chur eh?
pie KZ7
stoked
huhu grubs
pakaru
togs cuz
four by two
swannie shot bro
call me loyal rattle ya dags
ka pai good as gold
Pokarekareana pavlova L&P
it won't happen overnight, goodnight kiwi
but it will happen jandals
yeah right buzzy bees
land of the long
white cloud
yeah nah!
kiwi as she'll be right

Culture and
Communication in the
New Zealand Workplace

Contents

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Introduction

New Zealand has become increasingly culturally diverse with Auckland being the fourth most super-diverse city in the world in 2018. New Zealand is a small country and has sought to nation-build by encouraging migrants to settle (Spoonley & Macpherson, 2004); and since the 1980s government policy has ensured that most new migrants are skilled workers. In 2014 top source countries for skilled migrant workers were Philippines, India, United Kingdom (UK), Fiji, China and South Africa (MBIE 2015). This is very different to thirty plus years ago when the main source countries were Europe, UK and Pacific Islands. Policy changes between the 70s and 90s allowed people to immigrate on the basis of their qualifications and not their race (Phillips, 2015; Trlin & Watts, 2004) and as a result of these changes New Zealand has seen more migrants from the Asian region and some from Africa. As well as their skills, migrants bring with them their cultural values and beliefs. Our question is whether this has influenced the NZ working environment; are we different to what we were 30 years ago?

Most of the [NZ-relevant / internationally relevant] cultural research was conducted over 20 years ago, therefore it could be argued that the research is too dated to be of relevance or usefulness today. However, renowned cultural researcher Hofstede (2010) believes cross-cultural outcomes were based on centuries of indoctrinations and culture does not change overnight. Also supporting this point is Lachman (1988), who believes that early socialisation affects core values and late socialisation affects only peripheral values. He argues that when faced with the pressures to comply with organisational requirements and polices, employees' peripheral values may change while their core values may not. This study is only concerned with organisational values, rather than personal values. It can be argued however that organisational values are influenced by the cultural values of the community / country in which they are part

Three well known researchers Hofstede (1984), Schwartz (1992), and Hall (1976) conducted extensive research throughout the world to understand cultural differences. They came up with value dimensions by which they measured each country and plotted them on continuums. These continuums were used as a tool to identify differences between nations and are in current use today.

Two of their value dimensions are of interest to this study:

- power distance – the extent to which less powerful members of a society / organisation accept unequal distribution of power;
- context in communication – how directly or indirectly we communicate and the extent to which our meaning is derived from words as opposed to context.

We will compare our findings with previous research to see what and/or if any changes may exist.

304 participants took part in this research and answered a self-report questionnaire. The questionnaire was anonymous and distributed electronically through Survey Monkey using a snowballing method – i.e. sending it to colleagues, networks, friends and family who were asked to send it on if they were comfortable to. To bolster participant numbers, *SurveyMonkey Audience members were also invited to take part in the questionnaire.

*SurveyMonkey Audience - are representative of a diverse online population that voluntarily joined a program to take surveys

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The aim of this study is to identify where NZ is positioned on the cultural values continuums of power distance and communication context today compared with 20 years ago.

A Peek at Literature

The cultural context in which human communication occurs is perhaps the most defining influence on human interaction. Culture provides the overall framework wherein humans learn to organize their thoughts, emotions and behaviours in relation to their environment. Culture is learned; it teaches one how to think, conditions one how to feel and instructs one how to behave, especially how to interact with others—in other words, how to communicate (Neuliep 2003).

There are numerous definitions of culture, for example,

> According to anthropologist Sir Edward B Tylor (1920), *"Culture, or civilization, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (p1).*

> Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) define culture as *"consisting of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts; the essential core of culture consist of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the other hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditioning elements of future actions"* .

> *Hofstede defines culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguished the members of one group or category of people from others" (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010, p6).*

Amongst the multitude of notions and definitions, what is common to all is that; culture is learned, shared by a group of people, and has unwritten rules that programme a group of people to behave and communicate in a way that the group believes is normal and respectful. Thus, distinguishing them as a distinct group. The group's culture provides its members with an implicit model about how to behave and how to interpret the actions of others. Through socialization, individuals learn the principal values of their particular culture and their self-identities (Keesing, 1974).

There are many cultural value dimensions that have been identified; these are represented on a continuum which allows for representation of the values as continuous and varying in extent by degree, that is, no culture is only one or the other. It is important to note dimensions of cultural variability may coexist in cultures; an example of this is bi-cultural New Zealand with value differences between Māori and Pakeha (Fitzgerald, 2004; Love, 1992; Hofstede, 1980). Also, because culture is not static, values shift. Schwartz (2012) argues however that people can and do, pursue opposing
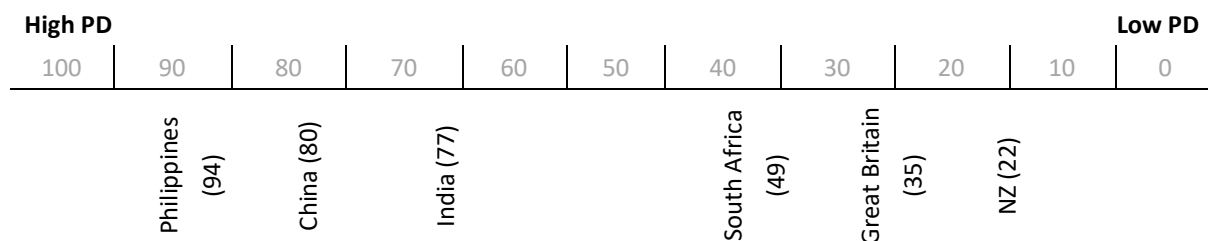
values through different acts, in different contexts and in different situations to influence positive social relations.

This can be difficult especially if you find yourself having to interact with someone who is on the opposite end of the continuum to yourself. For example, the way one is expected to interact in a high power distance culture is very different to that of a low power distance environment, likewise for context in communication.

Power Distance

Power distance is defined as "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede et al, 2010, p61). According to Hofstede (1980) people from high power distance cultures accept social inequalities and the less powerful tend to depend on the more powerful for direction, expect a more authoritarian management style, and consider questioning a person with higher status is disrespectful. On the other hand, people from a low power distance culture can be seen as the opposite wherein members prefer a more consultative management style, value working independently making decisions for themselves, and are comfortable challenging their manager. They value equality within the hierarchy and will reject leaders whom they perceive as authoritarian. (Sweetman 2012).

The continua following shows Hofstede's (2010) power distance scores for the main source countries of migrants and for NZ.

High PD										Low PD
100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0

Philippines (94) China (80) India (77) South Africa (49) Great Britain (35) NZ (22)

These are similar to the gaps Schwartz (1999) identified; except for the Philippines where Schwartz found smaller power distance then Hofstede. NZ is rated as a low power distance country and migrants are introduced to this concept on Immigration NZ website which states, "status, rank and hierarchies are much less important in Kiwi workplaces than elsewhere. Managers are respected by the staff but they are seen as one of the team. We nearly always address superiors, colleagues and clients by their first names. We treat everyone the same and will judge you on your ability and what you achieve in your job, rather than your previous qualifications, experience or status". While this depicts a low power distant business culture, it is important to note that top-down leadership exists everywhere (Parsons, 1951).

This is very different for a member of a high PD culture, for example to quote an employee from India "what is most important for me and my department is not what I do or achieve for the company, but whether the Master's favour is bestowed on me … This I have achieved by saying 'yes' to everything the Master says or does … To contradict him is to look for another job" (Negandhi & Prasad, 1971,

p128, cited in Khatri 2009). A more recent example is offered by McIntyre (2014) who found consistency with this in her Chinese and Indian participants who had been in NZ for more than six years; they still believed respect meant deferring to their manager and not questioning them as they deemed managers having higher status.

Furthermore, the expectations around workplace communication differ considerably. In high PD cultures for example, decisions tend to be made without consultation and subordinates may see their involvement in decision making as a sign of incompetence or weakness on the part of their leader (Francesco & Chen, 2000; Livermore, 2015; Earley et al, 2006). Moreover, subordinates are unwilling to express their opinions and disagreements openly due to fear of losing face or making someone else lose face (Hofstede, 2010; Khatri, 2009). Understandably this behaviour not only results in a major communication gap between senior management and subordinates because of incomplete information but is an incongruous fit in a low PD culture where the opposite is expected. For example, from a study with NZ nurses who commented about their fellow Indian nurses "they tend not to complain or question processes and find it difficult to advocate for patients when it means questioning or challenging the opinions of others, they deem it disrespectful" (Walker & Clendon 2013). This comment reflects high PD workplace behaviours and communication expectations often found in Asian cultures whereby a senior would not be questioned or challenged yet the migrant's behaviour is being interpreted through a low PD lens resulting in, perhaps, an inaccurate judgement on migrant colleagues' competence and ability.

Hofstede (1984) believes members of high PD cultures often feel lost in a low PD workplace because of lack of authoritarian managers to give them clear direction. Another example offered by Livermore (2015) "when a low PD manager answers with "I don't know" a high PD employee may ask themselves 'why are they in charge if they don't know', as in a high PD culture it is likely a superior would give a wrong answer rather than admit ignorance" (p.104) and consequently, the high PD employee believes their low PD manager is not a good manager. Yet each person's way of interacting is just as valid.

**Key differences between high and low power distance communities**

High Power	Low Power
Hierarchy in organisations reflects existential inequality between higher and lower levels.	Hierarchy in organisation means an inequality of roles, established for convenience.
Centralisation is popular.	Decentralisation is popular.
More supervisory personnel.	Fewer supervisory personnel.
There is a wide salary range between the top and bottom of the organisation.	There is a narrow salary range between the top and bottom of an organisation.
Managers rely on superiors and on formal rules.	Managers rely on their own experience and on subordinates.
Subordinates expect to be told what to do.	Subordinates expect to be consulted.
The ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat, or "good father".	The ideal boss is a resourceful democrat.
Subordinate-superior relations are emotional.	Subordinate-superior relations are pragmatic.
Privileges and status symbols are normal and popular.	Privileges and status symbols are frowned upon.
'White collar' jobs are valued more than 'blue collared' jobs.	Manual work has the same status as office work.

(Hofstede 2010)

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Context in Communication

Communication involves a sender encoding a message and sending that message through a channel to a receiver. Put simply "communication involves the exchange of meaning: it is my attempt to let you know what I mean" (Adler, 2008, p70).

It is assumed that in communication exchanges the message sent is the same that is received. However, both the sender and the receiver are encoding and decoding within their own cultural field, that is, their values and norms. Varner and Beamer (2005) state "so interconnected are communication and culture that some scholars have been led to use them interchangeably: 'culture is communication' and 'communication is culture'" (p27). The challenge in communication is our cultural conditioning acts as a mental template against which all new information is translated.
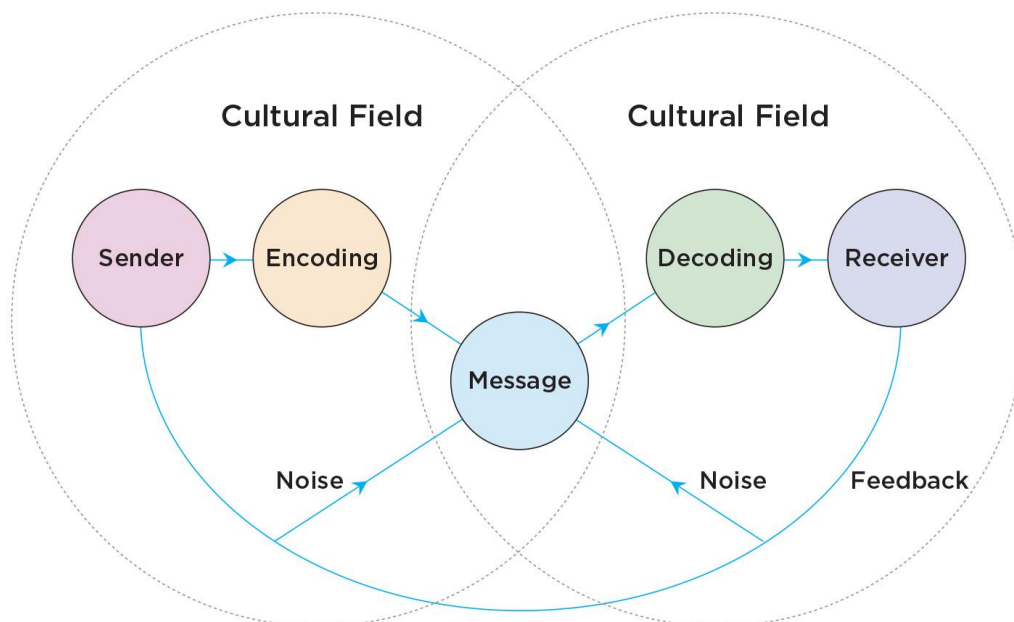
As Thomas and Inkson (2003) explain, "we are not cameras: we do not take in neutral information from out there and reproduce it exactly on the films of our minds. We perceive information with cultural and other cues embedded in it and interpret it in light of our own preconceived framework" (p47). Therefore, to communicate successfully, shared meaning needs to be found between the sender and the receiver.

Communication includes both non-verbal and verbal cues and takes place within a setting called context; this context can be physical, social or relational (Lustig & Koester, 2003).

Edward T. Hall (1976) identified a cross-cultural communication approach based on the role of context needed to get a message across. Hall's model of low context and high context communication is one of the main theoretical frameworks for explaining cross-cultural communication. Hall believes that in a high-context culture, there are many hidden contextual elements that help people to understand the communication rules. "Much of what one must know to operate is absorbed from culture, as if by

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osmosis" (Hooker, 2008); as a result, much is taken for granted. This can be very confusing for members of the outgroup who do not understand the 'unwritten contextual rules' of the culture. Context was further refined by Heylighen & Dewaele (2002) as "everything that is available for awareness which is not part of the expression itself, but which is necessary to correctly interpret the expression" (p297). On the other hand, in a low-context culture, the spoken word is what carries most of the meaning. While this means that more explanation is needed, as there are little contextual details, it also means there is less chance of misunderstanding, particularly when visitors are present. It can be argued however, that high context communication is more efficient as it relies on intuitive understanding and does not need everything spelt out clearly (Neuliep, 2003; Varner & Beamer, 2006; Hooker 2018), (however time must be devoted to programming (Hall, 1976) for this to be true).

Hall also utilises a continuum to show distance between cultures. Gannon and Pillao (2010) argue however, that Hall's research is similar to that of in-group / out group dichotomy rather than an overarching dimension on which countries can be mapped. They state an example wherein Hall describes that Japanese interact in a low context way with foreigners but in a high context way between themselves. Nevertheless, Hall's work, like Hofstede's and Schwartz's, is a useful tool as a starting point to identifying communication differences. NZ is not specifically mentioned in Hall's list of countries; therefore, the identification of where NZ is placed on the continuum is guided by Hall's descriptions of low context countries that are similar to NZ and from Hofstede's dimensions. Hall (1976) posits that Western countries are generally low context while Eastern countries are generally high context. It can be said NZ is seen as a low context culture (Hall 1976; Hofstede, 1991). In other words NZ communication style is driven more by the words used than contextual cues around those words.

Low Context   **High Context**

| South Africa | Great Britain | | NZ | India | Philippines | China | |
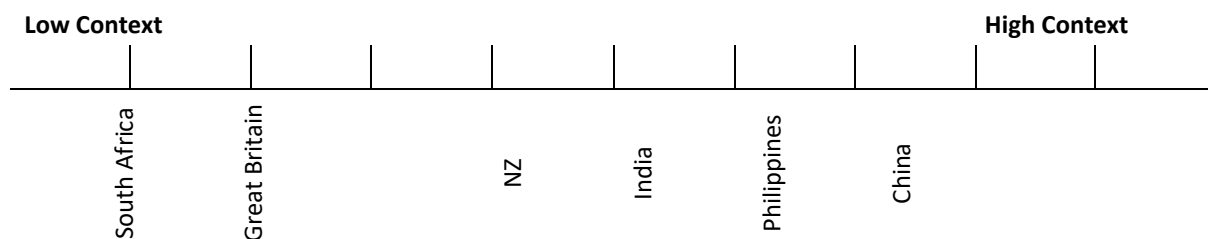
The style of communication used affects the way in which a person interacts and behaves in situations. A primary goal of high context communication is to save face and preserve harmony to build and strengthen relationships. Thus, a more indirect and circuitous answer may be given or more time to process the query is taken to ensure careful consideration before offering an answer, so as not to cause loss of face. As a result, silence becomes part of communication. This is the opposite for low context where silence could be interpreted as the person has nothing to share, or to add. In this case many high context communicators are misjudged by low context communicators as not having ideas to contribute in a brainstorming session where ideas are just blurted out. In a study by Walker & Clendon (2013) a NZ nurse commented that "certain cultures are not comfortable to openly discuss problems in the same way as 'Kiwis' would … maybe they don't feel comfortable and confident to speak up in a group" (p 15) as would be expected in low context and low power culture and thus their contribution is missing if another channel is not offered for their feedback.

Key differences between high and low context communication

High Context	Low Context
Relationships depend on trust, build up slowly and are stable. One distinguishes between people inside and outside one's circle.	Relationships begin and end quickly. Many people can be inside ones' circle; circle's boundaries are not clear.
How things get done are depends on the relationship with people and attention to group process.	Things get done by following procedures and paying attention to goals.
One's identity is rooted in groups.	One's identity is rooted in one's self and one's accomplishments.
Social structure and authority are centralised.	Social structure is decentralised.
High use of non-verbal elements.	Low use of non-verbal element. Message is carried mostly by words.
Verbal message is implicit: context (situation, people, nonverbal elements) is more important than words	Verbal message is explicit. Context is less important than words.
Verbal message is indirect; one talks around the point and embellishes it.	Communication is direct; one spells things out directly.
Communication is seen as an art form – a way of engaging someone.	Communication is seen as a way of exchanging information, ideas and opinions.
Disagreement is personalised. One is sensitive to conflict expressed in another's non-verbal communication.	Disagreement is depersonalised. One withdraws from conflict with another and gets on with the task. Focus is on rational solutions.
Everything has its own time. Time is not easily scheduled; needs of people interfere with keeping to a set time.	Things are scheduled to be done at particular times; one thing at a time. What is important is that activity is done efficiently.
Change is slow. Things are rooted in the past, slow to change and stable.	Change is fast. One can make change and see immediate results.
Learning occurs by first observing others as they demonstrate and then practicing.	Learning occurs by following explicit direction and explanation of others.

(Halverson 1993)

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Research Focus

Because the research on cultural values and the way we communicate in New Zealand was done some time (over 20 years) ago, we want to know if and how we've changed. The aim of this research: Have we changed and if so how?

Methodology

We designed a self-report questionnaire to research objectives and focusses for the present study. The communication cultural-context questionnaire from Halverson (1993) was available in published literature and used to measure the communication context. For power distance a questionnaire was created using available published literature from Hofstede (2001) and Yoo et al (2001). A limitation of this is that it cannot be a direct comparison with Hofstede's 1980 study as the questions are not exact. The questionnaire was anonymous and distributed electronically through Survey Monkey using the snowballing method – i.e. sending it to colleagues, networks, friends and family who were asked to send it on if they were comfortable to. 243 participants answered via this method. To bolster participant numbers 100 SurveyMonkey audience were also invited to take part in the questionnaire. Altogether 343 response were collected and among the retrieved ones 304 were complete and valid.

Participants

From the 304 participants 195 were born and schooled in New Zealand, 16 identifying as Māori and 5 as Pacific Peoples; and 109 born were overseas with 19 of those schooled in NZ. Migrant countries included Australia, Bangladesh Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, France, Germany, India, Korea, Kuwait, Libya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, The Netherlands and Tonga.

63% identified as female and 37% identified as male. Within the female category one participant born in India also responded as 'girl'. The majority of participants were aged between 25 – 54 years and have lived most of their life either urban or central city. The majority, 189, live in Auckland, with 19 in Otago, 15 in Christchurch, 15 in Wellington, 8 in Hamilton, 7 in Palmerston North, 7 in both Northland and Southland, 7 in New Plymouth, 6 in Tauranga and the remainder in smaller regions around NZ.

All categories of work listed were covered with the main occupations being in the Business Finance and Legal, Healthcare and Medical, Journalism/Marketing/PR, Education and Training, IT, Trades and Services and Construction sectors respectively.
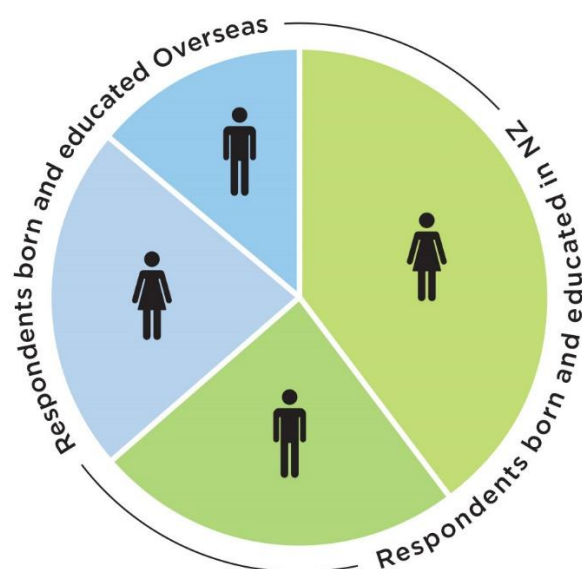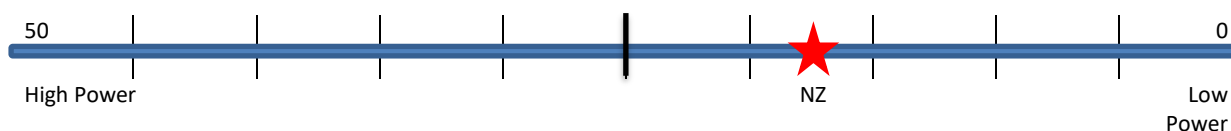
Results

Power Distance

Power distance is defined as "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede et al, 2010)

NZ remains on the lower power distance side of the continuum scoring 18 from a possible score of 50, with 50 indicating high power distance and 0 low power distance.

50   High Power   NZ   0 Low Power

Observations

The following are called observations as the numbers are too small to give valid results but are interesting in so far that the migrant scores are very similar to the NZ scores, yet the countries migrants have originated from are generally higher in power distance. Has the NZ cultures influenced the migrants or are they not typical of most of their population? This is often said of people migrating.

Migrant participants' scores
(*n=30*) UK averaged a score of 18
(*n=12*) India averaged a score of 19
(*n=8*) Philippines averaged a score of 19
(*n=7*) Australia averaged a score of 22.7
(*n=7*) South Africa average a score of 19.5
Note: The remaining participant numbers are too small to consider.

Power Distance and Gender

Female (*n=190*) averaged a score of 18.5

Male (*n= 114*) averaged a score of 19.8

Power Distance and Age

|	18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65+
Female	22.2	18	18.5	18.1	18	19.2
Male	22	20	19	18.8	19.3	19.5
Overall score for age group	22.1	19.7	18.9	19.3	18.8	19.4

Communication Context

High-context culture and low-context culture is a measure of how explicit or implicit the messages exchanged in a culture are.

A high-context culture relies on implicit communication and nonverbal cues. In high-context communication, a message cannot be understood without a great deal of background information. A low-context culture relies on explicit communication. Low-context culture, the message will be interpreted through the words (whether written or spoken) and their explicit meaning.

Scoring: each question either represented high or low context preference and is scored accordingly with a 0 score = neither high or low context. Scores between 0-3 indicate a relative bi-cultural orientation along the high/low dimension while score close to 20 indicate a strong preference towards either very high or low context.

The current research shows NZ is one point off the middle on the low context side of the continuum.
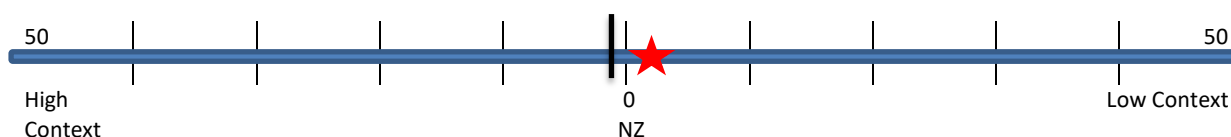
Observations

The following are called observations as the numbers are too small to give valid results but are interesting in so far that the migrant scores are very similar to the NZ scores yet the countries migrants have come from are generally higher context.

Both the Indian and Filipino participants were also in the middle of the continuum.

South African participants average 4.7 low context.

Context and Gender

Female (*n=190*) averaged a score of 0.4 high context
Male (*n= 114*) averaged a score of 1.9 low context

Context and Age

	18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65+
Female	3.4 L	1 L	1 H	0.5 H	0.25 L	2.5 L
Male	2 H	0.5 L	1.2 L	2.4 L	4 L	3.2 L

L=low context; H=High context

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Discussion

The following discussion discusses each dimension separately.

Power Distance

NZ prides itself on being an egalitarian society. It does appear however, there has been a small shift to accepting slightly higher power distance in the workplace. The current study finds NZ scoring 18 from a possible 50 compared to Hofstede's findings 22 / 100. Caution must be taken with this comparison however, as the scoring mechanisms and questions are not exact.

It appears that we see each other as equals in the workplace and most respondents preferred to work for a manager that allowed a lot of autonomy and individual decision making. While there is acceptance of an amount of hierarchy, 91% of respondents believe everyone should be spoken to the same way irrelevant of position, 87% believed that managers, like anyone should earn respect and 96 % believe that we can learn from each other, i.e. the manager does not necessarily have all the answers. This is very different from a high power distance workplace wherein a manager is expected to make decisions without consulting their team and if they were to consult, team members may view their manager as incompetent or weak.

Managers are experts and should not expect to learn anything from their team members.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
188	104	6	5	1

Strongly / disagree indicates LOW power

The responses show that NZers prefer a participative decision-making style in the workplace, with 234 respondents disagreeing with the statement – "People in higher positions should make most decisions without consulting people in lower positions". This was also supported in two other questions wherein respondents indicated that it was okay to disagree with the decisions made by people in higher positions and that a manager does not lose respect when they ask advice from the team before making a final decision.   As Hofstede points out in low power distance work environments subordinates expect to be consulted before a decision is made if it affects their work, but accept the manager is the one who has the final decision (Hofstede, 2010); they also feel free to question their managers (Livermore, 2015).

People in higher positions should make most decisions without consulting people in lower positions.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
94	140	48	20	2

Strongly / disagree indicates LOW power.

Employees lose respect for a manager who asks them for their advice before they make a final decision.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
126	140	22	11	5

Strongly / disagree indicates LOW power.

77% respondents preferred to work for Manager types 3 and 4 (described below), both of whom usually consult with their subordinates before they reach a decision.

> *Manager 3 - Usually consults with their subordinates before they reach a decision. Listens to their advice, considers it and then announces their decision. They then expect all workers loyally to implement it whether, or not, it agrees with the advice they gave.*

> *Manager 4 - Usually calls a meeting of their subordinates when there is an important decision to be made. Puts the problem before the group and tries to obtain a consensus. If they obtain consensus, they accept this as the decision. If consensus is impossible, they usually make the decision them self.*

While most preferred Manager 3 and 4, reality is slightly different. 36% of respondents stated their manager more closely resembled Manager 1 or 2, a more high power distance style.

> *Manager 1 - Usually makes their decisions promptly and communicates them to their subordinates clearly and firmly. Expects subordinates to carry out the decision loyally and without raising any difficulties.*

> *Manager 2 - Usually makes their decisions promptly, but before going ahead tries to explain them fully to their subordinates. Gives them the reason for the decisions and answers whatever questions they may have*

37 % stated their manager did indeed resemble Manager 3 or 4, a lower power distance style. 7.5% said their manager did not closely resemble any of the Manager types and for 20% of respondents this question was not applicable.

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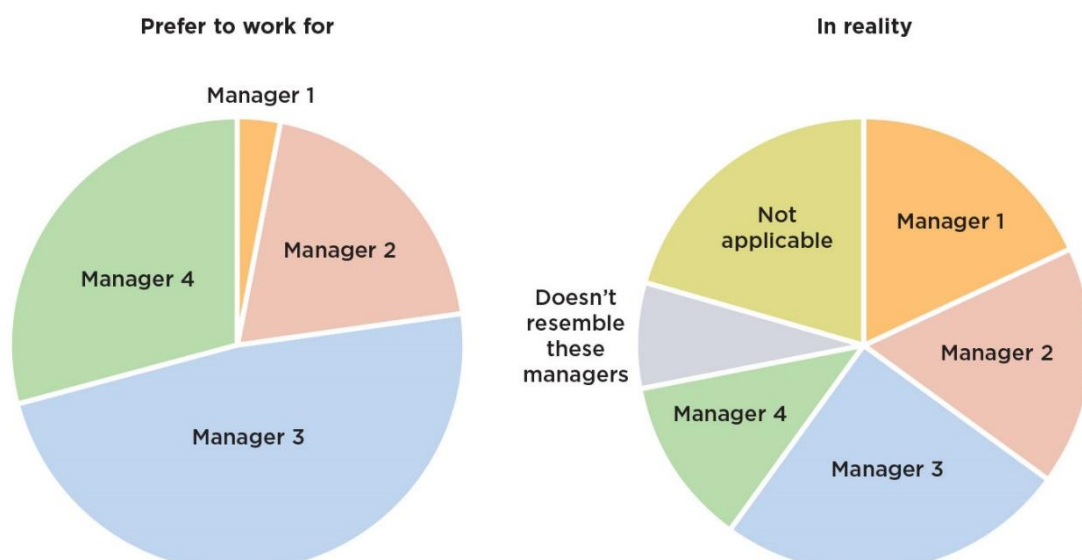
Williams (2008) believes the particular style a leader uses in decision making also contributes to team effectiveness. The mismatch found in this study regarding preferred management-decision making style versus reality, begs the question: is this impacting team effectiveness in the NZ workplace? This would be worthy of further study.

Interestingly the use of titles to show a person's rank or status in the workplace is somewhat acceptable. Although 32% respondents neither agreed or disagreed, 26% agreed and the same disagreed. What the question did not specifically ask is whether the titles were actually used to address someone in person. This question would have been a better indication of a higher power culture.

An earlier question contradicted this finding. There was strong agreement, 91%, which indicated that everyone should be talked to in the same way regardless of position. While this represents a low power distance business culture, it is important to note that top-down leadership exists everywhere (Parsons, 1951). It would also be fair to say that to some extent a certain degree of power distance is essential if organisations are to survive. I suspect that the use of organisation charts which typically use titles to show the hierarchy of the organisation is an accepted way to understand who's who in an organisation rather than as inequality of power. Caution is needed by using titles as a measure of power distance as it could be also be considered politeness.

Interesting enough there was no significant differences between those born and schooled in NZ to those born and schooled overseas. This supports the theory that people who migrate may not be typical of their general culture. Overall NZ managers and employees expect to be consulted, share their expertise with each other and be accessible to one another thus remaining a low power distance culture.

Context in Communication

While no research has been specifically conducted on NZers, assumptions have been made that NZ is on the lower context side of the continuum, albeit closer to the middle than our English-speaking counterparts. This may be because of our low power distance and more individualist culture. This is supported by comments on the NZ Immigration site "In New Zealand freedom of choice and independence is highly valued and most people in professional workplaces try not to impose too directly on someone's right to make their own decisions" and "New Zealanders often soften their language when making suggestions or expressing their opinions at work to avoid imposing their views too strongly on others and risking a relationship breakdown" (Immigration NZ, 2019).

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Our findings support this middle of the road placement for context. Consider the following statements, by way of example:

188 agreed with the statement – "When communicating, I tend to use a lot of facial expression, hand gestures and body movements, rather than relying mostly on words"; and 190 agreed with – "I pay more attention to the context of a conversation - who said what and under what circumstances - than I do the words". These statements reflect high context.

versus

187 who agreed with the statement – "When communicating, I tend to spell things out quickly and directly, rather than talk around and add to the point"; and 157 agreeing with – "I prefer having tasks and procedures explicitly defined to having a general idea of what has to be done". These reflect a lower context preference.

One trait of lower context that came through a little more strongly was the prioritisation of time regarding both punctuality and task. 76% preferred to get the job done before socialising, over half of respondents preferred setting a time schedule and 57% believed being on time was important. This last point is interesting, as generally speaking NZ runs by the clock versus being run by relationships as in a high context culture. As per some advice on NZ etiquette which states, "The first rule of business meetings in New Zealand is to be on time – there is no such thing as 'fashionably late'. Lateness is considered a sign of rudeness and unreliability and could cost you your business deal" (Podner, 2014; Renner, 2016). Maybe NZ has been influenced by both bi-culturalism and multi-culturalism and would be worthy of more research.

I believe it is more important to be on time than to let other concerns take priority

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
8	54	69	130	43

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Another trait of lower context is individualism and believing one's identity is rooted in one's self and one's accomplishments (Halverson, 2008), having one's own space and working autonomously. The results support this, somewhat, with just over half of participants indicating the preference for their own space, (with 24% neutral) and 57% considering their own likes and dislikes when making decisions (with 20% neutral). A third of respondents preferred to work by themselves and 43% were neutral on this point. When it came to rewards only 38% agreed it should be given to the individual rather than the group, although 40% were neutral on this point.

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Conversely relationships do seem to be important indicating a tendency for higher context and collectivist attitude. For example, 44% of respondents would describe themselves in terms of family and relationships rather than accomplishments (with 24% neutral); and 76% preferred a small close group of friends rather than a larger, less close group, indicating a higher context attitude.

Again, this shows we are do not have a high preference for either side of the continuum.

When we look at power distance and context in communication together, the respect for individual rights and contribution, compared with the respect for relationships, it seems we are juxtaposed and do not quite fit neatly into a box, i.e. for power distance we have a clear preference to lower power distance but for not so much for context in communication. This can easily create implications for migrants coming into NZ, especially from a hierarchical culture. For example, remembering the Immigration NZ site in which they warn NZ employers, "In New Zealand, employers often speak in a less direct manner, which can make our instructions sound like requests rather than orders. For example, you might ask 'would you mind fixing this?' but your migrant employee may be expecting an instruction like, 'get this done' or 'do this'. Our soft approach may make them unsure how important the task really is".

It is hard to judge whether we have moved as a country on this continuum as we have no previous hard data and have often been compared with Australia or other English-speaking countries. It is said that generally, cultures with western European roots rely more heavily on low context communication (Hooker, 2008, Hofstede 2010), however, it does not seem the case here as we prefer both in the workplace.

Conclusion

In conclusion I have to agree with both Hofstede (2010) and Lachman (1998). Hofstede who believes cross-cultural outcomes were based on centuries of indoctrinations and culture does not change overnight. This is evident, especially in the power distance dimension and while there may have been a slight shift, the study found no significant difference compared with the original study of NZ. Lachman, who believes that early socialisation affects core values and late socialisation affects only peripheral values and therefore, when faced with the pressures to conform with organisational requirements and regulations, employees' peripheral values may shift however their core values remain. As this study was concerned with the workplace it can be assumed this is true of some migrants, especially those who have come from countries who are placed at opposite ends of the continuum to NZ. Further research on personal values versus how one behaves in the workplace would be beneficial to ascertain whether it is indeed true.

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Power Distance Questionnaire Results

Q1. People in lower positions should not disagree with decisions by people in a higher position.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
118	145	29	11	1

Strongly / disagree indicates LOW power.

Q2. Managers are experts and should not expect to learn anything from their team members.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
188	104	6	5	1

Strongly / disagree indicates LOW power.

Q3. People should be talked to in the same way regardless of their position.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	12	15	115	161

Strongly / agree indicates LOW power.

Q4. People in higher positions should make most decisions without consulting people in lower positions.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
94	140	48	20	2

Strongly / disagree indicates LOW power.

Q5. People in higher positions should earn respect rather than expect.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	14	24	128	137

Strongly / agree indicates LOW power.

Q6. People in higher positions should not delegate important tasks to people in lower positions.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
64	161	47	27	5

Strongly / disagree indicates LOW power.

Q7. My immediate manager should support and encourage my career advancement.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	3	22	150	129

Strongly / agree indicates LOW power.

Q8. Employees lose respect for a manager who asks them for their advice before they make a final decision.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
126	140	22	11	5

Strongly / disagree indicates LOW power.

Q9. Titles should be used to show a person's status and rank in the organisation.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
34	82	98	82	8

Strongly / disagree indicates LOW power.

Q10 – Type of manager preferred.

Manager 3 and 4 represent lower power distance.

146 participants preferred to work for Manager 3 - *Usually consults with their subordinates before they reach a decision. Listens to their advice, considers it and then announces their decision. They then expect all workers loyally to implement it whether, or not, it agrees with the advice they gave.*

88 participants preferred to work for Manager 4 - *Usually calls a meeting of their subordinates when there is an important decision to be made. Puts the problem before the group and tries to obtain a consensus. If they obtain consensus, they accept this as the decision. If consensus is impossible, they usually make the decision them self.*

60 participants preferred to work for Manager 2 - *Usually makes their decisions promptly, but before going ahead tries to explain them fully to their subordinates. Gives them the reason for the decisions and answers whatever questions they may have.*

10 participants preferred to work for Manager 1 - *Usually makes their decisions promptly and communicates them to their subordinates clearly and firmly. Expects subordinates to carry out the decision loyally and without raising any difficulties.*

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Communication Context Questionnaire Results

Q1. When communicating, I tend to use a lot of facial expression, hand gestures and body movements, rather than relying mostly on words.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
7	47	62	150	38

Strongly / agree indicates HIGH context

Q2. I pay more attention to the context of a conversation - who said what and under what circumstances - than I do the words.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
2	38	74	166	24

Strongly / agree indicates HIGH context

Q3. When communicating, I tend to spell things out quickly and directly, rather than talk around and add to the point.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
3	48	66	150	37

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Q4. In a disagreement, I tend to be more emotional than logical and rational.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
21	122	61	82	18

Strongly / agree indicates HIGH context

Q5. I tend to have a small, close group of friends rather than a large, but less close group of friends.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
8	34	27	145	90

Strongly / agree indicates HIGH context

Q6. When working with others, I prefer to get the job done first and socialise afterward rather than socialise first and then tackle the job.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
4	31	38	150	81

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Q7. I would rather work in a group than by myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
14	86	130	64	10

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Q8.

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I believe rewards should be given for individual accomplishment rather than for group accomplishments.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
9	54	124	93	24

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Q9.   I describe myself in terms of my accomplishments rather than in terms of my family and relationships.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
35	100	72	80	17

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Q10.   I prefer sharing space with others to having my own private space.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
38	116	73	70	7

Strongly / agree indicates HIGH context

Q11.   I would rather work for someone who maintains authority and functions for the good of the group than work for someone who allows a lot of autonomy and individual decision making.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
53	105	79	52	14

Strongly / agree indicates HIGH context

Q12.   I believe it is more important to be on time than to let other concerns take priority.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
8	54	69	130	43

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Q13.   I prefer working on one thing at a time to working on a variety of things at once.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
14	93	74	108	15

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Q14.   I generally set a time schedule and keep to it rather than leaving things unscheduled and go with the flow.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
8	81	51	123	41

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Q15.   I find it easier to work with someone who is fast and wants to see immediate results than to work with someone who is slow and wants to consider all the facts.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
8	59	92	121	24

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Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Q16. In order to learn about something, I tend to consult many sources of information rather than go to the one best authority.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
7	60	61	155	21

Strongly / agree indicates HIGH context

Q17. In solving problems, I prefer to focus on the whole situation rather than focussing on specific parts or taking one step at a time.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
3	56	56	153	36

Strongly / agree indicates HIGH context

Q18. When tackling a new task, I would rather figure it out on my own by experimentation than follow someone else's example or demonstrations.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
6	98	96	93	11

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

Q19. When making decisions, I consider my likes and dislikes, not just the facts.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
8	62	62	158	14

Strongly / agree indicates HIGH context

Q20. I prefer having tasks and procedures explicitly defined to having a general idea of what has to be done.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither D or A	Agree	Strongly Agree
15	74	59	129	27

Strongly / agree indicates LOW context

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