordinates (SIS) and Encouraging Initiatives of Subordinate (EIS) for Public Sector in China [a]

Variable	SIS		EIS	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Controls				
Gender	-.14	-.09	-.09	-.05
Age	.11	.14	.12	.15
Education	.14	.14	.05	.04
Years in Mgt.	.01	.03	.07	.10
Mgt. position	-.04	-.07	.01	-.02
Main effects				
Superior face – saving		-.21*		-.18
R^2	.05	.21	.04	.08
Adjust R^2	.01	.17	.18	.13
F	1.1	3.89***	.52	3.01**
Observation number		135	135	

[a] Standardised coefficients are reported.
*p < .05; ** p < .01; ***p < .001

DISCUSSION

Theoretical Implication

Our objective in this study was to examine whether managers' face values predict their managerial behavior. Drawing on face theory, we assume that managers' superior face values are negatively related to their encouragement of subordinate participation. Our findings contribute to understanding of face values in the interactive relationship of a hierarchical system. The study also

extends the previous research on face focusing in social psychology, such communication (e.g. Ting-Toomey, 1994; Brett et al., 2007) to a managerial context at an applicable level.

Specifically, we found that superior face-saving is negatively associated with sharing information with subordinates. It indicates that the degree, to which managers allow subordinate participation in management, is not only affected by such external factors as intimacy and power difference, but it is also influenced by their intention to honor their own face and dishonor subordinate's face want. Sharing organizational information with subordinates leads to sharing power with them, as it allows subordinates to have a chance to voice their options on the organizational operation. Managers' behavior of sharing organizational information satisfy subordinates' need of self-esteem and actualization, which a public face subordinates want. Managers may select face-saving strategies to protect their power from the participation of subordinate increase. Managers' facework is directly related to their perception of power. If they believe that superior saving-face is critical for keeping their power-related competence-face and that sharing power with subordinates potentially leads to losing such face, then they may feel threatened to share organizational information with subordinates. It is argued that when the legitimacy is high, the behavior has little threat to the face of the other; however, when the legitimacy is low, the behavior poses a strong threat to the face of the other (Lim, 1994). Psychologically, to save their competence-face and reduce the threat to such face, managers with a strong value of superior face-saving may make facework on keeping a large power distance between themselves and subordinates in their interactive relationship in workplace.

The findings of the study contribute to the literature on management effectiveness which defines factors impacting on and facilitating creativity and participation of employees. A positive work environment can be developed by providing employees with autonomy (Glynn, 1996; Geber, Boerner, & Lanwehr, 2003) and information (Glynn, 1996). The creativity of employees depends partly on their managers encouraging them to be creative as well as on the use of suggestion systems and job-deign principles that encourage employees to be creative. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these methods in fostering creativity depends largely on the attitudes of the managers to these methods. Our findings indicate that

managers' superior face-saving is the factors which negatively influence on managers' encouragement on employees to be creative.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Limitations

The approach adopted in this paper deals mainly with psychological processes of managers' face values and their management practice in the context of the public sector in China. Moreover, unlike many earlier studies of management, we have introduced the important dimension of face into the analysis though not dealing extensively with the broader social processes to account for beliefs about face. While speculating on the face in the public sector in accounting for delegating behaviors amongst managers, we have not looked in detail at how broader social institutions, such as the corporate governance and policies, affect Chinese managers' extent of sharing information with and encouraging initiatives of subordinates.

Turning to methodological issues, a potential limitation is the size of our sample of 135 managers, which gives rise to statistical tests with relatively low power in terms of reliability and generalization. Therefore, the results should be viewed with caution.

Our study on beliefs about face values of Chinese managers only reflects a part of the complexity of values and attitudes in China's the public sector and could also be extended to examine such issues as trust in subordinates and their commitment which could also influence on managers' management practice of sharing information and encouraging initiatives of subordinates (Wang and Clegg, 2007).

Another potential limitation may be the instrument used in the survey, which is developed based on Chinese cultural assumptions about work-value dimensions of face. Although the results of our analysis are encouraging, meanings of face values in the two dimensions could be expressed in different ways in other cultures and may require a modified instrument more suitable to the general context. Alternative explanation would be that the difference between face commonly adopted in the individualist and small power distance cultures and mainly adopted in the Chinese culture, the

collectivist and large power distance power culture, might only be expressed in degree of face in the two dimensions of face.

Future Research

There is potential research to be done linking face to particular leadership styles, including sharing information, encouraging subordinates' initiatives. Such research could also prove insightful in terms of micro-level practices and leadership effectiveness in the public section in China.

Regional differences in China can account for different work values and orientations. Further research could explore how the different ownership types interact with local variations to influence and face values. It would also be interesting to identify how different ownership types affect how Chinese managers deal with participation of subordinates in relation to the face. The broader context of the transition in economy in China could also provide a useful context for further investigation though the dynamics we have explored in relation to changing HRM practices.

In conclusion, this study takes an important step in a complicated area of research, seeking to explain the development of management practice from the perspective of face values. Our findings suggest that within the public sector context, Chinese managers' face concern is a significant factor that must be taken into account in understanding of managerial practice of its bureaucratic system.

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