

This study addresses several limitations of previous cross-cultural research of intimacy by (a) differentiating meaning and expression of intimacy, (b) developing items reflecting both cultures' concepts of the two constructs, (c) specifying the relationship context rated, and (d) examining and adjusting cultural response sets in the data set. Findings indicated that the Japanese were more likely to conceptualize intimacy through expressive concepts such as "consideration/love" and "expressiveness" than did the Americans toward same-sex best friend. Likewise, "directly verbalizing how you feel about each other" was more valued by the Japanese than by the Americans toward mother, father, and same-sex best friend, whereas the Americans valued "indirectly verbalize how you feel about each other" more than did the Japanese toward mother, father, and lover. These results, which are contrary to those typically found in the literature, were discussed in relation to the methodologies used, which we believe reduced the possible cultural bias in research.

THE CONCEPTUALIZATION AND EXPRESSION OF INTIMACY IN JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES

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Psychologists have long been interested in the study of intimacy and its role in social relationships. Yet, limitations have been noted on intimacy studies driven from researchers' bias that researchers rely on their definition of intimacy, not on subjects' (Helgeson, Shaver, & Dyer, 1987; Monsour, 1992; Orosan & Schilling, 1992). Although these claims were made in the field of gender differences in intimacy in the United States, in this article, we would like to explain four limitations on cross-cultural research of intimacy below and then address these limitations through our research methodology.

In the past, researchers have often studied intimacy through the quality and quantity of self-disclosure (Adamopoulos, 1991; Altman & Taylor, 1973; Caldwell & Peplau, 1982; Helgeson et al., 1987; Rubin, 1973), nonverbal behaviors (Argyle & Dean, 1965; Iizuka, Mishima, & Matsumoto, 1989; Patterson, 1976), and psychological feelings (Burgoon & Hale, 1987; Millar & Rogers, 1976; Miller & Lefcourt, 1982).

Despite the potential importance of cross-cultural research on intimacy, there have only been a handful of studies that have actually tested cultural differences on it. Ting-Toomey (1991), for instance, demonstrated that French and Americans reported a significantly higher degree of love commitment and disclosure maintenance than Japanese; Americans also reported a higher degree of relational ambivalence than Japanese, and the Japanese and the Americans had higher ratings on conflict expression than the French. Elbedour, Shulman, and Kedem (1997) compared perceptions of intimacy and self-disclosure in close friendships by 288 Jewish and 327 Bedouin students, reporting that the Jewish perceived less of a need to control or be similar to each other and that the Bedouin emphasized control of and conformity to friends. Uleman, Rhee, Bardoliwalla, Semin, and Toyama (2000) examined cultural differences in individualism (Euro-American and Dutch) and collectivism (Turkish and Japanese) with regard to how the self relates to others, suggesting that the

meaning of closeness varies depending on in-groups—family, relatives, and friends. Finally, Gudykunst and Nishida (1983) compared conversation styles among close Japanese and American friendships and found that the Americans had significantly higher ratings for social penetration on three topics (own marriage and family, love/dating and sex, emotions and feelings), frequency on four topics (relationship with others; love/dating and sex; interests/hobbies; attitudes/values), and perceived intimacy on the same three topics (own marriage and family, love/dating and sex, emotions and feelings), whereas the Japanese were higher on one topic (physical condition) for frequency and five topics (interests/hobbies, school/work, biographical, religion, and money/property) for perceived intimacy.

To be sure, many cross-cultural studies have examined the related concepts of romantic love and marriage (e.g., Buss, 1989; Dion & Dion, 1993; Ellis, Kimmel, Diaz-Guerrero, Canas, & Bajo, 1994; Ellis, Kimmel, Diaz-Guerrero, Furnham, 1984; Hatfield, & Sprecher, 1995; Murstein, Merighi, & Vyse, 1991; Simmons, Vom Kolke, & Shimizu, 1986). But, in general, these studies do not focus on intimacy *per se* nor do they inform us about cultural differences in intimacy in other relationships, such as within our families and friends. Also, there were other related cross-cultural studies such as on self-disclosure and social penetration (Barnlund, 1975; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1983, 1986). But, intimacy is not the primary focus in these studies, nor do they investigate intimacy through a wide range of possibilities other than conversation.

What little cross-cultural research that does exist on intimacy is limited for several reasons. First, previous studies generally did not differentiate between different aspects of intimacy. It is entirely possible, for example, for cultural differences to occur in one way with regard to the conceptual meaning of intimacy and in a different way with regard to the expression of intimacy. As a result, limited concepts and manifestations are examined in the previous studies, including commitment, ambivalence, expression of self, and conflicting feeling by Ting-Toomey (1991); and closeness, individuality, and self-disclosure by Elbedour et al. (1997). No expressions were included in the study of Uleman et al. (2000), whereas conversation was a central notion in understanding intimacy for Gudykunst and Nishida's (1983) study.

Second, items of intimacy have typically been generated from translations of an existing instrument in the United States, or adjustments to them. This "imposed *etic*" approach does not ensure that items in one culture mean the same thing in another. And, cultural differences on such measures are open to interpretation. Thus, cultural differences on intimacy may be worth examining by equilibrating cultural bias on items of intimacy.

Third, although intimacy may be expressed, felt, or considered differently in different relationships, previous cross-cultural studies focused on single relationships (e.g., Elbedour et al., 1997; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1983; Ting-Toomey, 1991). One exception was the study by Uleman et al. (2000), which contained multiple relationships with immediate family, relatives, and friends; but, these terms were still vague and may have led subjects to picture different relationships.

Fourth, although some studies have acknowledged the possible influence of cultural response sets (item nonequivalence due to cultural positioning on scales) (e.g., see Gudykunst & Nishida, 1986, Note 8), no cross-cultural study examining intimacy has actually reported analyses to uncover their possible existence or corrected for them if they were thought to exist. As such, we cannot be sure that the differences that have been reported were due to actual cultural differences in the scales or to differences in the ways members of different cultures used the scales involved in the research.

This study addressed these limitations in a United States-Japan comparison. These countries were chosen because previous cross-cultural research on intimacy has often focused on them (e.g., Barnlund, 1975; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1983; Ting-Toomey, 1991), indicating higher degrees of self-disclosure and intimacy for Americans than for Japanese. Previous results suggest that Americans may conceptualize intimacy more concretely than do Japanese, especially in ways that are associated with direct, behavioral manifestations. Self-disclosure, for instance, is a discrete communicative style that can be easily and quickly identified, as it is associated with verbal output and specific content. Although the Japanese may not conceptualize intimacy in such concrete ways, we suggest that their conceptualizations may encompass more intangible, psychological characteristics or emotional feelings of intimacy. Thus, compared to Americans, we would expect that Japanese conceptualizations of intimacy involve a greater number of emotions, feelings, and role understandings and appreciations rather than tangible behavioral manifestations.

The previous literature also suggests that Americans will prefer to express intimacy through a greater variety of means and channels than do Japanese. This expectation, in fact, is commensurate with previous research findings in many areas of communication that indicate that Americans are much more expressive than Japanese in many facets of speech and behavior. Accordingly, these modes may involve both verbal and nonverbal behaviors.

These notions were tested while addressing the four limitations of previous studies described above. First, we differentiated between the conceptual meanings of intimacy from modes of intimacy expressions. Second, the items used were developed in a pilot study involving respondents of both cultures to ensure that they reflected both cultural realities. Third, four relationships were investigated: same-sex best friend, lover, mother, and father. These were chosen to cover salient partners in both cultures. Lover was selected because opposite-sex friendships have been found to be highly valued in the United States (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1986; Hofstede, 1980; Ting-Toomey, 1991), whereas same-sex friendships are considered to be a more significant relationship in Japan (Lebra, 1976). We chose both mother and father because both terms did not yield significant United States-Japan differences in ratings of intimacy in the study by Gudykunst and Nishida (1986). Finally, we analyzed data by first investigating whether cultural response sets may have been operating in the data set, and then correcting for them. Based on the previous literature, and on the unique methodological aspects of this study, we hypothesized that

1. Relative to Japanese, Americans will conceptualize intimacy in ways associated with tangible, concrete behavioral manifestations; the Japanese, however, will conceptualize intimacy in more psychological or emotional ways relative to Americans.
2. Americans will endorse more varied modes of intimacy expression that are associated with tangible behaviors relative to the Japanese.

METHOD

MEASURE DEVELOPMENT

Pilot study. To develop a measure that incorporated items that reflected both cultures' conceptualizations and expressions of intimacy, we conducted a pilot study using an open-ended questionnaire, asking respondents to recall and discuss their conceptualizations and expressions of intimacy with their mother, father, same-sex friend, or opposite-sex friend. In

developing the methods for the pilot study, the researchers first consulted with two Japanese and two American females about how the questions should be addressed. They, especially the Japanese, stated that it would be easier to respond if the particular partner were specified first. Because of time constraints, each respondent was asked to respond concerning random combinations of only two partners: 1 = mother/father; 2 = same/opposite-sex friends; 3 = mother/same-sex friend; 4 = father/opposite-sex friend; 5 = mother/opposite-sex friend; 6 = same-sex friend/father. Each version was distributed to an equal number of respondents.

The questionnaire asked respondents to describe when, where, and how they expressed intimacy in the specified relationship and to explain what intimacy meant to them in those relationships. The Japanese were also asked to translate the term *intimacy* into an equivalent Japanese term that may not necessarily be found in a dictionary but relevant in their real lives. This was done to ensure that the terms used to define the constructs were conceptually equivalent, as semantic differences in terminology may have biased the results.

The pilot questionnaire was administered to 44 Japanese students enrolled in an English language school in northern California and 43 American students who were enrolled in speech communication courses at a large, northern California university. The questionnaire was administered in the subjects' native languages, and two bilingual researchers achieved the equivalence of the translation.

The responses to all questions were systematically coded by a Japanese research assistant into 14 categories of intimacy conceptualization and 15 categories of intimacy expression (see Table 1). Some rules were necessary in classifying the responses. First, when a respondent provided multiple definitions of intimacy, all of them were equally counted and each was assigned to one category. Second, when the respondents defined intimacy as an "indispensable relationship," "to worry about each other," and "dependence for decision making," they were all assigned to Support/Protection. Third, when the respondents mentioned closeness as their conceptualization, the responses were taken as a connection and assigned to Bond. For intimacy expressions, the rules were as follows: first, if the respondents described a situation discussing a personal issue, then the responses were assigned to Disclose Personal Problems; second, the distinction between the categories Sexual Contact and Nonsexual Contact was made by assigning obviously sexual or romantic contact to the former, and other ambiguous contact to the latter. To assess reliability of the coding procedure, 25% of the texts were randomly selected and recoded by a second Japanese research assistant blind to the study's hypotheses and who was not otherwise involved in the research; 89% of the codes were identical with one another.

Creation of the measure used in the main study. The measure for the main study was developed by incorporating all categories that were created in the pilot study. This ensured that the measure reflected both cultural perspectives. The first section of the questionnaire inquired whether the respondents had an actual partner to whom they felt intimate, and if they did, the perceived intimacy level using a 5-point scale labeled 0 (*not intimate at all*) through 4 (*very intimate*). This question was included to exclude those respondents who did not currently have any intimate partners in their lives. Analysis of the ratings made in sections 2 and 3 of the questionnaire, however, using the presence or absence of an intimate partner as a factor did not yield any significant effects. Thus, all respondents were included in the main analysis.

The second section assessed the degree of importance of the intimacy expressions in four relationships: mother, father, same-sex best friend, and lover. We substituted the term *lover* instead of *opposite-sex friend* based on the fact that *lover* was shared as the most intimate

TABLE 1
List of Categories Generated by the Pilot Study, and the Percentage of Japanese and American Participants in the Pilot Study Who Generated the Codes Across the Four Relationships Assessed

<i>Category</i>	<i>Japanese %</i>	<i>United States %</i>
Conceptualization		
Openness (being able to talk about anything)	8	27
Expressiveness (being able to express how you feel about each other)	0	11
Consideration/love	11	10
Support/protection (mental support/feeling of being protected)	16	6
Appreciation (feeling of appreciation)	2	0
Understanding (feeling of being understood/being able to understand without words)	9	2
Similarity (having the same value)	4	0
Ease (feeling comfortable toward each other)	4	5
Trust	8	6
Respect	7	2
Bond (having a special bond)	9	10
Happiness (feeling of happiness)	4	1
Physical contact (sexual contact or nonsexual physical contact)	1	9
Common experience (sharing experience)	3	9
Expression		
Directly verbalize how you feel about each other	13	36
Indirectly verbalize how you feel about each other	8	8
Communicate feeling of appreciation	2	1
Give a compliment to the other	0	5
Show concern toward the other	8	4
Disclose personal problems	20	13
Encourage the other	7	1
Joke and laugh together	3	1
Talk about general things	2	1
Engage in physical contact (sexual)	1	0
Engage in physical contact (nonsexual)	5	16
Help the other or do something for the other	10	4
Share activities	10	1
Give a present	5	2
Tell your feelings in a letter	7	4

relational term among both Americans and Japanese in a previous study (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1986). Also, the term *same-sex friend* was changed into *same-sex best friend* to reduce ambiguity. Each of the 15 intimacy expression categories derived from the pilot study was rated using a 7-point scale labeled 0 (*not important at all*) to 6 (*very important*).

The third section measured the degree of fit of the 14 definitions of intimacy from the pilot study to the same four relationships. Fit was rated on a 7-point scale labeled 0 (*does not fit at all*) through 6 (*fits very well*).

The questionnaire also included a blank space to allow respondents to include items they deemed important to themselves that were not listed in either sections 2 or 3. This option, however, was used by fewer than 1% of all respondents in the main study and will not be mentioned further.

Translation. The questionnaire was originally created in Japanese. The two terms *shinmitsusa* and *shitashisa* were most frequently mentioned by the Japanese respondents in the pilot study and were used as terms for *intimacy* in the Japanese version of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was translated into English by one of the bilingual researchers, and the accuracy of the translation was verified using back-translation procedures. There were no problems.

RESPONDENTS

Respondents were 230 Japanese (113 males and 117 females, mean age 20.71) and 250 Americans (102 males and 148 females, mean age 23.03). Japanese students were enrolled at major universities in the Tokyo ($n = 85$), Osaka ($n = 44$), and Yamanashi ($n = 101$) prefectures. American students were enrolled at a major university in northern California and consisted of African Americans ($n = 12$), Asian Americans ($n = 67$), European Americans ($n = 127$), Hispanic/Latin Americans ($n = 22$), and Others ($n = 22$). Participants in both cultures were born and raised in their home countries and had no overseas living experience.

PROCEDURES

The procedures were the same in both countries. Data were collected in classes in which respondents participated either voluntarily or for extra credit. In some cases, students were allowed to take the questionnaires home, complete them at their leisure, and return them by a specified time. In addition to the questionnaire, respondents also completed a brief demographic questionnaire that assessed their ethnicity, age, sex, and overseas experiences. To control for possible order effects in the relationships rated, four versions of the questionnaire were developed, each containing different random orders of the partners. Each version was distributed to an equal number of the respondents in both cultures.

SCORING

To determine whether reliable factors existed that would allow for the computation of scale scores, eight (expression and conceptualization items \times four relationships) pancultural factor analyses with varimax rotation were performed on doubly standardized data. That is, the data were standardized first within each participant to his or her mean and standard deviation across all items rated, and second, within each country to the country's mean and standard deviation on each item. The results produced inconsistent factor structures, with factors ranging from 2 to 5. In addition, we computed the percentage of overlap of the items loading on each factor (criterion ≥ 0.3) among all pairs of factors, separately for conceptualization and expression. These results also indicated inconsistent and relatively low degrees of overlap of items to factors across analyses. We also then computed factor analyses on the conceptualization and expression items separately within each country on the raw data and compared the factor results in a similar fashion; again, however, no consistent factors emerged. For these reasons, we concluded that a reliable pancultural factor structure did not exist and therefore opted to utilize a multivariate approach to analyzing data (described in more detail below).

RESULTS

PRELIMINARY ANALYSES

We initially computed culture (2) \times relationship (4) \times item three-way ANOVAs separately for the conceptualization and expression items. The culture main effects were significant in both analyses, $F(1, 444) = 27.71, p < .001$, and $F(1, 438) = 38.37, p < .001$, respectively, suggesting the existence of cultural response sets in the data (see Matsumoto, 1994). To examine this possibility further, we conducted several more exploratory analyses. First, we investigated mean differences between the United States and Japan on each item, separately for the two rating types (i.e., expression and conceptualization of intimacy) and four relationships. Of the 116 comparisons (15 expression items \times 4 relationships plus 14 conceptualization items \times 4 relationships), Americans had a higher mean 90 times. One-way ANOVAs indicated that 64 of these were statistically significant. The Japanese had a higher mean than the Americans 25 times (there was one tie), of which only 13 were significant.

Furthermore, we then computed separate multivariate ANOVAs, using items as dependent variables, with follow-up discriminant analyses. We opted for this approach, as it would address the problem of the unreliability of single-item comparisons. The culture by relationship MANOVAs were significant for both expression and conceptualization items, Wilks's lambda = .472, $F(45, 465) = 11.57, p < .001$; and Wilks's lambda = .50, $F(42, 495) = 12.05, p < .001$, respectively. We then computed eight discriminant analyses, one for each of the four relationships and two rating types. All produced a statistically significant discriminating function, with the Japanese mean negative and the American mean positive. In each analysis, we identified all structure coefficients with a loading $\geq .20$. Across the eight analyses, there were 49 structure coefficients meeting this criterion, and all but 6 were positive (indicating a United States > Japan difference).

Although these findings may reflect true United States-Japan score differences, we interpreted these data as very likely being confounded by cultural positioning, as they overwhelmingly and consistently showed a United States > Japan difference, despite the bicultural nature of the measure derivation. To eliminate the effects of these possible response sets on the findings, we then standardized each item to the respective country mean and standard deviation across all 29 items rated. (We opted to average across both rating types, as we reckoned that if cultural response sets were operating, they would operate on both scales.) That is, all items for each subject were averaged, and the mean and standard deviation of this 29-item average were computed separately for Americans and Japanese. Then, each participant's item scores were standardized to his or her country's overall, 29-item mean and standard deviation.

All further analyses, therefore, are based on these standardized data. (Item means and standard deviations based on raw data are available from the authors.) The findings presented below should therefore be interpreted with the caveat that mean differences reflect differences between the cultures relative to each culture's overall mean.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF INTIMACY

Based on a significant overall country by relationship MANOVA on the 14 conceptualization items, Wilks's lambda = .50, $F(42, 495) = 12.05, p < .0001$, we computed four discriminant analyses, one for each of the four relationships, on the conceptualization items using culture as the independent variable. All four analyses produced significant discriminant

ating functions. We then identified items that had structure coefficients $\geq .20$, and that were also associated with significant univariate one-way ANOVAs between the cultures (see Table 2). We opted for this procedure as the discriminant functions would take into account the intercorrelations among the items, identifying only those that contributed substantially to the between-country difference and thus eliminating the problem of the unreliability of single-item analyses.

To a large degree, the findings supported Hypothesis 1. Americans rated “physical contact” significantly higher than did the Japanese on all four relationship types. At the same time, the Japanese endorsed many items representing emotions or psychological feelings of intimacy, such as “appreciation,” “understanding,” “ease,” and “bond,” in relation to mother and father. They also rated “consideration/love” for same-sex best friends and “happiness” for lovers higher than did Americans. These findings replicate previous observations that American intimacy is highly associated with physical contact (or Japanese avoid physical contact), whereas Japanese intimacy emphasizes psychological feelings and in general are commensurate with the percentage differences found for these categories in the pilot study.

At the same time, the findings were relationship-specific. For instance, Americans rated “respect” and “bond”—both psychological constructs with emotional overtones—significantly higher than did Japanese in relation to same-sex best friend. The same was found with “respect” toward lovers. These findings suggest that specific emotional constructs may carry greater weight in specific relationships for certain cultures.

Also, the Japanese rated “expressiveness” (*kanjo hyogen*)—what could be construed as a tangible behavior—significantly higher than did Americans in relation to same-sex best friend. This finding is interesting as it is the first to indicate that Japanese emphasize the expressive nature of intimacy in same-sex friendships more than Americans do. That no Japanese in the pilot study mentioned this category also raises questions about the effects of different methodologies in producing different findings (e.g., the free recall used in the pilot study vs. the endorsement of supplied categories in the main study).

EXPRESSION OF INTIMACY

Based on a significant overall country by relationship MANOVA, Wilks’s $\lambda = .47$, $F(45, 465) = 11.57$, $p < .0001$, four discriminant analyses were computed on the expression items (see Table 3). We employed the same criteria as above in identifying items that discriminated the cultures. The results for mother and father generally supported the hypothesis that Americans would endorse more varied modes of intimacy expression that are associated with tangible behaviors relative to the Japanese, as they gave significantly higher ratings to “indirectly verbalize,” “give compliments,” “show concern,” “encourage the other,” and “engage in nonsexual behavior.” That the Japanese rated “appreciate” higher than did the Americans in all relationship types can also be construed as supportive of the hypothesis, as being appreciative may not necessarily be associated with tangible behaviors.

Yet, some findings were contrary to the hypothesis and indicated the relationship-specific nature of cultural differences in intimacy expression. For example, the Japanese valued “directly verbalize how you feel about each other” significantly more than did Americans for mother, father, and same-sex best friend. In conjunction with American preferences for “indirectly verbalize,” this is in contrast to most findings in the literature as well as our own pilot study. In addition, again contrary to our expectations, Japanese valued more expressiveness than Americans through “encourage” and “joke and laugh” in relation to same-sex

(text continued on pg. 315)

TABLE 2
Listing of Conceptualization Items Associated With High Structure Coefficients From
the Discriminant Analyses and Significant Univariate Between-Country ANOVAs

<i>Item</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Structure Coefficient</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Univariate F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Epsilon</i> ²
Conceptualization toward mother								
Appreciation	Japan	229	.39	1.15	1.78	56.46	< .001	.05
	United States	243		.31	1.77			
Understanding	Japan	229	.26	.44	2.12	42.40	<.001	.03
	United States	243		-.29	2.05			
Ease	Japan	229	.32	1.00	1.96	61.02	< .001	.05
	United States	243		.14	1.85			
Bond	Japan	227	.28	1.03	1.99	49.99	< .001	.04
	United States	241		.25	2.04			
Physical contact	Japan	224	-.59	-4.05	2.65	329.60	< .001	.13
	United States	241		-2.02	2.69			
Conceptualization toward father								
Support/protection	Japan	227	.24	.31	2.35	40.95	< .001	.02
	United States	239		-.41	2.56			
Appreciation	Japan	227	.48	1.00	1.97	137.39	< .001	.08
	United States	237		-.31	2.44			
Understanding	Japan	227	.26	.12	2.53	62.06	< .001	.03
	United States	237		-1.00	2.49			
Ease	Japan	227	.29	.38	2.45	71.33	< .001	.04
	United States	237		-.57	2.44			
Bond	Japan	225	.37	.70	2.31	110.82	< .001	.06
	United States	235		-.49	2.55			
Physical contact	Japan	222	-.46	-4.41	2.56	196.84	< .001	.08
	United States	235		-2.83	2.77			
Conceptualization toward same-sex best friend								
Expressiveness	Japan	230	-.24	.48	1.88	62.55	< .001	.05
	United States	249		-.39	2.01			
Consideration/love	Japan	229	-.25	.62	1.86	50.55	< .001	.04
	United States	250		-.16	2.09			

(continued)

TABLE 2 Continued

<i>Item</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Structure Coefficient</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Univariate F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Epsilon²</i>
Respect	Japan	229	.55	-.60	2.07	194.63	< .001	.17
	United States	246		.94	1.31			
Bond	Japan	227	.25	-.47	2.36	63.92	< .001	.05
	United States	246		.41	1.70			
Physical contact	Japan	224	.41	-3.79	2.68	185.31	< .001	.07
	United States	246		-2.28	2.69			
Conceptualization toward lover								
Respect	Japan	221	.48	-.13	2.27	143.49	< .001	.13
	United States	229		1.23	1.16			
Happiness	Japan	222	-.27	1.46	1.76	29.12	< .001	.04
	United States	230	.	.85	1.36			
Physical contact	Japan	221	.23	.43	2.32	32.02	< .001	.03
	United States	230		1.07	1.23			

TABLE 3
Listing of Expression Items Associated with High Structure Coefficients from
the Discriminant Analyses and Significant Univariate Between-Country ANOVAs

<i>Item</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Structure Coefficient</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Univariate F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Epsilon</i> ²
Expression toward mother								
Directly verbalize	Japan	230	-.26	1.17	2.19	109.42	< .001	.08
	United States	244		-.10	2.22			
Indirectly verbalize	Japan	227	.36	-1.78	2.84	181.09	< .001	.10
	United States	243		-.14	2.19			
Appreciate	Japan	229	-.21	1.73	2.14	48.52	< .001	.05
	United States	244		.89	1.76			
Give a compliment	Japan	228	.41	-1.34	2.66	226.26	< .001	.13
	United States	245		.48	2.00			
Show concern	Japan	228	.34	.09	2.60	119.39	< .001	.09
	United States	244		1.41	1.59			
Encourage the other	Japan	227	.22	-.19	2.67	56.13	< .001	.04
	United States	244		.73	1.94			
Nonsexual physical contact	Japan	220	.22	-2.01	2.81	45.56	< .001	.02
	United States	242		-1.18	2.63			
Expression toward father								
Directly verbalize	Japan	228	-.32	.67	2.46	184.05	< .001	.10
	United States	240		-.99	2.64			
Indirectly verbalize	Japan	226	.26	-1.75	2.80	69.10	< .001	.04
	United States	238		-.73	2.51			
Appreciate	Japan	228	-.31	1.65	2.23	122.74	< .001	.08
	United States	239		.30	2.39			
Give a compliment	Japan	227	.23	-1.42	2.77	74.98	< .001	.04
	United States	240		-.36	2.51			
Show concern	Japan	227	.23	-.06	2.62	52.08	< .001	.03
	United States	239		.82	2.23			
Expression toward same-sex best friend								
Directly verbalize	Japan	230	-.46	1.10	2.02	160.61	< .001	.11
	United States	249		-.43	2.42			

(continued)

TABLE 3 Continued

<i>Item</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Structure Coefficient</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Univariate F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Epsilon²</i>																																																																																																																																																	
Appreciate	Japan	230	-.50	2.09	1.84	149.89	< .001	.14																																																																																																																																																	
	United States	248		.61	1.90				Disclose problems	Japan	229	-.32	1.68	1.90	60.67	< .001	.05	United States	249		.74	2.04	Encourage the other	Japan	229	-.37	2.28	1.43	53.41	< .001	.08	United States	250		1.39	1.48	Joke and laugh	Japan	229	-.38	2.60	1.23	38.42	< .001	.10	United States	250		1.85	1.08	Help or do something	Japan	227	-.39	2.04	1.56	60.52	< .001	.09	United States	249		1.10	1.48	Expression toward lover									Indirectly verbalize	Japan	225	.59	-.77	2.66	196.03	< .001	.12	United States	230		.96	2.13	Appreciate	Japan	226	-.22	2.14	1.93	13.92	< .001	.02	United States	231		1.68	1.27	Encourage the other	Japan	224	-.30	2.37	1.50	21.12	< .001	.04	United States	232		1.81	1.21	Joke and laugh	Japan	225	-.24	2.39	1.45	18.17	< .001	.04	United States	232		1.87	1.15	Help or do something	Japan	224	-.38	2.36	1.47	23.43	< .001	.05	United States	231		1.76	1.13	Tell feelings in a letter	Japan	224	.26	-.84	2.99	34.27	< .001	.02	United States
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best friends and lovers. Toward same-sex best friend, Japanese also valued “disclose problems” more than did Americans.

THE POSSIBLE INFLUENCE OF ETHNIC DIFFERENCES IN THE AMERICAN SAMPLE

Because the American sample included individuals of different ethnicities, it was important to examine whether they differed on the measures of intimacy, and whether these differences may have confounded the cultural differences reported above. Thus, we computed eight MANOVAs, one for each of the four relationships for both rating types, comparing European and Asian Americans (these were the only two ethnic groups with sample sizes large enough to provide for a meaningful comparison). Several findings indicated that ethnic differences did not confound the cultural differences reported. First, three MANOVAs were nonsignificant—conceptualization of intimacy toward same-sex friend and lover, and expression toward same-sex friend. Second, of the 43 effects reported in Tables 2 and 3, 34 of these were associated with nonsignificant ethnic group differences. Of the remaining 9, 4 were associated with findings congruent with the United States-Japan differences, whereas 5 were not. Third, the effect sizes associated with additional MANOVAs comparing Japanese versus European Americans and Japanese versus Asian Americans separately were in all cases considerably smaller than that comparing Japanese versus Americans as a whole; that is, the effect sizes associated with cultural differences were much larger than those associated with analyses separating the ethnic groups. Collectively, these findings suggested to us that the cultural differences reported above are not confounded by possible ethnic differences in the American sample.

GENDER DIFFERENCES

Based on a significant country by gender by relationship MANOVA on the conceptualization items, Wilks's lambda = .82, $F(42, 495) = 2.53$, $p < .001$, we computed discriminant analyses comparing male and female responses separately for each of the four relationships and two countries. Significant discriminant functions were computed, and items that differentiated between males and females were identified according to the same procedures used above (see Table 4). Of the 50 items meeting these criteria, females rated 49 of them higher than did the males, indicating that they endorsed these specific items as concepts of intimacy to a greater degree than did the males. Moreover, the number and type of items meeting criteria differed depending on the relationship, indicating relationship specificity in the gender differences. Across the findings, there was considerable overlap in gender differences between the United States and Japan.

Based on a significant country by gender by relationship MANOVA on the expression items, Wilks's lambda = .86, $F(45, 465) = 1.76$, $p < .01$, we also computed the same analyses on these (see Table 4). Once again, of all items meeting criteria, all but one was associated with a female > male difference, indicating that females valued the specified categories more than did males. There were interesting relationship-specific cultural differences. For same-sex best friend and lover, there was considerable overlap between the United States and Japan, with females giving higher ratings to many expression categories (with the exception of the male preference for sexual contact in Japan toward lovers). Toward mother and father,

TABLE 4
Gender Difference Analyses Separately for Each Rating Type, Relationship, and Country

<i>Rating</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Wilks's Lambda</i>	<i>Finding</i>		<i>Items With Structure Coefficients $\geq .20$ and Significant Univariate ANOVAs</i>
				χ^2	p	
Conceptualization	Mother	Japan	.892	29.397	.009	Ease, expressiveness, openness, consideration/love, common experience
		United States	.923	24.710	.038	Consideration/love, ease, physical contact, bond
	Father	Japan	.922	20.535	<i>ns</i>	
		United States	.883	37.583	.001	Openness (M > F), consideration/love
	Friend	Japan	.890	29.797	.008	Happiness, consideration/love, support/protection, similarity, expressiveness, respect
		United States	.765	83.180	.000	Consideration/love, expressiveness, bond, appreciation, happiness, physical contact, understanding, openness, ease, respect, trust, similarity, common experience
	Lover	Japan	.787	60.289	.000	Respect, support/protection, trust, happiness, consideration/love, expressiveness, appreciation, openness, similarity, understanding, bond
		United States	.922	24.241	.043	Similarity, ease, consideration/love, understanding, common experience, support/protection, bond, appreciation, respect
Expression	Mother	Japan	.889	30.821	.009	Compliment, appreciation, joke and laugh, give present, encourage, disclose personal problems
		United States	.922	22.686	<i>ns</i>	
	Father	Japan	.861	36.386	.002	Give present, compliment, appreciation
		United States	.925	21.281	<i>ns</i>	
	Friend	Japan	.676	95.308	.000	Give present, tell feelings in a letter, compliment, appreciation, show concern, encourage, disclose personal problems
		United States	.804	61.974	.000	Directly verbalize, tell feelings in a letter, disclose personal problems, appreciation, show concern, give present, compliment, encourage, engage in nonsexual physical contact, indirectly verbalize, help or do something
	Lover	Japan	.828	46.675	.000	Appreciation, disclose personal problems, joke and laugh, encourage, directly verbalize, engage in sexual physical contact (M > F), tell feelings in a letter
		United States	.901	30.168	.011	Show concern, encourage, directly verbalize, joke and laugh, disclose personal problems, appreciation

however, there were a number of gender differences for the Japanese, but none for the Americans.

DISCUSSION

The results provided partial support for both hypotheses. Toward mothers and fathers, Japanese conceptualized intimacy through psychological feelings such as “appreciation,” “understanding,” “ease,” and “bond,” more than the Americans, whereas the Americans expressed intimacy through manifested concepts such as “physical contact” across all relationships. Also, American ratings were higher on various expression modes such as “give a compliment,” “show concern,” “encourage,” and “engage in nonsexual physical contact” toward mother and father. These findings replicated previous notions of the inexpressive nature of the Japanese with regard to intimacy and their preference for high-contextual interaction in intimate relationships (e.g., Barnlund, 1975; Ting-Toomey, 1991).

The study, however, also uncovered several findings contradictory to the hypotheses and to previous research. For example, toward same-sex best friend, the Japanese conceptualized intimacy through “expressiveness” more than did the Americans, whereas Americans rated “respect” and “bond” higher than did the Japanese. Americans also rated “respect” higher than did the Japanese in conceptualizations of intimacy toward lovers. At the very least, these findings suggest that specific components of intimacy may be associated with specific relationships differently in different cultures. We have no post hoc explanations for why this pattern of data emerged. Future studies examining the culture-specific meanings of these constructs and the social roles and functions they play will be part of the key to uncovering the rationale underlying these results.

With regard to expression, Japanese valued “directly verbalizing how you feel about each other” more than did the Americans within the relationships with mother, father, and same-sex best friend, whereas Americans valued “indirectly verbalize how you feel about each other” more than the Japanese toward mother, father, and lover. In the pilot study, on one hand, direct verbalizations included statements such as “I like you” or “I love you.” Indirect expressions, on the other hand, included statements such as “I thought of you when I was on a trip,” “You know how I feel,” “I was in a hurry to come home,” or “I will come if you come.” That the Japanese preferred direct expressions more than did the Americans is surprising and may be related to the changing characteristics of the Japanese youth culture, who in many ways do not conform to previous stereotypes of classical Japanese culture (e.g., see Matsumoto, Kudoh, & Takeuchi, 1996). The same may be said of the other unexpected findings indicating Japan > United States preferences for modes of expression in relation to same-sex best friends and lovers. Or, these results may be due to the methodological characteristics of this study. Future research will need to replicate these findings and then link them systematically to characteristics of the samples that produce them.

To be sure, these findings are not mutually exclusive to the notion that Japanese are less expressive than Americans because the ratings for expression mode preferences we obtained here are not necessarily indicative of the frequency, intensity, or duration of each of the categories’ usage. It may very well be, for instance, that although Japanese rate some categories higher than do Americans, Americans may actually use the categories more frequently, more forcefully, or for greater durations than Japanese, giving the perception of greater overall expressiveness for Americans. Future studies will need to examine the linkage between

expression mode preferences we obtained in this study and actual behaviors, and cultural differences in these linkages.

Regardless of whether the findings we obtained were predicted or unexpected, we believe that they are attributable to a combination of several methodological factors unique to this study. First, the results may be due to our use of standardized data. Because cultural differences in response sets were recognized in the past but not adjusted, the present study may have uncovered cultural differences due to the manipulation of data. In fact, the findings make sense if the literature on Japanese expressivity of their "true voice" (*honno*) in private is accounted for (Condon, 1984; Lebra, 1976).

Another contributing factor may have been that both cultural groups generated the items. For example, the expressive forms of intimacy that the Japanese rated higher than the Americans, such as "communicate a feeling of appreciation" toward all relationships and "joke and laugh" toward same-sex best friend and lover, were not included in previous cross-cultural work on intimacy. In particular, the finding of "communicate a feeling of appreciation" is quite reasonable if we think about Japanese unique values of *on*, or indebtedness, in Japanese interpersonal relationships. Thus, the study may have been able to uncover more culture-specific concepts and forms of intimacy.

Third, the contradictory findings may have occurred because we included various relationships in the investigation, and as a result, unique aspects of intimacy specific to relationships were uncovered. These findings may not have been elicited if the work used single and/or ambiguous relationship terms.

Finally, the new findings may have been obtained by the fact that we have differentiated conceptual meaning from expression in understanding cultural differences. Previous cross-cultural studies on intimacy, which did not take the difference in concept and expression into account, may not have uncovered the differences we obtained.

Collectively, these methodological changes lend strong credence to the notion that innovations in methods may lead to considerably different findings in the literature. Although such methodological contributions are of course true in many areas of inquiry, we contend that they should be given special consideration in cross-cultural work.

At the same time, this study was not conducted without limitation. The average ages of the participants of both the pilot and main studies were different, and the average length of sojourn among the Japanese subjects in the pilot study was relatively long (2 years and 3 months); there were also more females among the pilot respondents than males (70% in Japan; 67% in the United States). Although U.S. respondents were from metropolitan areas, 43% of the Japanese sample was from rural areas. Also, the study investigated cultural differences on the valued mode of expression; how subjects in both cultures actually behave in intimate situations is worthy of future study.

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