The Relationship Between Emotional Expression and Psychological Distress amongst British, Indian, Polish, and South African University Students

Dovile Vore

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Abstract

Background: People from ethic minority groups living in the United Kingdom face inequalities when using mental health services. Young adults, particularly under the age of 25 years, are also less likely to receive mental health treatment than any other age group. These disparities in accessing and receiving treatment have been explained by a lack of cultural competence in mainstream healthcare services. Cultural values influence how people communicate their psychological distress and knowledge of cultural factors in emotional expression is needed to improve clinical practice. Several cross-cultural studies have described individual constructs of emotional expression, yet the organisation of the multiple emotional expression components remains unknown. This study aims to uncover the organisation of these constructs, clarify the link between emotional expressions and psychological distress, and highlight cultural differences in communicating psychological distress. Cultures that are most prevalent in the UK will be explored in the study. **Method:** A non-clinical sample of 399 university students (99 in India, 100 in Poland, 100 in South Africa, and 100 in the UK) were investigated. The questionnaires included the Emotional Self-Disclosure Scale, the Distress Disclosure Index, the Emotional Expressivity Scale, the Berkeley Expressivity Questionnaire, the Self-Concealment Scale, the Ambivalence over Emotional Expressiveness Questionnaire, and the Clinical Outcomes Routine Evaluation Outcome Measure. **Results:** An exploratory factor analysis was conducted on 15 emotional expression items and six factors were retained: Disclosure of Negative Emotions, Comfort with Emotional Expression, Expression of Distress, Lack of Affect, Expression of Positive Emotions, and Disclosure of Anger. An analysis of covariance indicated that only Comfort with Emotional Expression, Expression of Distress, and Expression of Positive Emotions significantly predicted psychological distress. Culture did not affect the level of psychological distress. A multivariate analysis of variance demonstrated cultural differences across two emotional expression factors – Expression of Distress and Expression of Positive Emotions. Further, discriminant analysis showed that South African students were significantly more expressive of distress compared to Polish and Indian students, while Indian students were more expressive of positive emotions than British, Polish, and South African students. **Conclusion: The** findings of this study provide a unique categorisation of emotional expression constructs that adds original support to

existing taxonomic studies in a way that examines broad emotional expression dimensions - including verbal, behavioural, and comfort - with expression components. The results also show that ambivalence over emotional expression and disclosure of distress and positive emotions are strongly associated with psychological well-being. Significant differences of emotional expression were identified among British, Indian, Polish and South African participants in this research project. These findings have implications for the need to improve recommendations regarding cultural competency in mental health provision, particularly psychological therapy.

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1 Reflexive Statement

Reflexivity refers to the process of looking at the ways in which a researcher may affect and be affected by a research project (Cole & Masny, 2012). Reflexivity provides an opportunity for the researcher to question their own thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and behaviours and in turn gain an understanding of personal influences on the outcomes and processes of research (Bolton, 2010). Theorists have documented the relationship between the research topic and the personal experiences of the researcher (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009). This is the case of the present cross-cultural study in which the exploration of emotional expression and psychological distress represents both personal and professional interests. Therefore I will describe how my personal experiences influenced the research focus as well as my attempts to manage my subjectivity in the research process.

On a professional level, my interest in emotional expressivity and psychological distress developed whilst I was working as a mental health practitioner for the Crisis Resolution and intensive Home Treatment Team (CRHTT). I had worked there for three years prior to commencing of my doctoral training. The CRHTT is a 24-hour service that urgently responds to adults of all ages in a mental health crisis, and it provides psychosocial assessments, develops clinical formulations, delivers initial crisis interventions, and forms treatment plans. My daily responsibilities included supporting highly distressed clients over the telephone, and delivering assessments and crisis interventions at their home, in outpatient clinics, and in Accident and Emergency (A&E) rooms. Client presentations included psychosis, acute anxiety and depression, severe self-harm and suicide attempts; and all the clients needed of urgent mental health help. I was deeply touched by my clients' struggles and their stories. Thus, I felt a huge emotional conflict when I had to prioritise crisis calls due to a high volume of emergencies. Often, I would look up to my senior colleagues for guidance on what was the 'right thing to do' on the days when the crisis telephone lines would not stop ringing, the queue of distressed and wounded people at the A&E would not reduce, and pleas from police officers and ambulance crews to assist with 'life or death' situations became too overwhelming. I wonder if my anxiety and anger about having to judge whose emotional pain was

'greater' sublimated into a research journey to make sense of my emotional experiences.

Although my colleagues practised safely and followed clinical protocols, I struggled to accept their responses to clients with highly expressed emotions, and I noticed a pattern in their approach it seemed that in order to offer help, they required the clients to suppress their expressiveness. I observed many clinicians end crisis calls with an instruction to 'call back when you are calmer and able to talk rationally' and abruptly cut assessments short by distracting clients when they attempted to vent their feelings or when they became distressed. I also observed them being especially attentive and supportive to clients who were inexpressive. My curiosity about their judgements towards clients who were highly expressive was met with comments such as 'they are not genuinely unwell', 'they are just being emotional', 'it's not the way to ask for help', and 'they are not in a serious crisis'. It seemed that emotional expressiveness was not perceived as a sign of psychological distress, but rather as an undesirable personality trait or behavioural problem. In contrast, inhibited emotions were perceived as a symptom of psychological ill being. I felt upset and frustrated that emotionally expressive clients seemed to wait longer for support and that their assessments and treatment plans were often inconclusive. It made me wonder about the link between emotional expressivity and emotional experience.

My colleagues shared their own emotional expression theories, which seemed to be heavily influenced by their personal stories, social norms, and cultural values. I wondered whether care provision was influenced by clinicians' cultural values. The CRHTT supports an ethnically diverse population with 30-40% of all people in the area being something other than White British. The team was similarly diverse in terms of their cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Many of my colleagues disclosed strong views on how people from the same or similar cultural backgrounds as them should express and manage psychological distress. It felt as though informal discussions about culture and psychological wellbeing among colleagues acted as an informal training on how to work with people from certain cultures. I observed a considerable difference in the delivery of assessments and treatments to clients from different cultural backgrounds. South Asian clients frequently received long-term systemic interventions and their family members were very involved in the

assessment and treatment. Black African clients usually received brief crisis resolution interventions before being discharged back to the care of their General Practitioner (GP). Polish clients often attended A&E following self-harm incidents or suicide attempts but rarely engaged in follow-up treatment. White British clients were most likely to be offered referrals for psychological therapy. I was disappointed that clients seemed to receive different interventions based on their cultural backgrounds. I shared my observations with colleagues who understood my concerns and acknowledged cultural patterns but also expressed their belief that certain interventions work best for particular cultural groups. Similarly, I recognised cultural factors influencing treatment options in the psychological therapy service. At the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service where I also worked before my doctoral training, ethnic minority clients were usually asked if they wanted to be referred to a specialist multi-ethnic counselling service instead. Alternatively, they were more likely to be offered structured cognitive-behavioural treatment than counselling. I wondered if ethnic minority clients and their emotional difficulties were misinterpreted, stereotyped, or viewed as different in the assessment and treatment processes. On another hand, I was curious about the cultural differences' impact on the perceptions of psychological wellbeing, emotional expression, and coping.

Inequalities in mental health service provision to ethnic minority clients using mental health services have been well documented (Department of Health, 2003; 2005; NIMHE Inside outside, 2003). In recognition of this, cultural competency training is mandatory for practitioners in all NHS services. I found it difficult to make peace with the notion that mental health care provision continues to be greatly affected by cultural factors despite the implementation of cultural competence policies, guidelines, and training. While reviewing relevant literature on cultural competence in healthcare provision within the NHS, I observed that cultural competency definitions vary significantly among different theoretical models and conceptual frameworks. I found considerable research exploring various aspects of culture including behaviours and beliefs, but very few accounts on cultural differences in emotional expression. In fact, there is no research available exploring emotional expression and psychological distress among South Africans, Polish, or Indian populations. I wondered if a lack of understanding about cultural differences in emotional expression could be a principal factor in poorer therapy experiences for

ethnic minority groups in the United Kingdom. Effective communication between professionals and clients about their emotions is paramount for the positive outcome of therapies. Thus, misinterpretation or failure to recognise the verbal and non-verbal expression of emotions may lead to an unsatisfactory therapy experience, poor outcome, and high dropout rates. I therefore wanted the opportunity to understand cultural differences in emotional expressions and the experience of psychological distress. I also hope that the findings of this research project contribute to the improvement of cultural competency in psychology services and that they help ethnic minority clients to be better understood in therapy rooms.

On a personal level, I wonder if my curiosity in this research area was driven by an unconscious desire for my own emotional experiences of cultural transition to be heard and validated. I was born and raised in Lithuania, but I lived all my adult life in the United Kingdom. I had to make sense of my cultural identity and self-concept within the context of both migration and developmental transition when I came to a new culture during my emerging adulthood (Cohen & Kassan, 2018). The process of understanding who I was and who I wanted to become while trying to adopt new cultural norms was especially challenging. I often felt in-between cultures and identities. Berry's (2001) model of acculturation suggests that individuals go through the process of resolving what cultural characteristics they should maintain and the degree to which they should be involved in other cultures. Therefore, I believe that culture has a great impact on how we think, feel, and behave, but each individual has a unique way of negotiating his or her cultural identity. Furthermore, I believe that there is no 'one size fits all' solution in mental health care, but a clearer understanding of cultures is needed in order to help professionals tailor their interventions to meet the needs of culturally diverse clients.

Due to past professional and personal experiences, I will inevitably bring a subjective stance to this research project. I believe that we all carry a certain set of conscious and unconscious assumptions, and we must bracket or learn to work with them in order to avoid a biased review of the literature, design, outcomes, and interpretation of the study. Reflexive research encourages a critical approach in a literature review, analysis of the data, and a transparent display in writing the findings and interpretations (Finlay, 2002). If I am aware of my thoughts, feelings,

experiences, culture, and social history, then I can increase the research accuracy and contribute to the information in meaningful and transformative ways. The utilisation of reflexivity in quantitative research has been often criticised to limit its objective nature (Walker et al., 2013). However, it is not enough to simply report accurate results and even quantitative researchers need to engage in an explicit analysis of their own experiences to question not only what was discovered but also how it was discovered (Attia & Edge, 2017). Counselling psychologists have a responsibility to bring a collaborative, reflexive, multicultural, and progressive perspective not only to their clinical practice but also to their research in order to facilitate a change at the micro, meso, and macro levels (Arthur & Collins, 2010).

I acknowledge that I am assuming that there are significant differences in psychological distress among cultures. By engaging in reflexive practice, I have become uncomfortably aware of my belief that overall stress levels may be higher in some countries but not others possibly due to socioeconomic and political issues. Furthermore, I expect that the Polish and South African samples will report lower emotional expressivity and higher ambivalence towards emotional expression compared to the British and Indian samples. I also expect to find a negative relationship between emotional expressivity and psychological distress. I ensured that I bracketed those assumptions from the start by giving equal attention to the existing research during the literature review. I have also attempted to reduce the subjective influence by using an exploratory quantitative approach without a formal hypothesis. By recognising and reflecting on the connection between my assumptions and my research project, I will make further efforts to bracket my influences throughout. Additionally, I will attempt to reduce biases by recruiting participants in their country of origin, and the data collection will be completed using validated questionnaires in person rather than online.

I acknowledge that I looked for evidence to support my bias concerning emotional expression and my beliefs about cultural-specific stress levels when engaging in the literature review. I recognised this bias following an exploration of my own cultural identity in my personal therapy and through discussions about culture and emotional expression in the reflective peer practice groups that I attended. Therefore, I took an active step to observe and position myself when I engaged in the

literature review, selected the research methods, and planned an additional research process. I was able to honestly acknowledge my thoughts and feelings through reflective journaling, which in turn increased self-awareness and helped me to be mindful about how I influence the research process. I am going to continue engaging in a regular research supervision and personal therapy, and I will keep a reflective journal, and make use of reflective peer practice groups in order to identify, explore, and address the potential subjective impact on the research process.

2 Introduction

People from ethnic minorities in the United Kingdom have poorer access to mental health and psychology services (Bowl, 2007; Fountain & Hicks, 2010), are more likely to be misdiagnosed (Singh et al., 2007), drop out from treatment, experience poorer therapy outcomes, and receive involuntary psychiatric treatment (Fernando, 2003). The reason for such inequalities is largely due to the misunderstanding of cultural factors (Department of Health, 1999, 2003a, 2003b; NIMHE Inside outside, 2003). The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines (NICE CG 123, 2011) and professional bodies (Roth & Pilling, 2007) put a great emphasis on cultural competencies for professionals, but there is surprisingly limited literature available defining cultural competence.

Culture can be visible, such as one's appearance and invisible such as the way we think and relate to others, and even the way we express our emotions. Cultural values and norms affect emotional expression in multiple ways, but cross-cultural psychology has been less researched than any other fields of psychology. Far more research is required in order to really understand cultural variations in clinical practice (Shiraev & Levy, 2017). A key therapeutic goal is to help clients become more aware of maladaptive emotions, understand the causes of such distressing feelings, and learn emotion-regulation skills. In order to accurately identify symptoms of psychological distress and build effective therapeutic communication, professionals need to be sensitive and attentive to clients' verbal expressions, non-verbal behaviours, and the information they share during therapeutic contact (MacCluskie, 2010). However, the relationship between emotional expression and psychological distress is complex. People experiencing psychological distress may be motivated to alleviate distress by sharing it with others, but emotional expression has also been associated with an increase in psychological distress (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001). It is, therefore, important to examine multiple components of emotional expression, including verbal disclosure, behavioural expressivity, and one's comfort with emotional expression to gain a better understanding of a person's vulnerability to psychological distress. Furthermore, there is evidence that people learn how to express their emotions in a way that is culturally and socially appropriate (Eleftheriadou, 2010). It is possible that cultural and social norms create incongruence between what is expressed and what is

truly experienced. As a result, what might be considered a symptom of distress in one culture might be considered a strength in a different culture. Hence, the challenge of working of cross-culturally is to explore normative emotional expressions specific to the client's culture and evaluate their emotional expressions in connection to psychological distress. This research topic is important to identify the organisation of emotional expression constructs and explore their relation to psychological distress among different cultures. This research study will be investigating the four most dominant cultures in the United Kingdom.

This thesis will now review the literature on the topic of cultural differences in emotional expression and psychological distress. First, emotional expression covering historical, philosophical, and psychological perspectives will be defined. Second, research on the emotional expression components including verbal, behavioural, and comfort with expression will be discussed in turn. Third, emotional expression and its association with psychological distress will be reviewed. Next, variations of cultural values and their influence on emotional experience and expression will be discussed. Following this, the common limitations of studies on the research topic shall be examined. Finally, the rationale for the study and its relevance to counselling psychology will be presented.

2.1 Defining Emotional Expression

Philosophers since Ancient Greece throughout the Middle Ages, during the Early Modern Period, and up to the present time have proposed complex theories of emotions and their value (Scarantino, 2016). Aristotle's (*Rhetoric*, 1378a31/1984) account of emotions began with a distinction between passion and action, which influenced Descarte's (1650/1984) formulation of feelings as sensory and bodily perceptions and James's (1884) constructionist approach which offered an understanding of emotions through physiological causes. Philosophers throughout the Middle Ages especially emphasised the motivational side of emotions, such as behavioural patterns, impulses, and reflex-like actions (Scarantino, 2014). John Dewey (1894) famously proposed the synthesis of Charles Darwin's (1872/1965) theory of emotional expressions with James's (1884) theory of emotions which added an important intellectual element of emotions, which is 'always "about" and "towards" something' (1895, p17). Behaviourism (McDougall, 1908/2001; Ryle,

1949/2009; Skinner, 1953; Watson, 1919) provided foundation for the development of basic emotions and social constructionist theories (Scarantino, 2014). Following the demise of behaviourism in the late twentieth century, a new understanding of emotions was brought about by the cognitive revolution. Emotion theorists emphasised the importance of cognitive appraisals of situations, information processing, and the intentionality of emotions (Goldie, 2000; Lazarus 2001; Prinz, 2004; Scherer, 2005). Although the definition of emotion varies widely among theorists of emotion, the majority currently agree on common features in them: emotion involves a certain feeling, which is recognised as an emotional experience; emotions are intentionally directed towards oneself or an object in an environment; emotions have a cognitive basis, which involves the evaluation or appraisal of the positive or negative values of objects; and emotions are expressed (Abell & Smith, 2016).

Psychological theorists of emotions have been strongly influenced by Darwin's (1872/1965) theories that emotions and their expressions are functionally adaptive and biologically innate (Dewsbury, 2009). Emotions are understood as innate reactions to stimuli that motivate rapid information processing and prompt behavioural actions with minimal conscious deliberation (Tooby & Cosmides, 2008). The classic perspective on the functionality of emotions explains the survival advantage by adapting to group behaviour and minimising rejection by others (Miller & Leary, 1992). Scherer (1994) proposed a four-component model of emotional experience: first, the cognitive component refers to the interpretation of situation or stimuli and the changes of one's perception; second, the affect component explains the dimension of pleasant and unpleasant feelings; the third component is an arousal level and a physiological change; and fourth is action-readiness, which is a desire to exhibit or inhibit a behavioural response. More than one component of an emotion should be present to identify the emotional experience (Andersen & Guerrero, 1998). Frijda et al. (2014) discuss that action-readiness leads to emotional expression that most typically occurs in multimodal patterns of behaviour: vocalisation, facial expression, and other behaviours such as gestures and other bodily movements. The phenomenon of emotional expression is differentiated between self-expression and expressiveness (Abell & Smith, 2016). Self-expression indicates one's expression of their psychological state and expressiveness refers to expressive behaviour even when

one is not expressing their own state of mind or feelings. The latter function of emotional expression can be viewed as goal-orientated and strategic interpersonal communication, which can meet both, self-presentation and interactional goals (Harré, 1998). Strategically altering emotional expression allows individuals to adapt to social demands and opportunities (Izard, 1992). Therefore, some emotions can be experienced but not expressed, or they can be expressed without a feeling in a manner consistent with personal goals and the rules of social appropriateness (Metts & Planalp, 2003).

For generations now, research in the psychology of emotions has often relied on the universality thesis, which states that humans recognise certain emotions from certain facial expressions and that all cultures recognise the meanings of those emotional expressions (Ekman et al., 1972). Later Ekman (1980, 1992, 1994) then developed the idea that a subset of emotions (anger, fear, disgust, surprise, sadness, and happiness) is 'biologically basic'– that is, human expressions of those emotions are universal and therefore innate. Ekman's theory of basic emotions proposed that a number of changes including emotional signals in the face and voice, learned actions, autonomic nervous system activity that regulates the body, regulatory patterns that modify behaviour, the retrieval of memories and expectations occur within seconds (Ekman & Cordaro, 2011). These changes were described as 'inescapable'. In a sense, it is not fully possible to inhibit basic emotions (Ekman & Cordaro, 2011, p.366). Researchers found that those six emotions among the various facial expression forms are recognised consistently across cultures because they are passed down to all humans in their evolutionary selection (Ekman & Friesen, 1971). The theory of basic emotions led to applications from education to police and airport screening (Barrett et al., 2011; Izard et al., 2004; Matsumoto et al., 2013). However, Ekman denies that basic emotions are full-fledged reflexes and agrees that an appraisal process mediates between the stimulus and the number of emotional responses (Ekman & Cordaro, 2011).

Research supporting the notion that human expressions of basic emotions are universal has been heavily criticised (Izard, 1994; Russell et al., 2003). For example, the majority of recognition studies used facial expressions that were posed rather than spontaneous (Nelson & Russell, 2013); the most influential research studies were

conducted in isolated and indigenous societies (e.g., Ekman, 1972; Ekman & Friesen, 1971; Tracy & Robins, 2008); and studies of literate societies were influenced by Western culture and media (Russell, 1994). Some of the stronger reviews of basic emotion expressions were based on the notion that basic emotions might be universal rather than culturally universal. Evidence has shown cultural and contextual variance in the expression of basic emotions (Aviezer et al., 2012) and human ability to communicate more than just six emotional states (Du et al., 2014).

Most contemporary researchers agree that communication of emotion is moulded by socialisation (Andersen & Guerrero, 1998). The sociological approach of emotions proposes that emotional arousals, cognitive appraisal, expressions, and language are constrained by culture and structure (Lively & Weed, 2016). Emotional socialisation is a process through which one learns existing norms, expectations, rules, and consequences of emotions and their display (Lively & Weed, 2014). Such emotional management helps one to deal with challenges in social environments in a way that helps with forming and maintaining social relationships, establishing social positions, and preserving self-esteem and identity (Fischer & Manstead, 2016). The social effects of emotional expression vary among social and cultural contexts dependant on what is considered acceptable in a specific environment (Parkinson, et al., 2005). For example, anger can be expressed by shouting, ignoring, or confronting, and it can have different effects depending on the appropriateness of expression in the specific setting.

Emotional expression researchers proposed five display rules: simulation, inhibition, intensification, deintensification, and masking (Ekman & Friesen, 1975; Safdar et al, 2009). Display rules are the products of emotional socialisation, which explains one's emotion management strategies in interpersonal communication (Matsumoto et al., 2005). Following the display rules one can strategically alter their emotional expressions according to their personal goals and the rules of social appropriateness across settings. Simulation involves displaying an emotion that is not actually experienced, such as smiling when happiness is not felt (Buller & Burgoon, 1994). Inhibition, also known as neutralisation, involves displaying no emotion, when emotion is truly experienced in the same way that one suppresses anger towards an employer (Josephs, 1994). Intensification, or maximisation, refers to giving the

impression that an emotion is stronger than actually experienced (grief at funerals) (Andersen & Guerrero, 1998). Deintensification, or minimisation, involves displaying an emotion that is not as intense as actually experienced (showing mild surprise when feeling shocked) (Saarni, 1993). Masking or substitution refers to displaying one emotion while experiencing an entirely different one (presenting as calm when feeling excited or scared) (Saarni, 1993). The social rules of emotional appropriateness influence one's emotional response to stimuli, and they can conflict with a personal desire to express emotion. A conflict between one's style of expressiveness, desire to disclose emotions, and controlling emotional expression has a strong link to psychological distress (King & Emmons, 1991).

Emotional expression can only be understood as a multimodal phenomenon. People exert considerable control over their emotions using various strategies to influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they express them. At the broadest level, the process of emotion regulation consists of antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies (Gross, 1998). Antecedent-focused strategies occur early in the emotional timeline before emotion response tendencies have been fully activated (Gross, 1998). A person approaches or avoids situations, modifies their environment, and turns their attention towards or away from something in order to alter the emotional impact during an antecedent-focused strategy. Another early emotional regulation stage is cognitive change in which one reappraises situations to modify the emotional impact (John & Gross, 2004). A cognitive reappraisal allows one to rationally evaluate and change the meaning of emotion-elicit situations. In contrast, response-focused strategies intensify, reduce, prolong, or restrain emotional experiences and expressions after the cognitive change (Matsumoto et. al., 2008). Therefore, cognitive factors such as goals, intentions, interpretations, and values provide meaning to one's expressive behaviour. People can rationally decide to suppress or express their feelings if certain emotional responses bring a beneficial outcome. For example, a police or military officer may rationally suppress their anxiety or confusion to gain trust from colleagues and civilians; people may suppress anger or express admiration towards work colleagues to achieve a positive evaluation. Emotional responses are expressed through vocalisation, body movements, intentional actions unrelated to emotions, facial expressions, and even physical appearance (Barrett et al., 2018).

Moreover, emotion regulation is considered an important part of cross-cultural differences in emotions (Ekman, 1992). One of the major functions of culture is to provide coordination and organisation to the group. Cultures create rules and norms concerning emotional regulation as emotions have especially important social functions (Keltner et al., 2003). Previous studies noted cultural differences concerning emotion regulation such as cognitive appraisals (Scherer, 1997a, 1997b), reappraisals (Tweed et al., 2004), and display rules relating to emotional suppression (Matsumoto et al., 2005). Cultural regulation of emotions occurs throughout the emotional process sequence. Largely, a cognitive appraisal occurs without one's awareness through the situations that are culturally encouraged (Matsumoto et. al., 2008). Response-focused regulation shapes observable emotional expressions via experiential, behavioural, and physiological channels. Hence, this research project will explore the multiple components of emotional expression (verbal expression, behavioural expressivity, and comfort with emotional disclosure) among four cultures.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Emotional Expression

Emotional expression is a universal adaptive impulse that provides a link between internal emotional experiences and the external world (Keltner et al., 2016). People communicate their emotions through different expressive channels, including verbal channels, such as direct and indirect statements; nonverbal channels, such as the tone and rate of speech; facial movements; body language, for instance hand gestures; full body movements like jumping for joy or hugging; and through autonomic responses such blushing or crying (Planalp et al., 1996). Thus, emotional expression is a multimodal phenomenon, and it is necessary to explore its different components to gain a comprehensive understanding of how people express their emotions. In everyday life, people generally elicit a need to talk after they have experienced positive or negative emotional events (Luminet et al., 2000). It was reported that 80-95% of people engage in the social sharing of internal experiences after an emotional situation (Rimé et al., 1998). Verbal communication helps people to recognise, understand, and interpret their inner emotional states while describing their experiences to others. However, nonverbal behaviours tend to be recognised as more spontaneous, and less strategic, and they are often viewed as more convincing

than verbal communication. Depending on the situation or context of interpersonal interaction, nonverbal expression can be recognised as more important in identifying internal emotional messages compared to verbal disclosure. However, it is generally agreed that emotional expressions work most effectively when verbal and nonverbal messages are combined (Lee & Wagner, 2002). The way emotions are experienced, expressed, or suppressed greatly depend on the social context (Fischer & Manstead, 2016). One of the main functions of emotions is to form and maintain relationships by providing comfort and harmony, and by avoiding social isolation. A person's goals, values, and intents for interpersonal relationships shape their emotional expression (Barrett et al., 2011). In other words, people judge what type, intensity, and method of emotional expression is appropriate and acceptable in social situations, and they regulate their emotions accordingly. Given that the expression of emotions has an adaptive function, especially in difficult life situations, it can create a conflict between an individual's needs or wishes to share emotions and the social standards (King, 1998). As a result, the degree to which a person expresses or suppresses both positive and negative emotions is highly influenced by one's comfort with emotional expression (King & Emmons, 1991).

2.2.1.1 Verbal Expression of Emotions

Verbal expression of emotion theories emerged from the early studies of self-disclosure that explained verbal process of expressing various messages through spoken and written communication (Berry & Pennebaker, 1998; Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001). Emotional self-disclosure in this research project is restricted to the process of talking about (versus writing about) personal, emotional experience. Verbal communication is the most common social process that enables people to express their thoughts and emotions and helps them understand others and the world (Chung & Pennebaker, 2007). Experimental studies confirmed that exposure to an emotion-eliciting situation provokes an urge to talk about it (Luminet et al., 2000). A process of socially sharing emotions typically occur on the day that the emotional event took place and to continue as a repetitive phenomenon days and weeks after that (Rimé et al., 1998). People discuss all types of emotional experiences with others and such interpersonal communication is universal. The ability to vocalise different emotional experiences is related to automatic appraisals and involuntary changes in expression and physiology, which allows one to regulate thoughts and feelings that

are verbally expressed at the same time (Schröder, 2003). In other words, putting emotions into words helps to organise feelings by making meaning of emotional states. Lieberman (2011) proposed that accessing language to describe perceptions causes engagement in 'reflective consciousness'. Language helps to regulate emotions by reducing uncertainty about the meaning of sensations in the body (emotional experience) and the environment (perception) (Keltner et al., 2016). Once emotional experience or perception is evaluated then emotions can be successfully regulated. Emotional regulation refers to strategies in which people increase or decrease the intensity, meaning, or expression of their emotional message.

The verbal expression of emotion can be described as self-disclosure or self-concealment, depending on whether the individuals verbalise their emotion or not. Self-concealment has been described as an active process of inhibition, and self-disclosure as an active process of the communication of an emotional experience (Kahn & Hessling, 2001; Kelly & McKillop, 1996). Expressing all types of emotions facilitates the development of insight and affects interpersonal relationships in a desirable way (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001). The theory of social sharing indicates that people engage in more self-disclosure when describing anxiety-charged events compared to happy events (Rimé, 1995; Stiles et al., 1992). The verbal expression of negative emotions is generally perceived as distress disclosure (Kahn et al., 2002). However, distress disclosure can also be explained as verbal expression or the concealment of distressing information and unpleasant emotions (Kahn & Hessling, 2001). Pennebaker (1997) suggested that when people do not communicate distressing events verbally, they fail to process their feelings and thoughts fully and cannot deal with those experiences effectively. Consequently, communicating emotion with others becomes an act of coping with distress.

Larson and Chastain (1990) found that self-concealment was associated with anxiety and depression. They explained that self-concealment causes psychological strain due to active attempts to suppress the disclosure of personal information. In contrast, self-disclosure is seen as active confrontation of distress and has been found to indicate better psychological wellbeing (Barr et al., 2008; Garrison & Kahn, 2010; Pennebaker, 1997). Self-disclosure is linked to lower illness rates, fewer physician visits, and better immune function (Pennebaker et al., 1990). However, Coates and

Winston (1987) discussed that self-concealment and self-disclosure were not reliable measures in identifying one's psychological distress. Research findings are conflicting, as distress disclosure has been related to greater life satisfaction, higher self-esteem, and higher positive affects (Kahn & Hessling, 2001), but it was also found that distress disclosure is associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression (Kahn & Garrison, 2009). It is possible that an individual who is a high self-discloser, may not be feeling distressed due to the selective disclosure of positive emotions only, and an individual who is a low concealer may not necessarily be a distress discloser. Hence, in order to explore and understand the verbal expression of emotions and their effects, it is important to assess not only people's willingness to verbally disclose emotions but also to investigate the content of their emotional messages, in particular their tendency to share unpleasant or distressing emotions with others (Kahn & Hessling, 2001).

2.2.1.2 Behavioural Expressivity

The nonverbal communication of emotions is defined as communication and the interpretation of information through behavioural channels, including facial expressions, such as changes in eyebrow and cheek muscles; bodily movements, such as posture and gestures; and vocal channels such as the volume or rhythm of speech (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1998). The nonverbal communication of emotion is usually referred to as emotional expressivity (Gross & John, 1998). For the purpose of this study, the nonverbal expression of emotions will be labelled as behavioural expressivity to distinguish it from verbal disclosure. Behavioural expressivity is often understood as subtle, uncontrollable, spontaneous, and unconsciously expressed. However, it can also be strategic and goal-driven in pursuit of establishing and maintaining relationships or influencing others (Chapman et al., 2009). Burgoon et al. (1996) discussed three functions of behavioural expressivity: it conveys the meaning of interpersonal communication (e.g., persuasion or intimacy); it contributes to the overall expressive message (e.g., matching behavioural expressions to verbal messages); and it clarifies the meanings of interpersonal interactions depending on situation and context (e.g., eye contact means intimacy in one setting and dominance in another). From a socio-functional perspective, emotions regulate social interactions and relationships (Frijda & Mesquita, 1994; Keltner & Haidt, 1999). The variations of behavioural expressions convey information about a person's emotional state to

others. Paying attention to one's behavioural cues enables people to detect information regarding one's underlying emotions (Roether et al., 2009). The abilities to express emotions clearly and read others' emotions effectively are correlated and central to the conceptualisations of emotional intelligence, which predicts increased social adjustment (Brackett et al., 2013; Mayer et al., 2003). The more the outward behavioural expression of emotions match the internal emotional states, the better the social-communicative function of emotions is. In contrast, when emotional behaviour is detached from the internal emotional experience, social communication is disrupted (Berry & Pennebaker, 1993; Bonanno et al., 2007; Boone & Buck, 2003).

Although people shape each other's emotional experiences and expressions throughout their lifespan, first years of the life are particularly important in emotion socialisation (Eisenberg et al., 2006). Primary caregivers strategically use emotions in their interactions with their children in the way that children learn to avoid certain emotional situations, develop cognitive appraisal styles, and regulate their emotional experiences and expressions (Cole & Tan, 2015). Parental methods of managing emotions allow children to imitate and learn emotional regulation (Denham et al., 2007). Primary caregivers encourage and reward children's emotional behaviour that fits their own emotional norms (Ulich & Mayring, 1992). The socialisation of emotions occurs through co-regulation during which primary caregivers validate or ignore children's emotions and interpretations of situations (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012). Such emotional co-regulation helps children to appraise a situation in a way that reinforces desirable emotions according to the social norms. Across different cultures, caregivers highlight emotional experiences that are key to their cultural norms (De Leersnyder et al., 2013). Children internalise culturally valued responses after repeatedly experiencing emotions that comply with social norms. Past developmental studies demonstrated that emotional experiences and expression depend on the culture in which children have been raised (e.g., Cole et al., 2002; Trommsdorff & Kornadt, 2003).

The behavioural expression of emotion not only regulates psychosocial functioning; it also maintains psychological and physical wellbeing. Research has well documented the inverse relation between emotional expression and autonomic arousal (Buck, 1984). The voluntary suppression of expressive behaviour activates

psychological arousal, and chronic autonomic arousal has been associated with a lower immune system and the development of psychosomatic disease (Pennebaker, 1985). The theory relating to behavioural inhibition and physiological arousal seem to indicate that lack of emotional expression is unhealthy. However, these theoretical constructs have been found inconclusive as there is evidence to suggest that the behavioural expression of emotion can also increase physiological arousal. King and Emmons (1990) found that expressiveness alone failed to predict psychological and physiological symptoms; however, one's inclination to express emotions were positively linked to symptoms of anxiety and depression. In addition, Gross and John's (1998) study established that the degree of one's tendency to mask emotions positively correlated to symptoms of depression. In order to fully understand behavioural expressivity, it is important to examine the inclination to display emotion via behavioural channels, the strength of the emotional expression, and the extent to which emotions are expressed as behaviour.

2.2.1.3 Comfort with Emotional Expression

Individual differences of verbal and behavioural expressivity are subject to one's comfort with expressing emotions. The explanatory framework on emotional expression focuses on the manner in which emotional messages are intended, constructed, and communicated. Self-disclosure is a form of emotional expression defined as an act of revealing one's thoughts and feelings to others, and self-concealment is an active suppression of personal information (Henretty & Levitt, 2010). The disclosure of emotions is associated with the number of positive correlates, such as social functioning, pain coping, and greater psychotherapy progress (Henretty & Levitt, 2010; Junghaenel et al., 2008). However, various fears can lead to negative appraisals of emotional disclosure. Disclosing sensitive personal information could lead to unpleasant emotions, such as guilt or shame, and a person may be afraid of becoming overwhelmed with negative emotions or being rejected by others (Grosse Holtforth et al., 2005). For example, people may wish to share their distress about a failed exam, loss of job, or abusive relationship, but they also feel hesitant about disclosing personal information that may lead to embarrassment or judgement. Self-concealment occurs as an act of avoidance if a person fears the negative consequences of disclosure (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999). Self-concealment may develop as a key emotional expression strategy for people who

repeatedly learned that unpleasant or distressing emotions lead to negative intra- or interpersonal consequences.

A high self-discloser may not necessarily be a distress discloser if they only disclose positive emotions and a self-concealer may not actively avoid distress if they neither conceal nor actively disclose distress. People may also be reluctant to express positive emotions, such as pride or confidence in situations where such emotions are not accepted or valued. A desire to express positive or negative emotions and the fear of negative consequences create an internal conflict, which is defined as ambivalence towards emotional expression. Ambivalence occurs when a person's emotional expressive style is in conflict with social or cultural norms (Butler et al., 2007). A person may feel distressed when unable to express their emotions in an environment where emotional inhibition is preferred or in settings where emotional expression is encouraged but that person may not have any desire to share their feelings. Ambivalence may be felt with regard to either positive or negative emotions and the expression or lack of expression of those emotions (Chen et al., 2005). King and Emmons (1990) defined ambivalence as an aspect of emotional regulation in which a person has a desire to express emotion but is unable to do so; express emotions without the desire to do so; or express emotion but later regrets doing so.

Emotion regulation has an adaptive function, especially in difficult life situations and in sensitive interpersonal relationships. Individuals experiencing distress may be motivated to share negative feelings with others in an attempt to reduce distress and one can also be reluctant to reveal personally distressing information due to feelings of shame or guilt. Past research dating back to Freud greatly focused on emotional expressiveness and how it relates to health outcomes and psychosocial functioning (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001). However, contemporary research found that emotional expressiveness failed to predict wellbeing, while the conflicting dynamics between an individual's expressiveness style, the desire to disclose emotions, and controlling emotional expression have a strong link to psychological distress (King & Emmons, 1991; Quinton & Wagner, 2005). Ambivalence over emotional expression has been identified as a significant factor in distinguishing between individuals who are inexpressive yet comfortable and individuals who are inhibited but tense and their risk related to psychological distress

and physical illness (King & Emmons, 1990). People who are strongly ambivalent over emotional expression have a low ability to identify and understand their distress and consequently do not invest in repairing their negative emotions (Gross & John, 2003). Barr et al. (2008) reported that individuals who are ambivalent towards their emotional expression present with more symptoms of anxiety and mood disorders. Mongrain and Vettese (2003) identified that ambivalence is linked with lower self-esteem and lower life satisfaction. Barr et al. (2008) also found that self-concealment, especially keeping personal information private over a sustained period of time, was a strong indicator for one's discomfort with disclosure.

The social rules of emotional expressivity may influence an individual's emotional responses as emotional expression occurs primarily in an interpersonal context. People who suppress their emotions may not share their positive and negative emotions with others and so may avoid close relationships and social support (Ciarrochi et al., 2002). Consequently, they may be less likely to communicate distress, thus making it difficult for others to detect their need for support (Mongrain & Vettese, 2003). Emmons and Colby (1995) found ambivalent individuals to be less likely to benefit from social support as they are less likely to accept sympathy and support from others.

2.2.2 Psychological Distress

The experience of an emotional event generally provokes an urge to share feelings and related experiences with others (Luminet et al., 2000). When doing so, people re-experience the mental images of the event, the related feelings, and the bodily sensations (Rimé, 2009; Rimé et al., 1991). People are motivated to express positive experiences because it reactivates emotional feelings and sensations. Positive emotional episodes are not seen as problems to be coped with but as opportunities to benefit from (Langston, 1994). The emotional expression of positive events is associated with an enhancement of the positive affect and increased wellbeing (Gable et al., 2004). By contrast, negative experiences reactivate negative feelings and memories. The expression of negative emotions is a sign of distress and a way of coping with that distress. The paradox of expressing negative emotions to others is that the expression can both intensify the negative experiences and alleviate distress and provide emotional recovery (Kahn et al., 2012; Zech, 2000).

Some people avoid expressing unpleasant emotions because they are afraid of becoming overwhelmed and are unable to cope with the distressing emotions (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001). Fears of intense feelings lead to the active avoidance of expressing and re-experiencing these feelings. Over time, the avoidance prevents one's learning to tolerate distress (Baumeister & Exline, 2000). The avoidance of negative experiences may become an important goal for these people. Attempts to suppress thoughts, emotions, and behaviours about negative experiences for extended periods of time lead to increased intrusive thoughts and the exacerbation of stress which lead to a decline in the immune system and other physical health functions (Chung & Pennebaker, 2007; Traue & Deighton, 1999). The avoidance of negative emotions prevents one from re-experiencing distress, and it provides short-term relief, but it can contribute to the development of psychological problems in the long run (Groose Holtforth, 2008). A study with student participants attending a counselling centre found that those who reported a greater tendency of distress disclosure reported a greater decrease in the perceived level of stress and their symptomology compared to those who reported less distress disclosure (Kahn et al., 2001). This demonstrates the role of disclosure in reducing the levels of stress. The expression of unpleasant or distressing emotions can enhance wellbeing and reduce overvalued beliefs about distress by helping people to perceive their feelings as less frightening or unbearable, foster distress tolerance and acceptance of painful experiences, and develop a sense of personal control (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001).

Talking about emotional experiences can both represent old-standing emotions and create new feelings. Describing emotional experiences helps a person to understand emotions in ways that were not possible before articulating them (Watson & Greenberg, 1996). In the process of verbalising unpleasant emotions people gain awareness of how to respond to environmental demands. Emotional insight helps them to organise their thoughts and actions and regulate or change the negative effects (Kennedy-Moore, 1999; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Talking about distressing experiences involves clarifying feelings internally so that the related thoughts become more organised and less disturbing. Consequently, the expression of distress reduces the emotional intensity of the experience and decreases intrusive thoughts about it

(Kahn et al., 2001). Better emotional insight may not necessarily lead to the immediate reduction of distress but may motivate coping or problem-solving strategies. For instance, confiding in a friend about an abusive relationship may lead to re-experiencing angry feelings, which in turn may enable a person who is sharing to perceive the distress with greater clarity and resolve the relational circumstances. Articulating feelings allows people to spell out the causes and implications relating to the distress. Expressing painful feelings in a narrative can provide a resolution of negative feelings and circumstances. Emotional insight of thoughts and feelings enhances wellbeing (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001; Lepore et al., 2000).

Expressing negative emotions and distress can to lead to greater insight into stressful situations not only because the expresser organises their thoughts and feelings, revaluates situations or generates more ideas during the process, but also because the recipient of one's distress may suggest different ways of understanding feelings and circumstances (Lakey & Orehek, 2011). People turn to others to cope with particular emotions as social support buffer against stressful events, which alleviates distress, increases self-acceptance, and improves wellbeing (Cheung et al., 2015). Both the verbal and nonverbal expression of emotion to others can provide structure to relationships, increase intimacy, allow greater social integration, and directly resolve distress stemming from interpersonal problems (Gable et al., 2004; Rimé, 2009). However, the social expression of distress can be risky; if a recipient responds negatively the expresser may feel rejected, embarrassed, or misunderstood. The expression of distress is more likely to lead to a positive social outcome when the disclosure is not oblique and the distress is sensitively communicated (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001). Social emotional expression studies found that people who tend to disclose distress report greater social support, experience less depression, and are more likely to seek professional help compared to people who suppress their distress (Garrison & Kahn, 2010; Greenland et al., 2009; Wei et al., 2005).

The expression of negative emotions is more likely to be beneficial when the level of intensity is intermediate, and it occurs among supportive relationships. Mennin et al. (2005) found that high-impulse strength and high-negative emotional expression are associated with the symptoms of general anxiety disorder. Negative emotions, such as anger or sadness, can be balanced out by positive emotions, such as

empathy, humour, and hope. Expressing both positive and negative emotions may lead to better health and wellbeing outcomes (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001). The ability to shift from negative to positive affects during emotional expression predicts greater self-esteem (Donnelly & Murray, 1991). Just as emotional disclosure is more likely to be linked to positive health and wellbeing outcomes, suppression or inhibition of emotions is associated with psychological distress (Kelly & Yip, 2006). Distress concealment has been linked to binge eating (Leahey et al., 2008), substance misuse (Fox et al., 2007), and anxiety and mood disorders (Campbell-Sills et al., 2006; Tull, 2006). Yet, some people may be inexpressive but comfortable, and others maybe expressive but tense. King and Emmons (1991) explored individual differences in comfort with emotional expression and its links to psychological distress. They found that people who are ambivalent over emotional expression are likely to be inexpressive. In such a context, inexpressiveness as a style of expression may not necessarily predict the negative wellbeing outcomes. However, ambivalence over emotional expression can be an important factor separating a healthy style from an unhealthy style. People who are ambivalent over their emotional expression are more vulnerable to developing symptoms of depression, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive tendencies (Carson et al., 2007; Mongrain &Vettese, 2003).

2.2.3 Cultural Differences

Culture is a social structure that refers to a set of symbols and meanings that people create to regulate behaviours, emotions, and relationships (Stets & Turner, 2008). It is a shared reality with norms, ideals and goals that give direction to a group of people on how to interact, how to build relationships, and even how to feel (Barrett, 2017; Mesquita et al., 2016). Cultural norms are both external occurrences such as customs or habits, and internalised concepts, such as values and goals that a group finds ‘normal’ (Mesquita, 2003). Cultural differences are present in every aspect of the emotional process, including the experience, the expression, and coping (Mesquita & Markus, 2004). One cultural group is not better or worse than another cultural group, but shared norms of emotional experiences and expression must be understood as part of the functionality of a cultural group (Novin et al., 2010). People develop their feelings and expressions in line with cultural norms in childhood. Adults raise their children in a way that teaches them to appraise and regulate their emotions as appropriate for that particular cultural environment (Diener & Lucas, 2004).

Frijda and Mesquita (1994) distinguished three aspects of emotion that are culturally influenced: the norms of experiencing different emotions, the regulation of emotional expression, and the social-cohesive functions of emotions. Cultural norms guide people's construction of meaning in different situations and in turn shape their emotional experiences within that culture (Barrett, 2012, 2017). For example, cultures that value certain positive emotions (e.g., pride) may encourage people to be alert to certain positive events, engage in situations that provoke those emotions, appraise events in a more positive way, and try to maintain or even enhance those feelings. On the other hand, cultures that discourage such feelings are likely to guide people to withdraw from situations that generate those feelings or dampen their emotional experiences (Eid & Diener, 2001). Emotions that are consistent with cultural norms and expectations tend to be more intense compared to those that violate cultural norms. People report experiences that help them to be 'good' members of their culture more often (Mesquita et al., 2017).

Cultural norms for experiencing emotions have a strong influence on emotional regulation and this is best captured by display rules (Ekman & Friesen, 1969; Safdar et al., 2009). There are five main types of cultural display rules in terms of how they affect emotional expression: 1) the emotion is being expressed with no changes; 2) the expressed emotion is more intense than it is felt; 3) the emotional expression is more suppressed than what is felt; 4) the expression of another emotion than what is felt; and 5) completely neutralising the emotional expression (Matsumoto et al., 2005). These display rules and their functions vary widely across cultures. Certain emotions are valued and encouraged, while others are devalued and suppressed in different countries, and display rules help to maintain a 'correct' emotional life. For example, there is a strong normative prohibition to expressions of anger in East Asian cultures, unlike in some Western cultures (De Leersnyder et al., 2015; Park et al., 2013). Although, feelings are a personal and internal experience, display rules are learned social norms that help to communicate feelings in a desirable way within a particular cultural context (Van Kleef et al., 2011).

Universally, the regulation of emotional expression is crucial in helping people to establish and maintain relationships, share concerns, and achieve goals

(Griffiths & Scarantino, 2009). The third aspect of cultural influences on the emotional process is a social-cohesive function. Emotions are essential in maintaining social relationships, interpersonal harmony, and group functioning. People tend to engage in more situations that elicit emotions that are consistent with their cultural norms but avoid situations that elicit emotions that are less likely to match cultural norms (Güngör et al., 2014). Overall, cultural standards influence the ways in which emotions are conceptualised, experienced, and expressed or controlled (Crowe et al., 2012). An emotional fit with a cultural group is rewarding because it promotes acceptance and belonging (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012). Cross-cultural studies have established that people experience higher levels of emotions that are congruent with their cultural model and lower levels that violate their cultural model as a result of shared relationship goals (De Leersnyder et al., 2013; Kitayama et al., 2006).

Cultural norms provide organisation and coordination to a group and such norms vary between countries due to different social conventions, family systems, geographic locations, languages, and religions (Matsumoto, 2007). Research over the last four decades has explored and identified a number of meaningful cultural variability dimensions. Hofstede (1980) was the first to initially identify four dimensions. Although other culture organisation models exist, all the later models of culture conformed to Hofstede's dimensions (for reviews, see Taras et al., 2009; Taras & Steel, 2009). Cultural values, such as individualism-collectivism, power distance, and masculinity-femininity, from Hofstede's (1991; 2011) cultural dimensions shape the emotional experience and expression (Chentsova-Dutton & Tsai, 2010; Mesquita, De Leersnyder & Albert, 2014). Previous research was unable to identify the trends in the effects of globalisation. Hofstede's dimensions remain the best-known and up-to-date cultural dimensions that represent the different aspects of culture, and they provide a base to understand cultural variability despite the increasing effects of global connectedness and cultural fluidity (Mesquita et al., 2017). Individualistic cultures emphasise the individual fostering separateness and autonomy, and they expect people to assert their individual goals. In contrast, collectivistic countries value in-groups over individuality, and foster cooperation, social obligations, and social duties (Lee et al., 2000). In collectivistic cultures people are more likely to show higher levels of emotional suppression, which is significantly guided by the consideration of others, whereas in individualistic cultures outward emotional

expression is encouraged and valued (Safdar et al., 2009). Positive and negative emotions are both valued, but particular emotions can be classed as socially engaging or disengaging. For example, positive emotions, such as love and gratitude, and negative emotions, such as shame and regret, can help in establishing and maintaining group relationships; while positive emotions, such as pride, and negative emotions, such as anger, can serve socially disengaging functions (Fischer & Manstead, 2016). Some studies show that expressing negative emotions towards others is more likely to be associated with negative social consequences and people from collectivistic countries tend to inhibit and avoid negative expressivity (Basabe et al., 1999; Kitayama et al., 2006).

Individualistic cultures are less concerned about the impact on social relationships and are more willing to express negative emotions (Ramirez et al., 2002). Cultures with high power-distance values emphasise the differences in power among people and value hierarchical social structures. Emotional expression in these societies is weakened because displaying high intensity emotions can be interpreted as a lack of respect, especially negative emotions which can be viewed as threatening the social order (Hofstede, 2011). Cultural values, such as masculinity, foster assertiveness, competitiveness, and power. Masculine cultures value independence and the expression of assertive emotions (Hofstede, 1998; 2011). Cross-cultural research in emotional expression between 21 countries indicated that individualism, femininity, and low-power distance is positively relates to verbal and non-verbal expressivity (Fernandes et al., 2000).

According to Hofstede's (2011) cultural dimension model, the United Kingdom is a highly individualistic country with a score of 89 out of 120; Poland and South Africa are also considered individualistic countries with scores of 60 and 65 respectively. However, India's score is 48, which indicates both collectivistic and individualistic traits. The Power Distance Index indicates that India, Poland, and South Africa value hierarchy in social systems, and the United Kingdom is rated low on power distance. All four countries are considered masculine countries with similar scores in the cultural dimension model (Hofstede, 2011). There are also studies that found changes in Hofstede's cultural dimensions during the past thirty years (Deighton & Traue, 2005; Oyserman et al., 2002). These studies place some degree of

doubt on the stability of the countries' positions along with their cultural dimensions. The cultural norms of emotional expression and experience are subject to historical change, and it is unsurprising that the culture dimensions do not remain static due to the effects of globalisation (Steams & Lewis, 1998). The variations of the emotional processes can be understood from a culture's goals and values, so people's emotional processes seem to differ in systemic ways, which is a component that previous research was unable to generalise (Mesquita et al., 2017).

Some studies have shown that people tend to produce emotions that fit cultural standards (De Leersnyder et al., 2013; Mesquita et al., 2014), possibly because the ability to express and experience a culture's ideal emotions that are in line with its cultural norms is associated with greater psychological wellbeing (De Leersnyder et al., 2015). A cross-cultural study by Tsai et al. (2006) also showed that psychological distress was associated with the incongruence between people's actual emotions and their culturally accepted emotions. Psychological distress and coping with difficulties are universal experiences regardless of culture, but people's internalised cultural norms and values affect how people appraise and respond to stressful events (Chun et al., 2006). This means that coping with distress is adaptive when the use of coping resources and strategies are in line with cultural values and norms (Wong et al., 2006). Failure to manage emotions in line with cultural expectations may lead to further interpersonal stress, which is also associated with mental health issues such as anxiety and depression (Hashimoto et al., 2012). Individualism and collectivism are two of the most frequently studied cultural and psychological dimensions to explain cross-cultural differences in coping with distress (Chun et al., 2006). For example, collectivistic cultures are more concerned about the maintenance of group relationships and the risk of disturbing the relationship harmony. People from collectivistic cultures are less willing to seek help because individual stress or personal failure may have a negative impact on the group dynamics (Heine et al., 2000; Kim et al., 2008). Such findings suggest that the suppression and avoidance of certain emotional experiences may increase psychological distress.

2.3 Common Limitations of Cross-Cultural Research in Emotional Expression

Research on emotional expression identifies some common limitations that

might explain the gaps and variations in the results reviewed. Existing emotional expression studies focus on one or two components of expression. For example, studies investigating verbal and/or non-verbal expressivity measure the valence and content of emotional displays but do not include the levels of ambivalence over the emotional expression. These studies provide evidence about tendencies within cultures and the differences among cultures in expressivity alone. However, the variability in such results may be subject to one's comfort with emotional expression. King and Emmons (1991) note that people who are ambivalent may or may not express their internal experiences, and such factors may further influence their verbal and behavioural expressions. In addition, studies tend to measure the verbal expression of emotion in controlled conditions, such as showing individuals emotionally stimulating video or providing them with various vignettes. Furthermore, behavioural expression studies have largely focused on facial expression and the recognition of emotions over the years, and it is only recently that new emotional behaviours such as posture and touch have been researched (Hertenstein et al., 2009; Hertenstein & Weiss, 2011).

A further common limitation in this field of research is the way in which the effects of emotional expression are identified and measured. Emotion studies pay great emphasis on the links between emotional expressivity and autonomic arousal, physical health, stress coping, and general life satisfaction (Kang et al., 2004; Slatcher & Pennebaker, 2007). However, there is limited literature exploring the relationship between emotional expression and the symptoms of psychological distress. For instance, studies exploring emotional expression and psychological distress tend to use stress-coping scales rather than clinical instruments, which may determine the symptomology (Kuo, 2011; Wang et al., 2017). Finally, the recruitment for cross-cultural studies in emotional expression often suffers from limitations. Most common cultures in emotional expression studies are from Asia-Pacific, Southern and Northern America, and Central Europe. There are only a handful of studies that include several African and Eastern and Northern Europe countries. For instance, Deighton and Traue's (2005) study investigated the relationship between emotional inhibition and somatisation among 29 countries covering five continents. Although their study does not include South Africa and Poland, their findings provide valuable information about cultural values such as collectivism and individualism, and offer a reference

point for other studies exploring countries that have not been included in previous research projects. Furthermore, emotional expression studies exploring cultural patterns in Britain focus mostly on the factors relating to acculturation among immigrant populations.

2.4 Relevance to Counselling Psychology and Rationale for this Project

The British Psychological Society's (BPS) Division of Counselling Psychology practice guidelines (n.d.) outlines that counselling psychologists need to be aware of the assumptions that manifest in thinking about culture and find new ways (verbally and non-verbally) to build rapport with clients in all stages of accessing and engaging in psychological therapy. According to the Department of Health's Race Equality Scheme (2005), people from minority ethnic groups living in the UK are more likely to experience poor outcomes of psychological treatment and are more likely to disengage from the treatment, which, in turn, may lead to further deterioration in their psychological wellbeing. White British people (aged 16 years and over) are the most likely of all the ethnic groups to receive treatment for mental and emotional problems in the UK (NHS Digital, 2014). The data from the Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing indicated that only 2.6% of Asians, 0.9% of 'White–Other', and 1.5% of Black adults who seek mental health help receive psychological therapy compared to 14.5% of White British adults in the United Kingdom. These differences can be explained by a number of factors, including a failure by mainstream healthcare services to understand cultural needs and provide accessible services to people from ethnic minority groups. Clients from different cultural backgrounds are often seen as so different that they are not 'suitable' for mainstream psychology services and require specialist treatment (Eleftheriadou, 2010). However, cross-cultural issues are inevitable in our international lives and counselling psychologists need to have sensitivity and the ability to understand the cultural components in clinical practice and feel confident to challenge it. Cultural differences include not only the visible aspects, such as appearance, but also the way we think, relate, and express emotions. In order to help clients from various cultural backgrounds to become more aware of their maladaptive emotions, understand the cause of those feelings, and gain emotion regulation skills, counselling psychologists need to be open to challenging their own views and to considering the diverse

functions of the verbal and non-verbal communication of emotions (Shiraev & Levy, 2017).

A fundamental part of the counselling psychology process is accurate recognition of a person's emotional expression and effective interpersonal communication. For example, accurately concluding a person's internal feelings through their external expressions, such as their facial or body engagements may change the psychologist's interpretations and evaluations of the client's behaviour and their responses to the client's expressions of emotion (Hutchison & Gerstein, 2017). Cultural norms influence a client's emotional expression in multiple ways and taking consideration of cultural factors can better inform clinical practice with regards to the therapeutic relationship, the communication, and therapy micro skills, such as validation or self-reflection. Important questions the psychologist should be raising are: what emotions do clients feel comfortable expressing? and which are more difficult, and why? For example, a flat affect can represent depressive symptoms, but it can also can suggest a cultural emotional display rule learned in childhood, a coping mechanism, or a response to trauma. Furthermore, a symptom of distress in one culture may be adaptive, but maladaptive in another culture. Without considering a client's cultural background, a psychologist may make incorrect assumptions or interpretations about that client's verbal statements, nonverbal behaviours, and the information provided during therapy sessions (MacCluskie, 2010).

A majority of cross-cultural studies exploring emotions focus on the individual components of emotional expression. Therefore, the first aim of this study is to investigate the relationship among multiple factors of emotional expression, including verbal expression, behavioural expressivity, and comfort with emotional expression. An Exploratory Factor analysis (EFA) will be used to clarify the relationship between the emotional expression constructs and establish their organisation, which in turn may guide clinical practice and future research. This research project will explore emotional expression among White British, White Polish, Asian Indian, and Black South African populations. The Census (Office for National Statistics, 2011) showed that almost half (46%, 3.4 million) of the foreign-born population identified as White-Other; a third identified as Asian (33%, 2.4 million), and 13% (992,000) identified as Black. The largest group of foreign-born

residents in the UK is Indian (776,603), and the second largest is Polish (703,050). The largest group of African-born UK residents (218, 732) is from South Africa (UN DESA, 2015). It would be difficult for a counselling psychologist to gain information about all cultures. Thus, this study aims to raise awareness about the cultures that are the most prevalent in the United Kingdom, which, in turn, may challenge the views of diverse value systems and help find a way to work with the similarities and differences in clinical rooms. The second purpose of this research study is to explore the links between emotional expression and psychological distress. This study is exploratory in nature and no preconceived hypothesis will be tested. An explorative analysis, including factor analysis and an analysis of covariance, will allow an examination of emotional expression among four cultures without prior expectations, which will generate comprehensive findings about the selected cultures and draw a cross-cultural model concerning emotional expression and psychological distress.

3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will describe the methodology used during this research project. First, the epistemological position will be discussed. Second, the research design, the participants, and the materials will be outlined. Finally, the ethical considerations, the procedure of data collection, and the analysis and research generalisability will be outlined.

3.2 Epistemological Position

Epistemology, or the theory of knowledge and knowing, is a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of knowledge, what is known, and the whole process of knowing (Honderich, 1995; Cardinal, Hayward, & Jones, 2004). It is linked to ontology, which describes what exists and how it exists, and also what kind of relationship exists between categories of being (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The ontological position defines the process of knowing, which is epistemology. The researcher's epistemological position is important in the researcher process as it takes into consideration the researcher's belief of what is knowable, their biases, and justifications of those beliefs. The epistemological position guides the researchers' methodology, which structures the way scientific investigation is carried out. Therefore, methodology and methods guide assumptions about human nature and society, beliefs about what is important in the study and what data is meaningful.

Studies comparing qualitative and quantitative research have argued that the main differences in the approaches are in the justification of the methods, rather than the methods themselves (Slevitch, 2011). Differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches are commonly considered only in terms of how data was collected, processed, and analysed. This can result in confusion about the differences between qualitative and quantitative studies and their philosophical assumptions. A common assumption is that qualitative studies are associated with social constructivism or interpretivism, and quantitative studies with positivist and post-positivist epistemology (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Sprague, 2005). The positivist approach accepts a single knowable reality, is often numeric, and is considered to be as free of bias (McLeod, 1999). The social constructivist approach rejects the idea of a single truth, and focuses on how reality is socially constructed. Although many

quantitative studies lend themselves to positivism, it is important that an overall epistemological position of quantitative studies is carefully considered (Sprague, 2005). This quantitative study was conducted through the lens of the theory of social constructionism. I will further explain the considerations of this project's epistemology and methodology. I will briefly review positivist and social constructivist methodologies; I will explain the methodological nature of this study; and I will acknowledge the limitations and liberations of such a potential philosophical mismatch. My aim is not to justify the methodological choice, but rather demonstrate my considerations for the non-traditional philosophical position of this unique exploratory research.

Positivism holds that objective reality exists independently from human perception, and that the researcher can conduct a study without influencing or being influenced by it (Sale, Lohfeld, & Brazil, 2002). Quantitative positivist epistemology also assumes that facts can be separated from values in a way that the researcher can present how things really are. In that way, objective reality can be studied, and the findings can be generalised, therefore enabling predictions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Quantitative positivist methodology is described as experimental due to hypothesis application, testing, and verification using statistical analysis that usually includes mathematical analysis, structured protocols, large samples, and questionnaires with a limited range of responses (Lee, 1999). Positivism has had a significant influence in the counselling psychology field as objectivist approaches, such as cognitive and behavioural models, focus on objective assessments, evidence-based interventions, and outcome evaluations. Further, objectivist approaches in counselling psychology can place great emphasis on knowledge as identification of existing facts, direct representation of the real world, concept formation, and people as reactive beings (Neimeyer, 1993).

The present study is concerned with the rational nature of constructed realities and cultural inclusiveness. The focus is on the emotional expression dimensions and psychological distress of groups from four countries. It aims to understand how those groups of people are both similar and different within the context of the research. The study holds a view that emotional expression constructs come from social interactions defined within a local context of knowledge, power dynamics, and cultural practices.

In that particular way, this research challenges positivistic viewpoints and objective reality. It accepts and emphasises that each and every country's reality is the effect of shared understandings, interpretations, and negotiations. A quantitative approach allows for the exploration of cultural representation and constructions of emotional expressions. This quantitative study is concerned about the identification of emergent phenomena and it is not limited to hypothesis testing. Further, participant data was collected in their country of origin to allow the exploration of shared realities, and a wide range of questionnaires was carefully selected to reduce any restrictions in responses.

When social constructivism challenges the positivistic counselling psychology models, it does not imply the field of counselling psychology is homogenous in its views. Instead, social constructivism confronts received or dominant views of human nature. For social constructivism, reality is not produced by individual experience, but presents itself as an intersubjective world, which is produced by social negotiations (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Gergen & Davis, 1985). Since we share the world with others, we experience and typify them in various ways; for instance, as British, Indian, Polish, South African, man, woman, student, etc. In that respect, a certain meaning content is given an expression and concrete relationship. Such objectivations are created through signs, symbols, and language, which helps to construct social knowledge (Burr, 1995). Hence, social constructivists believe that language is not only a way to express oneself, but also a tool to construct realities. Coherence and integration within and between social groups arises through meaningful social interaction, which also helps to develop an experience of self. Therefore, individuals create their reality, and this constructed world, in turn, creates the individuals (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009). This happens through primary socialization during which a child learns social norms through significant others and secondary socialization such as school systems, peer groups, or the media. Thus, social constructivists maintain that our understanding and construction of realities varies between different cultures and societies.

Different methodologies were considered, but found unsuitable for this research project. Qualitative methods would not have been able to provide the required information about the cultural-specific constructs and the structure of

emotional expression. However, qualitative methods would allow the researcher to co-create emotional expression frameworks with participants through their vivid descriptions of lived experiences. Language and verbal and non-verbal signs are especially important in building an understanding of world views and realities. The depth of descriptions and rich interpretations in qualitative research build the knowledge of realities that can later be transferred to other research or clinical settings. Social constructionists believe in the construction of realities through language and that language provides the basis for our thoughts. Therefore, social constructionism emphasises the reflexivity in human beings. The number of pitfalls using a quantitative approach in this study relates to how language was used to construct the knowledge. The researcher uses standard questionnaires and cannot access dialogue with the participants to explore their expressions through words, signs, and symbols. The use of structured questionnaires with close-ended questions cannot always represent the participants' realities. The limited options of responses can impose categories of meaning to the participants that restricts them to freely express their views. Therefore, the outcomes of the questionnaires provide limited knowledge about the actual phenomenon Furthermore, the use of questionnaires assumes that emotional expression and ambivalence about expression are immediately understandable by all participants equally. The data may also not be robust and versatile enough to explain the complexities of emotional expression, distress, and culture.

At the heart of clinical practice of counselling psychology is the therapeutic relationship with the client. Counselling psychologists place great emphasis on social processes through which participants or clients describe and share their world views. Therefore, counselling psychologists actively collaborate with clients to build the knowledge and explore stories in clinical practice. Burr (1995) suggests that those psychologists who hold social constructivist views learn and use the client's language and focus on reflexivity in their clinical work. However, when counselling psychologists come to research, they may employ research methods influenced by positivism, even when their philosophical position is based upon social constructionism. This means that the psychologist may hold a social constructivist approach to the research process while still choosing the quantitative method because it can provide a macro view with statistically sound formulation and enable the

research conclusion to be generalised. The consequences of navigating the philosophy of one approach and using the methods of another are the way the researcher must reflectively decide on data analysis and carefully make interpretations. A number of decisions were made in order to negotiate and reconcile potential inconsistency between the chosen methodology and philosophical position. The key choices included: exclusion of hypothesis testing, the use of a wide range of questionnaires, participant recruitment and data collection in four countries, and exploratory factor analysis. These resolutions promoted curiosity within the research process with an attitude of 'not knowing' and accommodated the exploration of the unique nature of cultures and their realities. However, I do believe that a qualitative project would be an important follow-up to this study, allowing for a deeper insight into individual experiences.

This study reflects the key features of social constructionism that were proposed by McLeod (1997). First, social constructionism rejects the positivistic research position that is considered as non-reflexive in nature. This study subscribes to the social constructionism philosophy and employs quantitative methods. It has been argued that such an approach not only explores shared realities, but also extends the validity and allows generalisability of the phenomenon (Gergen, 2009; Sale, et al., 2002). Second, social constructionists critically challenge prominent assumptions about social constructs that reinforce the research interests of dominant groups. This study contributes to an existing body of research about emotional expression, mostly conducted in western countries by exploring Indian, Polish, South African, and British populations. Third, social constructivists believe that the understanding of the world is a culturally-specific process of negotiation between groups of people. This cross-cultural study also upholds the belief that meaning-making is culturally specific. Therefore, participants in their country of origin, rather than migrant groups in the UK, were recruited with consideration of the acculturation effect. Fourth, social constructivists aim not to produce knowledge that is fixed, but open up to what is possible. Although quantitative methodology of this study pursues objectivity, it also appreciates what is possible by not limiting research to hypothesis testing. Further, this research emphasises generalisability and transferability, and the extent to which readers can apply this culturally-specific emotional expression phenomenon to other cultures and therapy settings. Finally, social constructionism views psychological

constructs, such as ‘self’ and ‘emotion’ as socially-constructed processes produced by social interaction rather than by an individual (Gergen & Davis, 1985). This quantitative study emphasises emotional expression as a culturally-relative phenomenon, despite using language as a passive vehicle for expressing thoughts and feelings in this research process.

3.3 Study Design and Sample Size

The objective of this cross-cultural study is to understand the structure of emotional expression, explore the structure among cultural groups, and test the predictability of psychological distress. This research project is a quantitative cross-sectional study since the independent variables were manipulated. It is an independent measures design as it measures four different groups using the same entities (Field, 2012). The statistical analysis included an EFA, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), and a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA).

First, factor analysis was used to explore multiple emotional expression variables, understand the structure between them, and identify the underlying emotional expression factors. The emotional expression measures from six questionnaires and their subscales were used as independent variables (IV) in this study. There were fifteen independent variables: ESDS Depression, ESDS Happiness, ESDS Jealousy, ESDS Anxiety, ESDS Anger, ESDS Calmness, ESDS Apathy, ESDS Fear, DDI, EES, BEQ Negative, BEQ Positive, BEQ Impulse, SCS, and AEQ. Factor analysis extracted the maximum common variance from all fifteen variables and identified six underlying emotional expression factors.

Second, ANCOVA was used to evaluate the relationship between psychological distress and the country of origin while statistically controlling the effects of the emotional expression factors. This analysis allowed the evaluation of the main effect of culture on psychological distress. The independent variable (IV) was the cultural groups (Indian, Polish, South African, and British); the dependent variable was psychological distress (CORE); and the covariates were six emotional expression factors extracted using factor analysis.

Third, MANOVA was used to compare the four cultural groups (India, Poland, South Africa, and the UK) on six emotional expression factors. The main objective of this analysis was to evaluate the interactions between the independent variables (country) and look at the ways in which they differ from each other by exploring multiple dependent variables (emotional expression factors) simultaneously. In addition, MANOVA was followed up by a discriminant analysis in order to see exactly how the emotional expression factors discriminate the cultural groups.

In the factor analysis literature, there are a range of recommendations regarding the sample size. Comrey and Lee (1992) refer to the overall sample size, and suggest that 300 is a good size. However, a sample size above 300 would provide a stable factor solution (Field, 2012). The power analysis indicated a sample size of 237 to detect a medium effect size for the ANCOVA of four levels and four covariates (Faul et al., 2007). The minimum sample size requirement for MANOVA was 24. The sample size was increased to 400 to include a safety margin and a dropout rate. The participants were recruited from universities in four countries. The aim was to recruit 100 suitable participants from each condition and the recruitment was stopped once 100 suitable questionnaires were achieved. The questionnaires that were damaged (e.g., missing pages), inappropriately filled (e.g., drawings, multiple answers to one statement), and lacking a completed consent sheet were considered unsuitable. One participant withdrew from the study after the data collection was completed. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test verified the sampling adequacy for the factor analysis - KMO=.83 (‘Meritorious’ according to Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999). All KMO values for the individual items were greater than .72, which is well above the acceptable limit of .5 (Field, 2013). The final sample size of N=399 was considered satisfactory.

3.4 Participants

Overall, 399 people participated in this research project. All the participants were students and they were recruited from the University of Mumbai, India (N=99), the University of Warsaw, Poland (N=100), the University of Johannesburg, South Africa (N=100), and the University of Reading, United Kingdom (N=100). Four

Indian, two Polish, twenty-one British, and seventeen South African participants withdrew from the study during the data collection process. One participant from the University of Mumbai withdrew from the study three weeks after the data collection was completed. Therefore, the final groups were unequal in participant numbers. Although the gender ratio was not controlled, a relatively good balance between male (41.9%, N=167) and female (58.1%, N=232) participants was achieved. Data regarding the participants' age were not collected. Although the range of the students' ages was assumed to be relatively similar across all country groups, the participants' ages was unknown. This stands as a possible limitation for understanding sample's comparability to the general population.

The exclusion criteria included ethnicity and English language proficiency. All the participants were fluent in the English language. Only the White British in the United Kingdom, the White Polish in Poland, the Asian Indian in India, and the Black South African in South Africa were asked to participate in order to control the ethnic diversity variable. The participants were not asked to indicate their sub-cultural backgrounds, which is a limitation in examining the intra-national cultural differences, especially in South Africa and India. The Black population of South Africa consists of a number of ethnic groups, such as Nguni, Sotho, Shangaan, and Venda and subgroups, including Zulu, Ndebele, Xhosa, and Khoi-San. The largest ethnic groups in India are Indo-Aryan and Dravidian, which are further made up of subgroups such as Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Kannadinga, Tamil, and many others. However, multiculturism is not alien in South Africa and India. Subcultures have had a profound effect on each throughout the history creating a unity in multi-culturism in both countries. Despite great intra-cultural diversity, Johannesburg and Mumbai are largely considered as culturally homogeneous entities. Furthermore, the data of the subcultures were not collected as the participants in this study were assumed to represent their multicultural populations. There are no precise cultural subgroups in Poland, and the population in the UK acknowledges the national identities: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, and British (Office for National Statistics, 2011).

3.5 Study Materials

Standardised measures were used for this research project. The same previously published questionnaires in the English language were administered to all participants. Three categories of emotional expression were measured: verbal expressivity, behavioural expressivity, and comfort with expression. Each category consists of two questionnaires. Psychological distress was measured using the CORE-OM instrument. The set of questionnaires has a total of 157 items, which takes approximately 45 minutes to complete (see Appendix B for the complete questionnaire). Information sheet, consent form, and debrief information sheet were attached to all sets of questionnaires (see Appendix A). A detailed information sheet included the purpose of the study, confidentiality declaration, and rights to withdraw from the study. A signed consent form was necessary to participate in the study. Further information about the study, researcher's contact details, and a list of local counselling services were provided in the debrief information sheet.

3.5.1 Verbal Expressivity

Emotional Self-Disclosure Scale (ESDS; Snell et al., 1988) is a 40-item measure that allows individuals to self-assess willingness to be open and revealing about their emotions, both positive and negative. The ESDS consists of eight subscales, each containing five separate items for specific emotions: depression, happiness, jealousy, anxiety, anger, calmness, apathy, and fear. Participants are asked to rate the extent to which they have discussed specific feelings and emotions with other people. Each and every item is coded so that: A=0 (I have not discussed this topic), B=1, C=2, D=3, and E=4 (I have fully discussed this topic). Five items on each subscale are summed; higher scores indicate greater verbal emotional disclosure for each type of emotion. The ESDS had a high reliability in this research project (α= .87).

Distress Disclosure Index (DDI; Kahn & Hessling, 2001) is a 12-item self-report measure designed to assess one's tendency to disclose personally distressing information relating to negative events or emotional experiences. Participants are asked to rate their agreements on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicate greater tendency to disclose distress and lower scores indicate higher emotional concealment (Kahn & Hessling,

2001). The sample items are: 'I typically don't discuss things that upset me' and 'If I have a bad day, the last thing I want to do is talk about it". The DDI reliability for the present data was high (α = .94).

3.5.2 Behavioural Expressivity

Emotional Expressivity Scale (EES; Kring et al., 1994) is a 17-item self-report measure that assesses one's outward expression of emotions, regardless of the type of emotion or the form of expression. Participants are asked to rate the list of statements about expression of emotions on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never true) to 7 (always true). The average score on the EES is 64.67 (Kring et al., 1994). The sample items are: 'People can "read" my emotions', 'I am able to cry in front of other people', and 'I hold my feelings in'. The EES reliability for the present data was good (α = .77).

Berkeley Expressivity Questionnaire (BEQ; Gross & John, 1997) is a 16-item self- report scale designed to measure the strength of emotional response and the extent to which emotions are behaviourally expressed. The BEQ consists of three subtypes: Negative Expressivity, Positive Expressivity, and Impulse Strength. The sample item for the Negative Expressivity is: 'I've learned it is better to supress my anger than to show it'; Positive Expressivity: 'I laugh out loud when someone tells me a joke that I think is funny'; and Impulse Strength: 'I sometimes cry during sad movies'. Participants are asked to rate they agreement on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The scoring is kept continuous and it is possible to combine all scores to form an overall emotional expressivity scale. However, three subtype scores were kept separate for the purpose of this research project. Overall, the BEQ had acceptable reliability in this research project (α = .6). Measures with few items can have lower Cronbach's alpha values (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

3.5.3 Comfort with Emotional Expression

Self-Concealment Scale (SCS; Larson & Chastain, 1990) is a 10-item self-report scale designed to measure one's inclination to keep personal information that one perceives as negative of distressing to oneself. The sample items are: 'My secrets are too embarrassing to share with others' and 'if I share my secrets with my friends,

they'd like me less'. The scale utilises a Likert-type 5 point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The SCS had good reliability for this research project (α = .86).

Ambivalence over Emotional Expressiveness Questionnaire (AEQ; King & Emmons, 1990) is a 28-item self-report measure designed to assess one's conflict between the desire to expresses emotions and what one actually expresses. The AEQ measures two areas of ambivalence over emotional expression: wanting to express emotion and not being able to do so (e.g., 'I want to express my emotions honestly but I am afraid that it may cause me embarrassment or hurt') and experiencing guilt or regret over expressed emotion (e.g., 'I feel guilty after I have expressed anger to someone'). All items are scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not applicable at all) to 5 (highly applicable). The AEQ score was derived from the sum of all the scale's items (King & Emmons, 1990). Overall, the AEQ had a good reliability for this research project (α = .84).

3.5.4 Psychological Distress

Clinical Outcomes Routine Evaluation – Outcome Measure (CORE-OM; Evans et al., 2000) is a 34-item self-report measure designed to assess global distress. The CORE-OM is widely used, assessing response to psychological therapy, but also suitable for use as an initial screening tool for measuring level of psychological distress (Evans et al., 2000). The sample items are: 'I have felt able to cope when thing go wrong' and 'tension and anxiety have prevented me doing important things'. The scale can be separated to four subscales: Subjective Wellbeing, Problems/Symptoms, Functioning (general functioning, functioning in close relationships and in social relationships), and Risk (harm to self and harm to others). Participants are asked to rate each of the 34 items on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (not at all) to 4 (most of the time). Total scores were calculated for all items for the purpose of this research project. Total score gives a measure of global distress ranging from 0 to 136 (distress severity levels: 0-20 healthy, 21-33 low level, 34-50 mild, 51-67 moderate, 68-84 moderate to severe and >85 severe). This instrument has been extensively used and possesses high validity and reliability (Evans et al., 2000).

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The potential risks to the participants were identified as low. The questionnaires are not known to cause distress. However, it was expected that some questions would stimulate emotional reflexivity, and, consequently they may cause some emotional discomfort. To manage this risk, the participants were briefed about this study prior to the completion of the questionnaires. All the participants received an information sheet that included the contact details of local counselling services (see Appendix A). The information sheet also explained that their participation was voluntary and anonymous, and it detailed their right to withdraw at any point up to two weeks after the data collection (BPS, 2014). No confidential or identifiable information about the participants was collected; they were asked to choose a pseudonym, so their questionnaires could be identifiable in case they decided to withdraw from the study after the data collection. One participant requested to withdraw from the study via email three weeks after the data collection so the questionnaire was identified by their pseudonym and then shredded.

The estimated time for the questionnaire completion was 45 minutes. The appropriate environment for the data collection was discussed with all the participating universities. The University of Reading approved an appropriate space at the student centre and library for the participant recruitment and data collection. The University of Warsaw suggested a study area in the Applied Linguistics and Modern Languages Faculty building. The study rooms in the University of Johannesburg's library and the lecture rooms in the University of Mumbai were used for the data collection. All the participants were given space and time to complete the questionnaires, and they were debriefed immediately after. To ensure anonymity, no lecturers or university officials were involved at any point in this research project.

A specific issue of this study was that the data collection and data processing took place in four different countries. This raised issues concerning the safe transport of the data. The data were processed in line with the Data Protection Act of 1998. I was the only person to access the questionnaires, which were transported in my locked hand luggage to ensure constant supervision. Once the collection was

completed and the data had been returned to the UK, it was entered into SPSS before the questionnaires and consent forms were shredded.

This is an impartial and independent research project. I was solely responsible for all the financial costs, including travelling, accommodation, daily expenses, and travel insurance. I have no affiliation with the universities and the participants taking part in the study. This research project was approved by the London Metropolitan University Psychology Department Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix C). Ethical approval was granted by the University of Johannesburg's Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix D). The data collection at the University of Mumbai was approved by the Department of Applied Psychology and Counselling Centre. There was no requirement for external ethics clearance at the University of Warsaw and the University of Reading. The data collection in Poland was agreed with the University of Warsaw's Department of Doctoral and Postgraduate Studies. The data collection in the UK was agreed with the University of Reading's student centre.

3.7 Procedure

There were four data collection stages: the first stage took place at the University of Reading; second was the University of Mumbai; third was the University of Johannesburg; and the final stage took place at the University of Warsaw. The data collection in the UK allowed the identifying and analysing of potential problems relating to participant recruitment and questionnaire completion. The sequence of the other stages was influenced by the ethical clearance, the visa applications, and student holidays. At the University of Reading, I approached students individually and in groups to take part by introducing my study. Those who agreed to take part were talked through the information sheet and invited to ask questions. Once the questions were answered, the participants were invited to start the questionnaire in the allocated area. The questionnaire took approximately 50 minutes to complete. The questionnaires that were not fully completed were not included in the study. Once the questionnaires were returned, I handed the participants the information sheet that included further information about the study, my contact details, and a list of local counselling services. I also checked if the participants had

any further questions or concerns. It took four days to complete the data collection in the UK. All the questionnaires were kept in a locked cabinet until the data was entered into the SPSS. All the questionnaires were shredded once all the data were entered. No adjustments to the questionnaires or procedure were required after the first data collection point.

The data collection arrangements at the University of Mumbai were agreed with the Head of the Applied Psychology and Counselling Centre. University lecturers from various faculties informed the students about my study and invited them to participate. The students who were interested in taking part attended data collection sessions at the Applied Psychology and Counselling Centre building. Four data collection sessions were conducted out throughout the day. I met the students at the classroom where I informed them about the study, explained their rights, and provided the questionnaires for completion. All the participants were provided with information sheets after completion. It took three days to complete the data collection in India. One participant contacted me via email requesting to withdraw from the study three weeks after the data collection. The questionnaire was identified by the participant's pseudonym and then shredded; it was deleted from the SPSS file. Following ethical clearance, the data collection at the University of Johannesburg was agreed with the Head of Department of Psychology. I promoted the research project by approaching students in the library and study rooms. All the students who agreed to take part were invited to an allocated area to hear more about the study. The data collection procedure was the same as for the British and Indian participants. It took two days to complete the data collection at the University of Johannesburg. The final stage of the data collection was carried out with Polish students at the Applied Linguistics and Modern Languages Faculty. The research project was promoted at break times between lectures, and the participants attended drop-in sessions to complete the questionnaires. It took two days to complete data collection at the University of Warsaw. All the questionnaires were kept in a locked safe at the accommodation in all the countries, and then locked my hand luggage during transportation. Once the collection was completed and the data had been returned to the UK, it was entered into SPSS. The questionnaires and consent forms were shredded after three weeks of the data completion.

3.8 Analysis

All analyses were conducted using the IBM SPSS version 25.0 software (IBM Corp, 2017). Preliminary data screening showed no entry errors. The initial checks included looking at the correlation between the variables as well as ensuring normal distribution of the data. Factor analysis was performed to estimate the underlying factors from the data and reflect the constructs that could not be measured directly (Field, 2000). The Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) method of factor extraction was used to analyse the variance among the variables and calculate the common factors. Factor analysis offered a clear view of the data and the possibility of using new variables (factors) in subsequent analyses (Field, 2000). Following the extraction of the factors, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was carried out to assess the effects and interactions between psychological distress and culture variables with the inclusion of emotional expression factors as covariates (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). MANOVA was performed to understand the patterns between emotional expression clusters and to detect whether the groups differed along a combination of those emotional expression dimensions.

3.9 Generalisability

The data were collected in four countries (India, Poland, South Africa, and the United Kingdom) to explore the cultural uniqueness of emotional expression and psychological distress with a view to informing and improving cultural competence recommendations in mental health service provision in the UK. Extrapolating the findings of the participants living in their countries of origin helps to better understand the similarities and differences of those cultures and to identify what may be universal and variable. Also, recruiting the participants in their country of origin rather than recruiting the participants of Indian, Polish, and South African ethnic backgrounds in the UK was an attempt to control the acculturation effect. Acculturation refers to a dual process of cultural and psychological changes that take place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups (Berry, 2005). John Berry (1997) proposed four acculturation categories that result from the combination of the culture of origin and the host culture dimensions. Assimilation refers to a strong orientation to the host culture and the discarding of the culture of origin. Separation defines rejection of the host culture and a strong orientation to the original culture;

integration refers to the adoption of both the culture of origin and the host culture; and marginalisation occurs when both the original and the host cultures are rejected (Berry, 1997). Individuals face different types and degrees of acculturation challenges depending on whether they are first, second, or later generation migrants and on the age that experienced contact with a new cultural context (Zane & Mak, 2003).

There is a large body of research on acculturation that focuses mostly on sociocultural and health outcomes (Berry et al., 2006; Myers & Rodriguez, 2002). However, there is little research on the psychological processes of acculturation referring the emotional, behavioural, and cognitive aspects. Research on cultural identity and acculturation is much needed to understand symptom presentation in order to attend to the risks of mental health issues in multicultural communities (Draguns & Tanaka-Matsumi, 2003; Richmond, 2002). It is especially important to gain a comprehensive understanding of both the host culture and culture of origin to effectively measure acculturation and its impact on psychological wellbeing. For example, Butler et al. (2007) observed that the effects of emotional suppression on social consequences were due to the original cultural influence despite the high levels of acculturation. Therefore, this research study focused on extrapolating the data of the participants in their cultures of origin to provide a basis for understanding the acculturation and its effect on mental health. Regarding my knowledge there are no existing studies that explore emotional expression and psychological distress in Polish, Indian, and South African cultures. However, it is important to keep in mind the potential issues of extrapolating the findings of people living outside of the UK to the UK system. The participants recruited in their countries of origin are not affected by acculturation factors unlike people living in the host country. Additionally, the participants living outside the UK and those who live in the UK may be affected differently by socioeconomic and sociocultural factors. Therefore, a measure of a psychological construct, such as emotional expression in populations living outside the UK, may look differently to when it is applied to a group of people living in the UK. There are limitations in generalising the findings of people living outside of the UK to the UK system, and the findings must be interpreted with caution to avoid incorrect assumptions and interpretations in clinical practice.

The participants in this study were students from large universities in

Johannesburg (South Africa), Mumbai (India), Reading (United Kingdom), and Warsaw (Poland). A student sample was used in an attempt to achieve homogeneity in the data. However, the student sample may have an effect on the comparability and generalisability of the results in this research study because the students are usually of high socioeconomic status, are younger and are more highly educated compared to the general population (Hanel & Vione, 2016).

4 Results

Means and standard deviations for measures of emotional expression and psychological distress are presented in Table 1. Several significant country differences were observed; South African participants reported being less expressive than did Indian and Polish participants in terms of various aspects of behavioural expressivity and distress disclosure. They were more (low) ambivalent about emotional expression than Indian participants, but less (high) ambivalent than the British. Polish participants reported higher self-disclosure of anger than South Africans and stronger behavioural expressivity impulses than the British. Furthermore, Indian compared with the Polish and British participants reported being more expressive in terms of verbal disclosure of positive emotions such as happiness and calmness. There were no significant differences in psychological distress measure (CORE) scores among the country groups.

Table 1 Means and Standard Deviations among study measures

Measures	**Total (N=399)**		**India (N=99)**		**Poland (N=100)**		**SA (N=100)**		**UK (N=100)**	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
ESDS Depression	9.94	4.42	9.62	4.04	10.72	4.73	9.39	4.57	10.03	4.24
ESDS Happiness*	13.42	4.51	14.28	3.77	12.51	4.21	14.16	4.38	12.75	5.31
ESDS Jealousy	7.96	3.91	7.56	3.57	8.37	3.97	8.02	3.74	7.86	4.35
ESDS Anxiety	9.89	4.23	9.79	4.01	10.41	4.51	9.41	4.06	9.95	4.32
ESDS Anger*	9.86	4.50	9.71	4.43	10.85	4.60	9.06	4.20	9.82	4.66
ESDS Calmness*	8.61	4.64	9.72	4.14	8.21	4.67	8.98	4.50	7.53	4.99
ESDS Apathy	7.32	4.38	7.22	3.71	7.38	4.35	7.41	4.43	7.26	4.99
ESDS Fear	9.92	4.57	9.71	4.37	10.63	4.38	10.19	4.50	9.17	4.96
DDI*	36.22	10.46	38.59	8.36	37.97	11.07	33.00	10.48	35.34	10.88
EES	60.13	6.27	59.30	5.67	59.37	5.75	61.16	7.29	60.66	6.12
BEQ Negative*	21.55	6.56	21.97	5.69	22.80	7.13	19.86	6.06	21.57	6.98
BEQ Positive*	20.67	4.57	21.77	4.07	20.74	5.01	19.54	4.78	20.64	4.14
BEQ Impulse*	28.69	8.31	30.46	7.18	31.09	7.57	25.95	8.94	27.26	8.42
SCS	29.92	9.26	29.09	8.91	30.50	8.93	30.85	9.55	29.25	9.65
AEQ*	87.57	21.78	85.04	20.99	86.75	19.89	93.55	22.75	84.93	22.52
CORE	45.12	23.96	41.86	22.72	47.82	25.08	48.49	21.29	42.27	26.02

Note. ESDS = Emotional Self-Disclosure Scale; DDI = Distress Disclosure Index; EES= Emotional Expressivity Scale; BEQ = Berkeley Expressivity Questionnaire; SCS = Self=Concealment Scale; AEQ = Ambivalence Over Emotional Expressiveness Questionnaire; CORE = Clinical Outcomes Routine Evaluation. * Independent samples t-test indicated Mean Country differences are significant, $p < .05$

4.1 Factor Analysis of Emotional Expression Measures

4.1.1 Preliminary Analysis

Factor analysis was carried out using 15 independent variables from six emotional expression questionnaires. Eight subscales of AEQ, three subscales of BEQ, scale scores of DDI, EES, SCS, and AEQ represented independent variables. All instruments have previously been validated and meet validity and reliability criteria. The ESDS was designed to measure only verbal disclosure of emotions and subscales representing types of emotion. Similarly, the BEQ consists of three carefully devised subscales measuring behavioural expression of emotion. The DDI, EES, SCS, and AEQ instruments also assess particular components of emotional expression. Scale and subscale scores were used rather than all items across questionnaires to determine common factors among separate emotional expression components measured separately by these questionnaires. The data were converted to z-scores for standardisation and benchmarks to search for outliers. Values were broadly consistent with what is expected in normal distribution.

The correlation between variables was checked using correlate procedure to create a correlation matrix of all variables (Table 2). The determinant of the correlation matrix for the data was .003, which means that no multicollinearity was identified. All emotional expression measures correlated reasonably well with all others, and none of the correlation coefficients were excessively large ($r < .9$); therefore, no elimination of any measures was required at this stage. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistics value was .83, which fell into the range of ‘marvellous’, meaning that the sample size was adequate for factor analysis (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). Further, data values of the diagonal elements of the anti-image correlation matrix were well above the minimum of .5; the rest of the anti-image correlation matrix showed very small correlation between off-diagonal elements which represent the partial correlation between variables. The Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant *(*$p<.001$) (Table 3).

Table 2
Correlation Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. ESDS Depression	-	.30	.43	.71	.53	.27	.51	.61	.45	-.21	.26	.09	.19	-.19	-.11
2.ESDS Happiness		-	.39	.36	.33	.41	.23	.38	.21	-.19	.09	.27	.15	-.09	-.02
3. ESDS Jealousy			-	.53	.52	.43	.53	.48	.23	-.16	.23	.07	.13	-.11	-.11
4. ESDS Anxiety				-	.64	.34	.56	.68	.42	-.23	.26	.12	.25	-.17	-.15
5. ESDS Anger					-	.30	.49	.57	.31	-.15	.27	.18	.15	-.07	-.14
6. ESDS Calmness						-	.62	.36	.14	-.17	.07	.12	.08	-.04	-.01
7. ESDS Apathy							-	.47	.27	-.22	.20	.04	.08	-.08	-.08
8. ESDS Fear								-	.35	-.19	.23	.13	.22	-.17	-.09
9. DDI									-	-.30	.47	.29	.32	-.34	-.30
10. EES										-	-.36	-.14	-.33	-.03	-.08
11. BEQ Negative											-	.28	.37	-.22	-.23
12. BEQ Positive												-	.42	-.08	-.01
13. BEQ Impulse													-	.07	.18
14. SCS														-	.58
15. AEQ															-

Note: Determinant = .003

Table 3
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin of Sampling Adequacy		**.83**
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2318.05
	df	105
	Sig.	.000

4.1.2 Factor Extraction

In Factor Analysis, it is crucial to arrive to accurate decision of how many factors are going to be extracted. Factors with large enough eigenvalues should be retained. Kraiser (1960) recommended extracting factors with eigenvalues only greater than 1. Evidence suggests that Kraiser's (1960) criterion for four factors to be extracted when there are fewer than 30 variables and communalities after the extraction are greater than .7 or when the sample size exceeds 250 and the average communality is greater than .6 is also accurate (Stevens, 2002). However, there were only two (ESDS Anxiety and ESDS Calmness) out of fifteen communalities after extraction with eigenvalues greater than .7 and the average communality was lower than .6 (7.89/15 = .53) (Table 4). The Oblique rotation that allows factors to correlate was performed to improve the interpretability of factors. Despite increasing the

maximum number of iterations, the parameter estimates for the factor extraction did not converge. In other words, rotation failed to estimate factor loadings. Zwick and Velicer (1986) discussed that Kraiser's criterion often overestimates and underestimates the number of components. An error in this analysis suggests that Kraise's rule was inappropriate for these data and the best way to determine how many factors to retain was parallel analysis (Horn, 1965; Zwick & Velicer, 1986).

Parallel analysis is a recommended procedure for deciding on the number of components that account for more variance compared to components obtained from random data (O'Connor, 2000). Horn (1965) originally explained that parallel analysis extract eigenvalues from random data sets that parallel the actual data with regard to the number of variables. The SPSS software does not permit performing this test, because it requires a number of components to be identified before running factor extractions. However, SPSS software allows for the writing of one's own program. Brian O'Connor's (2000) SPSS syntax facilitated the use of parallel analysis for determining the number of components. The model was a good fit for the data as there were only three (2.0 %) nonredundant residuals with absolute values greater than .05. A total of six factors were extracted after performing Parallel Analysis (Table 5).

Table 4
Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
ESDS Depression	.58	.70
ESDS Happiness	.35	.43
ESDS Jealousy	.44	.48
ESDS Anxiety	.68	.77
ESDS Anger	.52	.73
ESDS Calmness	.49	.77
ESDS Apathy	.60	.73
ESDS Fear	.55	.61
DDI	.44	.55
EES	.24	.28
BEQ Negative	.38	.57
BEQ Positive	.28	.40
BEQ Impulse	.38	.53
SCS	.38	.56
AEQ	.40	.66

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Table 5
Factor Matrix

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
ESDS Depression	.74					
ESDS Happiness	.48				.37	
ESDS Jealousy	.64					
ESDS Anxiety	.83					
ESDS Anger	.72					.36
ESDS Calmness	.54	.39				
ESDS Apathy	.69				-.32	
ESDS Fear	.74					
DDI	.56	-.43				
EES	-.34		-.34			
BEQ Negative	.45	-.43	.30			
BEQ Positive			.42			
BEQ Impulse	.34		.64			
SCS		.57	.35			
AEQ		.59	.49	-.55		

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring; 6 factors extracted. 36 iterations required.

4.1.3 Factor Descriptions and Labels

Factor rotation was conducted to calculate the degree to which variables loaded on six factors extracted using parallel analysis. The oblique rotation was chosen after consideration of theoretical reasons discussed in the literature review that underlying emotional expression factors might be related. The Oblique rotation permits correlation between factors (Field, 2013). Factor loadings after rotation are presented in the pattern matrix (Table 6), which is comparable to the factor matrix (Table 5). For the pattern matrix the same six factors emerge and only three factors have more than three statistically meaningful variables that are at least than 0.32 loaded on each factor (Factor 1 and Factor 4). As a general guide, rotated factors should have at least three variables and retaining factors with one or two variables is risky and should be interpreted with caution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

The three items loaded on Factor 1 are: verbal expression of depression, verbal expression of anxiety, and verbal expression of fear (ESDS subscales). The common theme of Factor 1 is verbal disclosure of unpleasant feelings; therefore the label for this factor is Disclosure of Negative Emotions. Factor 3 consists of four items: BEQ Negative, BEQ Impulse, EES, and DDI. The label for Factor 3 is Expression of Distress as it contains items measuring the outward expression of emotions, impulse

strength, negative expressivity, and distress disclosure. There were two variables loaded on Factor 2: ambivalence over emotional expression and self-concealment (AEQ and SCS). According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), if two variables are reasonably highly correlated with each other and relatively uncorrelated with other variables, the factor can be considered as reliable, which was the case for this analysis (see Table 2). Factor 2 was labelled Comfort with Emotional Expression.

Table 6
Pattern Matrix

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
ESDS Depression	.83					
ESDS Happiness					.48	
ESDS Jealousy				-.32		
ESDS Anxiety	.76					
ESDS Anger	.36					.60
ESDS Calmness				-.90		
ESDS Apathy				-.64		
ESDS Fear	.67					
DDI	.32	-.32	.42			
EES			-.46			
BEQ Negative			.69			
BEQ Positive					.54	
BEQ Impulse			.50		.32	
SCS		.73				
AEQ		.79				

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring; Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalisation; Rotation converged in 18 iterations.

Furthermore, three variables were loaded onto Factor 4 in a pattern matrix**:** verbal expression of calmness, apathy, and jealousy. Two variables, calmness and apathy, seem to represent neutral emotions, however jealousy is a negative emotion. Therefore, structure matrix table was explored to gain better understanding of the relationship between the factors (Table 7). The structure matrix differs from the pattern matrix in the way that shared variance was not ignored. The structure matrix indicates that Verbal Expression of Jealousy is more appropriate to be included under Factor 1 (0.551) rather than Factor 4 (-0.545), which is a good fit with the Disclosure of Negative Emotions construct. As a result, Factor 1 contains verbal expression of depression, anxiety, fear, and jealousy. The label for Factor 4 is Lack of Affect as it contains disclosure of apathy and calmness. There was a moderately high correlation

between both variables, which was not correlated with other variables; therefore, the factor can be retained, but interpreted with caution. In addition, there were a number of variables loaded highly on both Factor 1 and Factor 4 in the structure matrix

Weak reliability of Factor 5 and Factor 6 was observed in the pattern matrix. Two variables, Verbal Expression of Happiness (ESDS) and Positive Expressivity, were loaded on Factor 5, which was labelled as Expression of Positive Emotions. Both variables included in Factor 5 were uncorrelated with each other and other variables in the analysis. Only one variable, Verbal Expression of Anger, was loaded under the Factor 6 representing Disclosure of Anger. However, both factors were poorly defined and did not meet the general reliability criteria for factor extraction. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) discussed that retaining factors of marginal reliability can often represent the most unexpected and interesting findings in research. Factor 5 was the only construct that represented positive emotions among all six factors and Factor 6 highlighted the separation of anger from negative and positive emotions. Therefore, retaining both of these factors may provide unique information about valence of emotional expression. The number of variables loaded highly on more than one factor in the Structure Matrix confirming the evident relationship between Factor 1 and Factor 6.

Table 7
Structure Matrix

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
ESDS Depression	.827		.306	-.379		.335
ESDS Happiness	.400			-.428	.523	
ESDS Jealousy	.551			-.545		.499
ESDS Anxiety	.862		.305	-.457		.491
ESDS Anger	.649			-.388		.760
ESDS Calmness	.357			-.868		
ESDS Apathy	.584			-.759		.441
ESDS Fear	.763			-.446		.408
DDI	.488	-.396	.579		.307	
EES			-.487			
BEQ Negative			.710			
BEQ Positive			.388		.592	
BEQ Impulse			.610		.491	
SCS		.727				
AEQ		.800				

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring; Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalisation.

4.1.4 Summary of Factor Analysis

A principal axis factor analysis was conducted on the 15 items with oblique rotation (direct oblimin). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO =0.83 (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999), and all KMO values for individual items were greater than 0.7, which is well above the acceptable limit of 0.5 (Field, 2013). A parallel analysis was chosen to retain factors with large eigenvalues**.** Brian O'Connor's SPSS syntax (O'Connor, 2000) was applied onto the SPSS software to run a parallel analysis and it successfully determined statistically significant eigenvalues for each factor in the data. A random permutation method was used for a robust approach of factor extraction from the data reduction analysis. Six factors emerged after the extraction procedure, but only two factors, Factor 1 and Factor 3, were loaded with three or more variables, which met the general extraction rule. Although Factor 2 and Factor 4 were loaded with only two variables, they met the reliability criteria based on variable correlation with each other and no correlation with other variables in the model. The poorly defined Factor 5 and Factor 6 were retained despite consisting of two or less variables or fewer and no correlation between items. There is an ongoing debate in existing research about retaining too many or two few if the number of loaded variables is ambiguous. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) validated the retention of factors with marginal reliability because of the possibility of unexpected findings in the research area but also warned of the necessity tp interpret those factors with caution. Factor 5 and Factor 6 were retained because they represent unique constructs in the emotional expression model and may provide important information about valence of emotions. The items that cluster on the same factor suggest that Factor 1 represents Disclosure of Negative Emotions; Factor 2 represents Comfort with Emotional Expression; Factor 3 represents (verbal and non-verbal) Expression of Distress; Factor 4 represents Lack of Affect; Factor 5 an Expression of Positive Emotions; and Factor 6 represents Disclosure of Anger.

4.2 The Influence of Emotional Expression Factors on Psychological Distress

To establish significant relationships between the six factors of emotional expression, cultural background, and psychological distress, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) of between-subject design was conducted. All six factors as covariates were measured and included in an analysis of variance, in order to reduce within

group and error variance, eliminate systemic bias, and perform a step-down analysis (Stevens, 2002). As such, this method of analysis performed as a cross between Regression and ANOVA. Covariates were Disclosure of Negative Emotions, Comfort with Emotional Expression, Expression of Distress, Lack of Affect, Expression of Positive Emotions, and Disclosure of Anger; an independent variable was the country (India, Poland, South Africa, and UK); and a dependent variable was psychological distress (CORE). Looking at the significant values (Table 1), it is clear that covariates Factor 2, Factor 3, and Factor 5 significantly predict the dependent variable (psychological distress), because the probability value is less than .05. Therefore, Comfort over Emotional Expression, Expression of Distress, and Expression of Positive Emotions influence levels of psychological distress. The covariate Disclosure of Negative Emotions was not significantly related to the psychological distress variable (CORE), F (1, 389) = .98, p=. 32, $r = \sqrt{\frac{-.99^2}{-.99^2+389}} = .05$. The covariate Comfort with Emotional Expression was significantly related to the psychological distress variable, F (1, 389) = 135.02, $p < 0.001$, $r = \sqrt{\frac{11.62^2}{11.62^2+389}} = .51$. The covariate Expression of Distress was also significantly related to the psychological distress variable, F (1, 389) = 8.20, $p < 0.001$, $r = \sqrt{\frac{2.86^2}{2.86^2+389}} = .14$. The covariate Lack of Affect was not significantly related to the psychological distress variable, F (1, 389) = .05, $p = .83$, $r = \sqrt{\frac{-.22^2}{-.22^2+389}} = .01$. The covariate Expression of Positive Emotions was significantly related to the psychological distress variable, F (1, 389) = 35.70, $p < 0.001$, $r = \sqrt{\frac{-5.98^2}{-5.98^2+389}} = .29$. Finally, the covariate, Disclosure of Anger**,** was not significantly related to the psychological distress variable, F (1, 389) = .08, $p = .78$, $r = \sqrt{\frac{.28^2}{.28^2+389}} = .01$. There was also not significant effect of culture on the psychological distress variable after controlling the effect of emotional expression factors, F (3, 389) =.96, $p = .41$, $\eta^2 = \frac{1130.51}{1130.51+153426.85} = .01$.

Table 8
Tests of Between- Subjects Effects (Dependent Variable: CORE)

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	75094.611*	9	8343.85	21.16	.00
Intercept	812169.11	1	812169.11	2059.18	.00
Disclosure of Negative Emotions	386.97	1	386.97	.981	.32
Comfort with Emotional Expression	53253.75	1	53253.75	135.02	.00
Expression of Distress	3235.01	1	3235.01	8.20	.00
Lack of Affect	19.36	1	19.36	.05	.83
Expression of Positive Emotions	14081.74	1	14081.74	35.70	.00
Disclosure of Anger	31.64	1	31.64	.08	.78
Country	1130.51	3	376.84	.96	.41
Error	153426.85	389	394.41		
Total	1040732.00	389			
Corrected Total	228521.46	389			

Note: *R Squared = .33 (Adjusted R Squared = .31)

Furthermore, Table 9 shows the parameter estimates and their bootstrapped confidence intervals and *p*-values. These estimates result from a regression analysis with 'country' split into three dummy coding variables. The dummy variables were coded with the last category (United Kingdom) as the reference category. The reference category (country = 4) was coded with a 0 for all three dummy variables. Therefore, country = 1 represents the difference between the group coded as 1 (India) and the reference category (United Kingdom), country = 2 represents the difference between Poland and United Kingdom, and country =3 represents the difference between South Africa and United Kingdom. Planned contrasts revealed that the psychological distress results of Indian participants did not significantly differ compared to the British participant results, t (389) = .814, p = .416, r = $\sqrt{\frac{.81^2}{.81^2+389}}$ = .04. Planned contrasts also showed no significant difference between Polish and British psychological distress results, t (398) = 1.32, p = .42, r = $\sqrt{\frac{1.32^2}{1.32^2+389}}$ = .07. Planned contrast showed no significant difference between South African and British participants' CORE results, t (398) = 1.55, p = .12, r = $\sqrt{\frac{1.55^2}{1.55^2+389}}$ = .08.

Table 9
Parameter Estimates (Dependent Variable: CORE)

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	42.47	2.01	21.13	.00	38.52	46.43
Disclosure of Negative Emotions	-.99	1.00	-.99	.32	-2.96	.976
Comfort with Emotional Expression	11.67	1.01	11.62	.00	9.70	13.65
Expression of Distress	2.94	1.02	2.86	.00	.92	4.96
Lack of Affect	-.22	1.01	-.22	.83	-2.21	1.76
Expression of Positive Emotions	-6.01	1.02	-5.98	.00	-8.06	-4.07
Disclosure of Anger	.29	1.01	.28	.78	-1.69	2.26
[Country = 1]	2.37	2.91	.81	.42	-3.35	8.09
[Country = 2]	3.75	2.84	1.32	.19	-1.83	9.33
[Country = 3]	4.46	2.88	1.55	.12	-1.21	10.13
[Country = 4]	0*					

Note: * This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

Table 10
Pairwise Comparisons (Dependent Variable: CORE)

(I) Country	(J) Country	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.*	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
India	Poland	-1.38	2.90	.99	-9.06	6.30
	South Africa	-2.09	2.92	.98	-9.81	5.62
	United Kingdom	2.37	2.91	.96	-5.32	10.06
Poland	India	1.38	2.90	.99	-6.30	9.06
	South Africa	-.71	2.93	1.00	-8.46	7.04
	United Kingdom	3.75	2.84	.71	-3.76	11.25
South Africa	India	2.09	2.92	.98	-5.62	9.81
	Poland	.71	2.93	1.00	-7.04	8.46
	United Kingdom	4.46	2.88	.54	-3.16	12.08
United Kingdom	India	-2.37	2.91	.96	-10.06	5.32
	Poland	-3.75	2.84	.71	-11.25	3.76
	South Africa	-4.46	2.88	.54	-12.08	3.16

Note: * Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Sidak.

Follow up *post hoc* tests were conducted to compare all different combinations of country groups, as there was no specific hypothesis regarding cultural background in this research project. Post hoc tests are not designed for the analyses in which covariates are specified. However, comparisons were performed using contrasts and

the results of Šidák corrected *post hoc* comparisons are presented in Table 10. There were no significant differences in psychological distress between country groups. In addition to planned contrast test with the reference group (United Kingdom), there were no significant differences between remaining groups: India and Poland (p = .99), India and South Africa (p = .98) and Poland and South Africa (p = 1.00).

4.3 Emotional Expression Factors Across Cultures

4.3.1 Multivariate Test Statistics

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to test the difference between culture groups across all six emotional expression factors simultaneously. The study design was between subjects; the independent variable was the country (Poland, India, South Africa, and UK) and dependent variables were Disclosure of Negative Emotions, Comfort with Emotional Expression, Expression of Distress, Lack of Affect, Expression of Positive Emotions, and Disclosure of Anger. Table 11 shows the test statistics for the intercept of the model and for the culture group variable. For this research project, the culture group effects are of interest as they indicate whether or not the culture has an effect on the emotional expression. Pillai's trace ($p < 0.001$), Wilk's lambda ($p < 0.001$), Hotelling's trace ($p < 0.001$), and Roy's root ($p < 0.001$) all reached the criterion of significance of .05. This result shows, using Pillai's trace, that there was a significant effect of country variable on all emotional expression factors collectively, V=0.17, F (18, 1176) = 3.91, $p < 0.001$

Table 11

*Multivariate Tests**

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.00	.00**	6.00	390.00	1.00
	Wilks' Lambda	1.00	.00**	6.00	390.00	1.00
	Hotelling's Trace	.00	.00**	6.00	390.00	1.00
	Roy's Largest Root	.00	.00**	6.00	390.00	1.00
Country	Pillai's Trace	.17	3.91	18.00	1176.00	0.00
	Wilks' Lambda	.84	3.93	18.00	1103.57	0.00
	Hotelling's Trace	.18	3.95	18.00	1166.00	0.00
	Roy's Largest Root	.09	6.14***	6.00	392.00	0.00

Note: *Design: Intercept + Country; **Exact statistics; ***The statistics is an upper bound on F that yields a lower bound on the significance level.

Furthermore, Table 12 contains an ANOVA summary for each of the emotional expression factors. Separate univariate ANOVAs on the emotional expression variables revealed that there was a not significant difference between country groups in terms of Disclosure of Negative Emotions $F(3, 395) = 1.27$, $p = .28$, Comfort with Emotional Expression $F(3, 395) = 2.33$, $p = .74$, and Disclosure of Anger $F(3, 395) = 2.53$, $p = .06$. But there was a significant effect of country on Expression of Distress $F(3, 395) = 8.07$, $p < 0.001$, Lack of Affect, $F(3, 395) = 3.89$, $p = .01$, and Expression of Positive Emotions $F(3, 395) = 5.07$, $p < 0.001$. It is clear that the person's country of origin influences their Expression of Distress, Lack of Affect, and Expression of Positive Emotions. This result also indicates that the greatest differences in emotional expression between countries were in terms of how people express their distress and their positive emotions.

Table 12
Tests of Between-Subject Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Country group	Disclosure of Negative Emotions	3.80	3	1.27	1.27	.28
	Comfort with Emotional Expression	6.91	3	2.30	2.33	.07
	Expression of Distress	22.99	3	7.66	8.07	.00
	Lack of Affect	11.42	3	3.81	3.89	.01
	Expression of Positive Emotions	14.76	3	4.92	5.07	.00
	Disclosure of Anger	7.49	3	2.50	2.53	.06
Error	Disclosure of Negative Emotions	394.20	395	1.00		
	Comfort with Emotional Expression	391.09	395	.99		
	Expression of Distress	375.01	395	.95		
	Lack of Affect	386.58	395	.98		
	Expression of Positive Emotions	383.24	395	.97		
	Disclosure of Anger	390.51	395	.99		
Corrected Total	Disclosure of Negative Emotions	398.00	398			
	Comfort with Emotional Expression	398.00	398			
	Expression of Distress	398.00	398			
	Lack of Affect	398.00	398			
	Expression of Positive Emotions	398.00	398			
	Disclosure of Anger	398.00	398			

4.3.2 Discriminant Analysis

The MANOVA was followed up with discriminant analysis to test whether culture groups differ along a linear combination of emotional expression variables. This revealed three discriminant functions. The first explained 51.4% of the variance,

canonical R^2= .09, whereas the second explained 41.3%, canonical R^2=.07, and the third explained 7.3%, canonical R^2 = .01 (Table 13). In combination these discriminant functions significantly differentiated the country groups Λ= 0.84, $x^2(18)$ = 69.11, p < 0.001. Removing the first function indicated that the second function significantly differentiated the country group, Λ = .92, $x^2(10)$ = 33.84, p < 0.001; but removing the first and second functions indicated that the third function did not significantly differentiate the country groups, Λ = .99, $x^2(4)$ = 5.23, p = .27 (Table 14). Therefore, the culture group differences by the MANOVA can be explained in terms of three underlying dimensions in combination.

Table 13
Eigenvalues

Function	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation
1	.09*	51.4	51.4	.293
2	.08*	41.3	92.7	.265
3	.01*	7.3	100.0	.115

Note: *First 3 canonical discriminant functions were used in the analysis.

Table 14
Wilk's Lambda

Test of Function(s)	Wilks' Lambda	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1 through 3	.84	69.11	18	.00
2 through 3	.92	33.84	10	.00
3	.99	5.23	4	.27

The correlations between outcomes and the discriminant functions revealed that the Expression of Distress loaded highly on the first function (*r* = .91) compared to the second *(r* = .15) and third (r = -.395) functions; Lack of Affect loaded fairly evenly highly onto the second (*r* = .68) and third (*r* = .71) functions compared to the first function (*r* = .18); and the Expression of Positive Emotions loaded highly on second function (*r* = -.70) compared to the first (*r* = .36) and third (r = .61) functions (Table 15). The functions with high correlations contributed most to country group separations (Bargman, 1970). It is clear that a person's Expression of Distress and Positive Emotions best describe country group differences. The discriminant function analysis further explored countries that differ the most in Expression of Distress and Positive Emotions. The discriminant function at group centroids showed that the first

function discriminated the South African group from the Polish and Indian country group. The second function differentiated the Indian from the other three culture groups. The third function indicated that culture groups loaded fairly evenly onto all three functions (Table 16). Therefore, the emotional expression, in particular distress and positive emotions, of South African participants were significantly different from Polish and Indian participants. In addition, the way in which Indian participants expressed their distress and positive emotions was significantly different compared to Polish, South African, and British participants. The MANOVA revealed that culture can have significant effect on emotional expression, but the not significant univariate ANOVAs suggested that the difference is not in terms of individual emotional expression factors. This means that country group separation is necessary to understand individual country differences in emotional expression. The discriminant analysis revealed that the culture group separation can be best explained in terms of two underlying dimensions (Function 1 and Function 2).

Table 15
Structure Matrix

	Function 1	Function 2	Function 3
Expression of Distress	.91*	.15	-.39
Lack of Affect	.18	.68	.71*
Expression of Positive Emotions	.36	-.70*	.61

Note: Pooled within-groups correlations between discriminating variables and standardized canonical discriminant functions. Variables ordered by absolute size of correlation within function. *Largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function

Table 16
Functions at Culture Centroids

Country	Function 1	Function 2	Function 3
India	.24	-.33	.01
Poland	.25	.20	-.02
South Africa	-.41	-.12	-.01
United Kingdom	-.08	.26	.02

Note: Unstandardized canonical discriminant functions evaluated at group means.

4.3.3 The Interpretation of Cultural Effect on Emotional Expression

The discriminant analysis discovered that the South African group differentiated from other culture groups, especially the Polish and Indian groups based on Function 1, a function that has a positive effect on the Expression of Distress

and the Expression of Positive Emotions. It also discovered that the Indian group differentiated from other country groups based on Function 2, a function that had the opposite effect on Expression of Distress and Expression of Positive Emotions. In the Polish group, there was a positive not significant relationship and in the United Kingdom group there was a negative not significant relationship between the two emotional expression factors. Combining with that in Figure 1, it can be concluded that the South African group is significantly more expressive of distress compared to the Polish and Indian groups. The Indian group is more expressive of positive emotions compared to the three other cultural groups. Furthermore, looking at the relationship between expressivity of distress and expression of positive emotions, in the South African group there is a positive relationship between emotional expression factors, so the more a person expresses their distress, the more expressive they are of their positive emotions. But the negative relationship between emotional expression factors for the Indian group indicated that the fewer positive emotions they express, the more expressive of distress they become (Figure 2).

Figure 1. *Means between the Emotional Expression factors in each culture group*

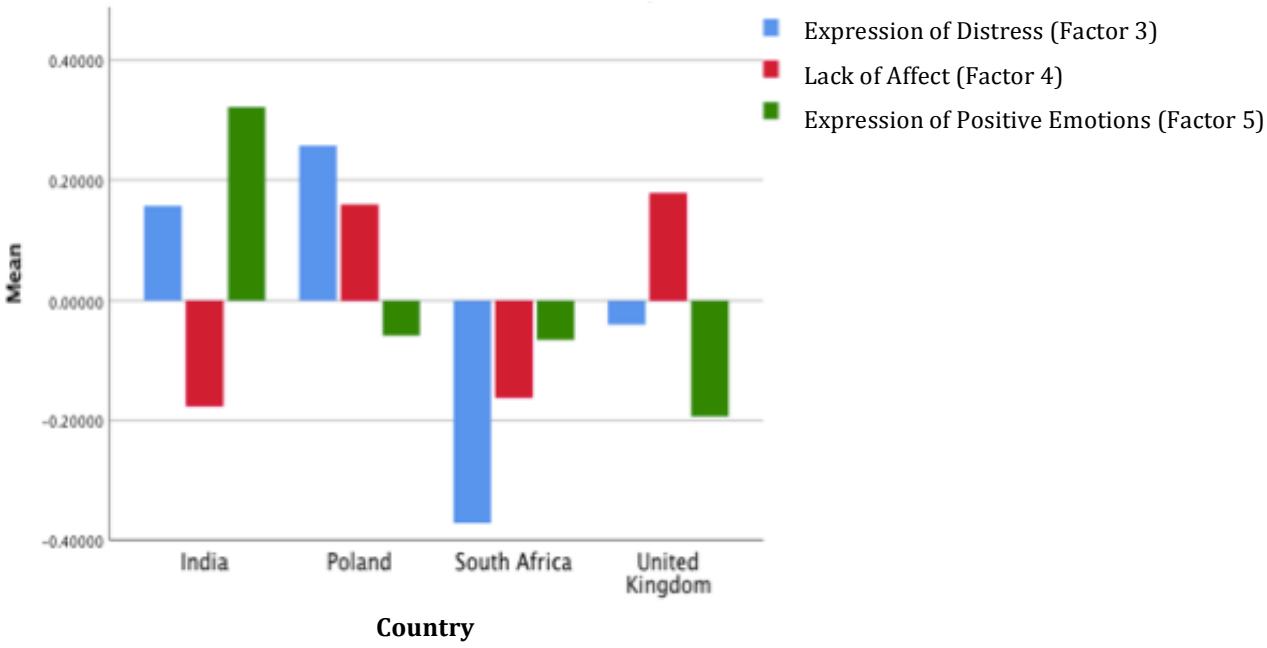
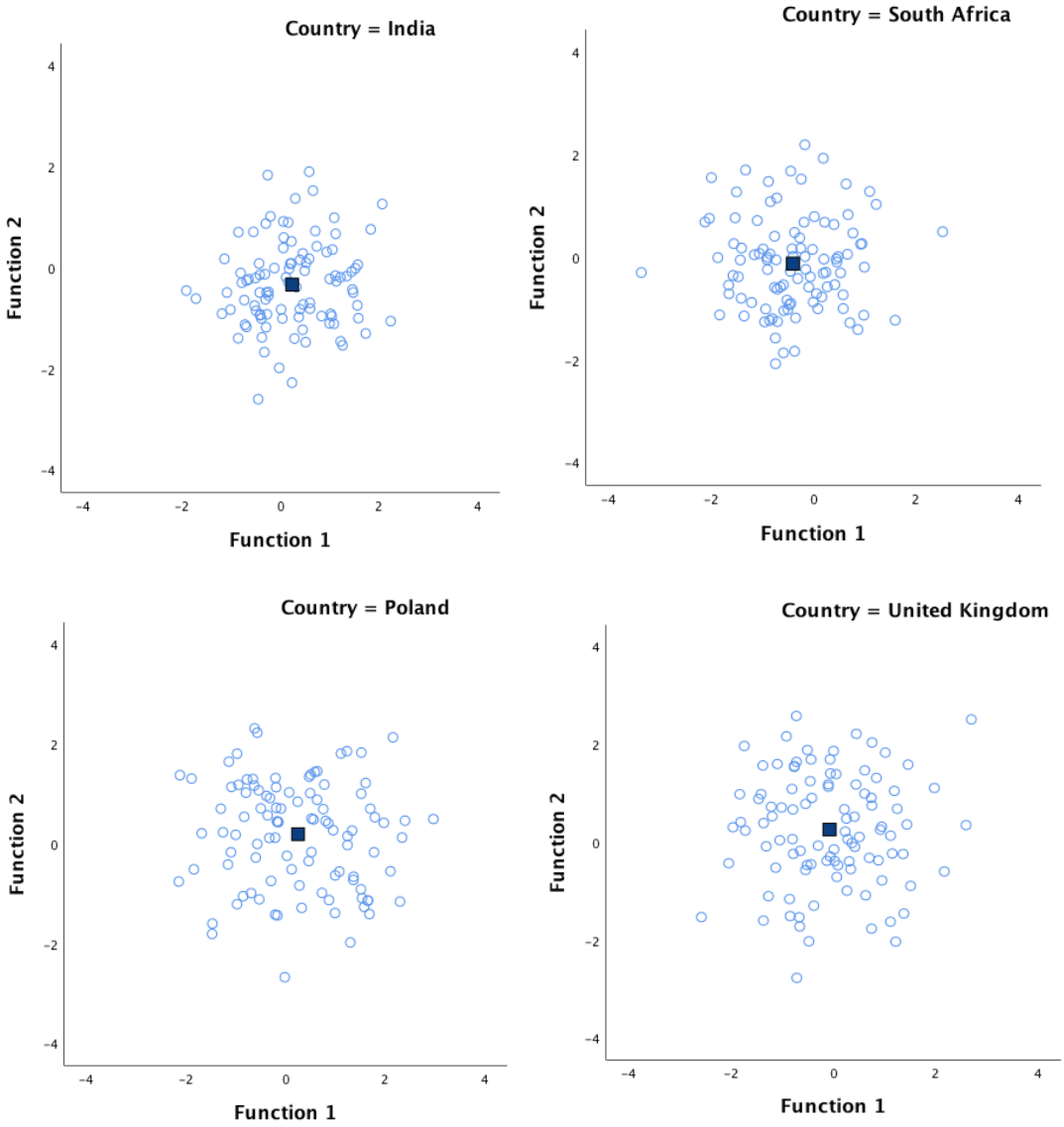


Figure 2. *Relationship between the Emotional Expression factors in each culture group.*



Note: Function 1 represents Expression of Distress. Function 2 represents Expression of Positive Emotions

5 Discussion

The following chapter will summarise the findings and place them into the relevant context. The results will be described in relation to both the previous and current literature. This chapter will also revisit the reflexive statement and discuss the implications of this research project for the counselling psychology field. Finally, the limitations of this study and recommendations for future research will be presented.

5.1 Summarising the Findings

5.1.1 Organisation of Emotional Expression

Based on the literature review, the initial prediction was that individual differences in emotional expression would fall under three categories: verbal expression, behavioural expressivity, and comfort with expression. The results of factor analysis did not support such a clear organisation. To some degree, the factor analysis separated the construct measured by the instruments used in this study. However, the analysis also helped to gain a better understanding of what these instruments measure collectively, what they have in common with one another, and what are the underlying themes of each category of emotional expression.

Verbal expression of emotions was present in several factors: Disclosure of Negative Emotions, Expression of Distress, Lack of Affect, Expression of Positive Emotions, and Disclosure of Anger. This spreading of the verbal expression category across a number of empirically derived factors suggests that there are a number of ways in which individuals talk about emotions they experience. The findings of the factor analysis suggest that individual differences in verbal disclosure of emotion appear to be valence-specific and intensity dependent. Exploring verbal expression of positive and negative emotions separately provides a greater understanding of individual differences in emotional experience, regulation strategies, and abilities (Nyklıcek, Vingerhoets & Denollet, 2002). Theorists of emotional expression continue to debate whether a model of separate emotions or a dimensional model of emotions is more appropriate for describing the structure of emotions (e.g., Ekman, 1992; Izard, 1993).

The findings of this study partly support a broad dimension model suggesting that emotions can be ordered in a space with lower dimensionality (positive vs.

negative). Similarly, a number of personality studies postulate strong associations between disclosure of positive and negative emotions and personality dimensions providing valuable evidence for the valence-specific models of emotional expression (Lucas & Fujita, 2000; Watson et al., 2000; Diener et al., 1995). However, anger was separated from the Expression of Positive Emotions and Disclosure of Negative Emotions factors and instead formed a separate dimension (Disclosure of Anger). Research has found that individuals vary in the degree to which they evaluate anger negatively or positively (Harmon-Jones, 2004; Harmon-Jones et al., 2011). They suggest that anger would be categorised as negative emotion if individuals dislike the experience of anger and positive if the experience of anger is desirable. Trierweiler et al. (2002) in their multitrait-multimethod study on emotional expressivity found that anger is not represented by a valence-specific model of emotions because anger is different from the expression of other negative emotions. Several studies explained the differentiation of anger from positive and negative emotions as a result of the socialisation process (Anderson & Guerrero, 1998; Shweder et al., 2007). Culture dictates norms and rules of emotional communication and as a result modifies verbal and non-verbal emotional expression. For example, in some cultures anger is not desirable and is avoided (e.g., Tibetan), whereas in other cultures (e.g., Utku, American) it is accepted and encouraged (Oatley & Jenkins, 1996; Shweder et al., 2007). Furthermore, disclosure of apathy and calmness also formed a separate emotional expression factor indicating lack of affect. This dimension is not associated with positive or negative emotions but rather lack of valence system function such as decrease in arousal and emotional responsiveness.

In contrast, Expression of Distress focuses on the intensity of one's desire to express distressing affect. Essentially, distress disclosure is also not valence-specific, that is, verbal expressions of positive or negative emotion but rather intense desire to disclose negative affect which can be caused by both unpleasant and pleasant emotions. For example, pride is commonly regarded as a positive emotion but can cause distress depending on interpersonal context. These findings are consistent with other distress disclosure studies indicating positive relationship to emotional expressivity (Barr et al., 2008), negative relation to emotional suppression (Pederson & Vogel, 2007) and weak association to general positive and negative emotions (Kahn & Hessling, 2001). Given that there are a number of ways in which people talk

about their emotions, exploring just one dimension or focusing on an entire component of verbal expression would possibly disregard important emotional disclosure differences.

Behavioural expression of emotions was tapped by two factors: Expression of Distress and Expression of Positive Emotions. These two factors also consist of verbal expression components. It appears that Expression of Distress and Expression of Positive Emotions cannot be fully understood without considering the non-verbal behaviour that accompanies specific affect. Early emotional expression studies show little evidence that different emotional expression channels correlate (Buck et al., 1974; DePaulo et al., 1992). However, the present study's findings partly support growing research evidence that nonverbal behaviour of emotion expression must be examined together with the verbal expression that accompanies it (Lee & Wagner, 2002; Wagner & Lee, 1999). Lee and Beattie (1998) have shown that emotional messages of different expression channels can be in conflict and exploring verbal and behavioural expression separately is of limited value. However, behavioural and verbal expression of emotion overlaps in two out of five factors only. With respect to behavioural expressivity, the factor analysis shows that there are two ways in the outward display of emotions: Expression of Distress and Expression of Positive Emotions. Present findings mirror the circumplex model of affect that proposes the order of emotions in two-dimensional space with two axes called 'arousal' and 'pleasantness', that is, positive affect vs. negative affect (Feldman et al., 1999). Although distress disclosure focuses on negative affect, it is not associated with positive or negative emotions (Kahn et al., 2017). This suggests that Expression of Distress captures the strength of desire to express unpleasant affect, which may be equally caused by pleasant or unpleasant emotions. The Expression of Distress factor consists of behavioural expression variables including negative expressivity and impulse strength that appear to fit the definition of 'arousal' dimension in the circumplex model of affect. Further, the Expression of Positive Emotions factor seems to represent the 'pleasantness' dimension of the circumplex model of affect. Given that behavioural expressivity was represented by only two factors suggests that emotions can be ordered in lower dimensionality differently from Gross and John (1998) who proposed a hierarchical model of emotional expressivity that found six behavioural expression factors.

The next category, comfort with emotional expression, was captured by the Comfort with Expression factor. Outcome variables of both the Ambivalence over Emotional Expressiveness and the Self-Concealment measures were present in this factor. The structure of the Comfort with Expression factor was somewhat expected because self-concealment and ambivalence over emotional expressiveness questionnaires measure individual differences in (dis)comfort with expression. While verbal and behavioural expression categories were defined by factors relating only to disclosure of emotions, ambivalence over expression focuses on individual attitudes towards expression. King and Emmons (1991) demonstrated that a single dimension of expressiveness does not account for expressive behaviour (verbal and non-verbal). They emphasised the importance of ambivalence in distinguishing between inexpressive individuals who are suppressing their desire to express and those who are expressive but tense and uncomfortable with expression. Similarly, Larson and Chastain (1990) provided conceptual and empirical evidence differentiating self-concealment from self-disclosure. However, studies suggest that expression of emotions can be the subject of a specific ambivalence (King, 1998; Sincoff, 1990). These research project results support such conceptualisation of emotional expression in a way that Comfort with Emotional Expression falls under the separate factor. It appears that unlike verbal and behavioural expression, the comfort with emotional expression category was most clearly justified in the factor analysis.

The factor analysis results of this research project complement other hierarchical studies investigating emotional expression and emotional experience. Gross and John's (1998) taxonomic study of behavioural expression found five factors: impulse strength, positive expressivity, negative expressivity, expressive confidence, and masking. Although the current study examined verbal, behavioural, and comfort with expression, a number of factors (Disclosure of Negative Emotion, Expression of Distress, Lack of Affect, and Expression of Positive Emotion) fitted well within Gross and John's behavioural expressivity hierarchical model. The present results support the multidimensional structure of emotional expression, in particular, it suggests valence-specific and intensity-dependent emotional expression categorisation. More specifically, disclosure of anger was differentiated from expression of positive and negative emotions as a separate category, which fits well

within emotional experience taxonomy studies (Barrett, 2006). Furthermore, Expression of Distress and Lack of Affect factors seems to represent and account for expression intensity. This is consistent with psychophysiological studies focusing on arousal and valence as part of affective experience (Barrett et al., 2004; Feldman, 1995; Mandler, 2002). The present findings also overlap with King et al.'s (1992) work on emotional disclosure and suppression demonstrating that emotional expression accounts for emotional constraint. To conclude, categorisation of emotional expression appears to be parallel to other taxonomic studies but in a way that examines broad emotional expression dimensions including verbal, behavioural, and comfort with expression components which have not been explored previously.

5.1.2 Emotional Expression and Psychological Distress

The analysis of covariance determined that some emotional expression factors were more closely associated with psychological distress than others. Comfort with Expression appeared to be the factor with the most relevance to psychological distress regardless of cultural background. Expression of Distress and Expression of Positive Emotions factors had a significant effect on the degree of psychological distress among all participants. However, Disclosure of Negative Emotions, Lack of Affect, and Disclosure of Anger were not significantly related to symptoms of psychological distress.

In the present study, the Comfort with Expression factor, which was formed by ambivalence over emotional expression and self-concealment, was correlated with the level of psychological distress. The association between ambivalence over the emotional expression and symptoms of depression and anxiety has already been demonstrated by King and Emmons (1990; 1991). They argued that people may experience psychological and physiological reactions when personal goals and needs are in conflict with social norms or with other expectations. More recent studies explained that when people cannot express their emotions freely, in other words, they are ambivalent about expressing emotions, their psychological needs are unfulfilled, which in turn leads to maladjustment such as physical pain and psychological distress (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Lu et al., 2011). Such conflict over emotional expression is often expressed by overthinking and difficulty understanding other's emotions, which can manifest in symptoms of depression and anxiety (Bryan et al., 2016; Mongrain &

Vettese, 2003) and poor intra- or interpersonal functioning (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999; King, 1993). Uysal et al. (2010) suggested that when people avoid or conceal their emotions and personal information, then their basic psychological needs are not satisfied which in turn leads to maladjustment. These findings mirror past studies reporting significant correlation between self-concealment and anxiety, depression, and physiological symptoms even after controlling social support and occurrence of trauma distress (Larson & Chastain, 1990). Additionally, findings show that emotion concealment negatively impacts relationship satisfaction regardless of ethnicity and age (English et al., 2013). Consistent with previous findings, the present results provide supporting evidence that indicates a positive relationship between comfort with emotional expression and psychological distress.

The Expression of Positive Emotions factor was negatively related to psychological distress; expressing positive emotions was associated with higher levels of wellbeing. It is known that positive emotions are linked with enhanced psychological functioning; and wellbeing is often defined by high levels of positive feelings such as joy and happiness (Diener, 2000; Fredrickson, 2001; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). But studies showing the benefits of expressing positive emotions are particularly relevant to the present research findings. Fredrickson and Joiner (2002) described that sharing positive emotional experiences with others enhances positive affect because it allows the individual to relive positive experience to some extent, and that creates an upward spiral to wellbeing. By contrast, suppression of positive affect is related to decreased levels of positive emotion, poor self-esteem, and symptoms of anxiety and depression (Aldao et al., 2010; Nezlek & Kuppens, 2008). Another plausible explanation that disclosure of positive feelings improves psychological wellbeing is that positive expressivity is strongly associated with positive social outcomes (Gable et al., 2004). For example, studies have found that positive emotional expression signals approachability, friendliness, and attractiveness, which in turn impacts formation and the maintenance of satisfying relationships (Harker & Keltner, 2001; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; Otta et al., 1996). Having satisfying relationships leads to positive affect including happiness, and a lack of positive relationships and social exclusion contributes to low mood, anxiety, loneliness, and risk of self-harm (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Vittengl & Holt, 2000). However, when positive emotions are not communicated accurately, they lose

positive functions and may be negatively evaluated by others. Mauss et al. (2012) suggest that when positive emotional expression does not match inner experience it disrupts rather than enhances communication, because the person appears inauthentic and not trustworthy. Consistent with this argument, present findings show that the more participants express positive emotions and the more comfortable and less ambivalent they are about sharing their inner experience with others the lower the levels of psychological distress they experience.

Analysis also demonstrated that the Expression of Distress factor was negatively related to psychological distress, but that Disclosure of Negative Emotions showed no significant relationship with psychological distress. In contrast to these study findings, past studies provided strong evidence that sharing negative emotions can help reduce the intensity of those emotions, decrease stress (Shim et al., 2011), aid in creating insight (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001), and increase support from others (Beals et al., 2009). Whereas, chronic suppression of negative emotions not only does not decrease negative experience but also exacerbates it, which in turn leads to many negative consequences, including lower well-being and psychological disorders such as depression and anxiety (English, et al., 2013; Nezlek & Kuppens, 2008). But it has also been argued that people react negatively to those who express negative emotions and that individuals who express fewer negative emotions have more positive interpersonal outcomes (Kashdan et al., 2007). Le and Impett (2013) suggested that short-term restriction of negative emotions can in fact benefit strong on-going relationships when an individual prioritises a partner's needs above their own self-interest. But frequent use of suppression may create a sense of discrepancy between inner experience and outer expression and such incongruence can increase negative feelings about self and relationships with others can become strained and avoidant. Emotion regulation studies have established that suppression comes late in the emotion-generative process and primarily reduces the behavioural (verbal and non-verbal) expression of negative emotions but does not decrease the subjective experience of those emotions (e.g., Gross, 1998). As a result, suppressed negative emotions continue to linger and accumulate unresolved and that in turn influences the development of psychological difficulties (Beblo et al., 2012; Haga et al., 2009).

Another emotion regulation strategy involved in decreasing behavioural (verbal and non-verbal) expression of negative emotion is reappraisal. Gross and John (1998) explained that unlike suppression, reappraisal occurs earlier in the emotion regulation process modifying emotional sequence before emotional response. Reappraisal consists of changing the way in which the individual thinks about an emotion-eliciting situation in order to decrease its emotional impact. Reappraisers tend to hold a positive attitude towards challenging situations, which successfully reduces experience and expression of negative emotions and increases positive emotional experience and expression. As a result, frequent use of reappraisal has been found to be associated with beneficial outcomes, such as fewer depressive symptoms, greater self-esteem and life satisfaction, and improved interpersonal functioning (Gross & John, 2003). These research study findings demonstrated no significant relationship between disclosure of negative emotion and psychological distress possibly because self-report inventories measured only expression but not subjective experience of negative emotion. John and Gross (2004) suggested that suppressors and non-suppressors do not differ much in negative emotion expressive behaviour, but suppressors express far fewer actual negative emotion experiences compared to non-suppressors. These research study findings add valuable evidence that disclosure of negative emotion alone does not predict psychological wellbeing. On the other hand, the Expression of Distress factor specifies not only emotional reactivity but also subjective emotional experience. Present findings are consistent with existing emotional expression studies reporting strong associations between disclosure of distress and wellbeing outcomes. For example, people who disclose their distress experience fewer depressive symptoms (Garrison & Kahn, 2010), report secure social support (Greenland et al., 2009), and greater general well-being (Kahn et al., 2012).

The Disclosure of Anger factor representing willingness to talk about angry feelings and the Lack of Affect factor consisting of verbal disclosure of calmness and apathy did not relate to psychological distress in this study. Existing anger expression studies mostly report negative association with social outcomes (Chervonsky & Hunt, 2017). However, they indicate that both suppression and expression of anger are related to negative social outcomes. Therefore, exploring alternative emotion regulation strategies may provide a better understanding of the relationship between anger and psychological wellbeing. For example, active use of reappraisal has been

found to relate to better psychological wellbeing and fewer psychological illnesses (Diong et al., 2005; Szasz et al., 2016). Also, individuals who tend to control angry feelings present with lower psychological distress and greater psychological wellbeing, and those individuals tend to engage in more active reappraisal to control their anger (Spielberg & Reheiser, 2009). Similarly, measuring verbal disclosure of calmness and apathy does not provide significant association with psychological wellbeing. There are no existing studies exploring expression of calmness and apathy alone. But a possible explanation for this finding is that an inclination to talk about calmness or apathy alone is not sufficient to explain the expressive response and in turn to predict the association with psychological wellbeing.

5.1.3 Cultural Differences in Emotional Expression and Experience of Psychological Distress

Findings showed no significant differences in levels of psychological distress among British, Indian, Polish, and South African participants. The scores of all four culture groups fell under 'mild levels' of psychological distress (healthy = 1-20; low = 21-22; mild = 34-50; moderate = 51-67; moderate-severe = 68-84; severe = 85+; Evans et al., 2000). However, South African and Polish group scores were on the higher end of the 'mild' category, while British and Indian scores were at the midpoint of the category. According to the Global Health Estimates by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2015), estimated prevalence for the global population with depressive disorders is 4.4%, while it is 5.1% in Poland, 4.6% in South Africa, and 4.5% in the United Kingdom and India. The research project findings indicating higher psychological distress scores for South Africa and Poland and lower scores for United Kingdom and India appear to have a partial fit with the WHO prevalence of mood disorders. Furthermore, all four culture group's psychological distress scores were far greater than the recommended clinical 'cut off' score of ten (Evans et al., 2000).

A possible explanation for considerably higher scores may be participant demographics. University students are at significantly greater risk of mental health concerns compared to the general population (Stallman, 2010). Individual research studies in Britain, Australia, and Sri Lanka demonstrated that psychological distress in university students is higher compared to a sample of similar age people not attending

university (Kuruppuarachchi et al., 2014; Stallman, 2010; Stewart-Brown et al., 2000). University life is anxiety provoking and distressing for many students globally due to developmental changes associated with early adulthood, transition to independent life, lack of social support, high academic demands, and financial concerns (Bewick et al, 2010; McGorry et al., 2011; Ormel et al., 2015). A cross cultural study investigating student populations in 12 countries found that 29% considered and 7% attempted suicide and more than a third suffered with psychological distress that could be classified as a psychiatric case (Eskin et al., 2016). The study indicated that psychological distress and nonfatal suicidal behaviour was common in all countries, but it also showed considerable variation across those 12 nations with the U.S. and Austrian samples scoring the lowest and Saudi Arabian and Palestinian samples scoring the highest on psychological distress tools.

Another study exploring psychological distress among students in Australia, the U.S., and Hong Kong did not find any significant links between culture and psychological distress (Pigeon et al., 2015). The CORE-OM validation study in a South African context found that South African students experienced greater psychological distress levels compared to the UK students (Campbell & Young, 2011). A number of cross-cultural researchers discussed that differences in psychological distress levels between highly developed countries such as United Kingdom and United States and developing countries such as South Africa can be understood in light of significant socio-political and socio-economic differences (Eisenberg et al., 2007; Young, 2009; Young & Campbell, 2014). Cultural and social factors influence what type of life events are common and regarded as stressful in a society. However, stress and coping models place emphasis not only on environmental systems consisting of social climate and resources but also on an individual's personal characteristics and cognitive, behavioural, and emotional abilities (Aaker & Lee, 2001; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Moos, 2002). It has been found that cultural values shape how individuals cope with external demands and that the choice of coping strategies predicts variability in psychological distress (Chang, 2001; Sullivan, 2010). Studies of psychological distress in university samples highlight the importance of identifying and understanding normative ways of experiencing and expressing emotions which may prevent and reduce distress (Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010; Stallman, 2010).

The multivariate analysis of variance found no significant effects of culture on all emotional expression factors collectively in this research project. However, discriminant analysis determined cultural variations among Expression of Distress and Expression of Positive Emotion factors. This study's findings showed that South African participants express significantly more distress compared to Indian and Polish participants and that Indians express significantly more positive emotions compared to British, Polish, and South African students. There are no previous emotional expression studies exploring Indian, Polish, and South African populations available. In cross-cultural psychology, a number of cultural values were proposed in order to meaningfully differentiate cultures. But the most widely studied cultural values that shape emotional experience and expression are individualism and collectivism (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1995). Collectivist cultures stress the importance of maintaining group harmony and adaptation to the group and individualist cultures pay greater emphasis on autonomy and independence. It has been reported that expressing socially disengaging, distressing emotions is more common in individualist countries such as United States and expressing socially engaging, positive emotions is more frequent in collectivist countries such as Japan and Costa Rica (Kitayama et al., 2006).

Consistent with the individualism-collectivism cultural dimension model, this study's findings demonstrate that participants from collectivist countries, such as India, express more positive emotions compared to participants from individualistic countries: e.g., Poland, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. It has also been reported that collectivist cultures more often suppress and control distressing emotions because distress disclosure is associated with negative in-group outcomes (Eid & Diener, 2001). In contrast, individualistic cultures are less concerned about the impact on social relations, and the expression of distressing emotions is perceived as an indication of personal needs (Ramirez et al., 2002). A past study of over 20 nations documented that individuals from collectivist cultures self-report higher levels of emotional suppression and inhibition (Matsumoto et al., 2009). Several other cross-cultural studies reported that university students from Australia and United States were more likely to express negative and distressing emotions compared with Asian university students (Noordin & Jusoff, 2010; Oyserman et al., 2002). This research

project found that participants from individualist countries, such as South Africa, express more distress compared to participants from collectivist countries, such as India. However, South Africans also report more distress expression compared with participants from an individualist country such as Poland. According to Hofstede's cultural dimension model, Poland is a highly individualist country, which also holds significant need for hierarchy. Power Distance is another important dimension defined by the significance of authority in a country and has been strongly associated with the suppression of negative emotions in social situations, particularly towards social superiors (Hofstede, 2001). Fernandes et al. (2000) demonstrated that collectivistic and high Power Distance cultures are characterised by lower verbal expression of negative emotions. However, it is important to highlight that the United Kingdom, identified as a highly individualistic country with a low Power Distance index, did not significantly differ in distress expression from South Africa, Poland, and India. A possible explanation for such cultural incongruence may stem from more recent research indicating a lower Power Distance index among the higher class compared with the working class in the United Kingdom (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Overall, findings revealed that participant scores were within the mild category of psychological distress, despite the fact that those scores were moderately higher compared to the recommended 'clinical cut-off' mark. Slightly alleviated levels of psychological distress may be justified by the greater external demands and stressors students generally experience compared with the general population of their age. No significant differences in psychological distress were found among British, Indian, Polish, and South African participants. Although culture influences the degree of unique life problems such as discrimination, financial hardship, and relational problems that are present in a society, past studies have shown that wellbeing is not based on the occurrence of socio-economic issues but rather on individual ability to cope with those challenges (Diener et al., 2003; Mesquita et al., 2017). Culture shapes acceptable ways of experiencing and coping with stressors and depending on cultural values certain coping strategies might be more appropriate than others (Chun et al., 2006). For example, individuals from collectivist cultures focus more on in-group harmony than drawing attention to themselves by expressing distress and seeking help (Feng & Burleson, 2006). In contrast, individualists are less likely to use avoidance coping strategies to regulate their emotions and more likely to be concerned about

maximising their own gains (Taylor et al., 2004). Therefore, emotional expressivity that helps to realise culturally acceptable coping style is associated with wellbeing (Diener et al., 2003). Consistent with the previous findings this study demonstrated that cultures vary in the degree of distress expression and positive emotion disclosure, but do not differ in the experience of psychological distress (De Leersnyder et al., 2015). Overall, the findings add valuable evidence to the notion that cultural fit of emotional expression predicts psychological wellbeing.

5.2 Reflexivity Revised

At the end of this research journey, I feel that the process has been meaningful for my professional and personal growth. In this section, I reflect on the ways that I feel I have been affected and was affected by this research project.

When I first began this research project, my aspiration to conduct a large international study was challenged by my peers, lecturers, and supervisors. Those who challenged the idea said that the research method seemed too ambitious for a doctoral study and unachievable in a relatively short period of time. A number of alternative ideas to explore cultural differences within the United Kingdom were suggested. Although I believed that knowledge about the experiences of different generations of immigrants was greatly needed and could have provided an interesting insight, my interest lay in cultural features of emotional expression prior to the effects of acculturation. My confidence and commitment gradually transformed into insecurity and I felt discouraged sharing my research processes with others. Self-doubt and isolation led to a persistent sense of ‘doing something wrong’ and I felt as if failure was inevitable. I was aware that exploratory studies require a large data set in order to generate hypotheses for future research and clinical practice (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012). Thus, I was worried about my ability to gather sufficient data that would produce valid findings. As a result, my anxiety about proving myself may have led me to recruit more participants than required and I became overwhelmed with the sheer volume of data gathered. On reflection, I wonder if I overcompensated for my feelings of anxiety and the need to be validated.

In an attempt to control data accuracy and reliability, I collected data in person. This meant I had to make arrangements with universities and travel to recruit

participants in Johannesburg, Mumbai, Reading, and Warsaw. Data collection in person was important to me, not only to ensure accurate data screening but also to fully learn and understand the process of cross-cultural research. Although this was my second international research project, I was aware of my limitations as a novice cross-cultural researcher and I felt nervous. Despite my doubts, I was taken aback by the welcoming and supportive responses I received from most universities. I did not expect that data collection in person would be such a powerful experience. I was moved by the connection with my participants and the experience of their culture as a whole. In fact, one of the key points of the doctoral training was transformative experience of data collection for this research project. Barnett's (2005) description of the developmental approach to 'being and becoming' a whole-person-who-researches strongly resonated with me. He discussed the importance of openness in researchers not only to be intellectual but also to engage in feelings, values, and needs in the research process. A direct connection with participants and their environment not only helped me to observe and manage my impact on the study but also provided me with an opportunity for internal growth.

Data collection in each country was a unique experience - emotionally, practically, and experientially. During my week at the University of Mumbai I became a part of their environment: I met with all the counselling psychology teaching staff and learned about their clinical and research interests and specialities: I attended focus groups and talks with master and doctoral students; I took the role of visiting speaker in seminars; and I was even invited to a birthday party which was organised by students for the head of the Counselling Psychology Department. My experience of data collection at the University of Johannesburg was very different but equally positive. I was given full support and guidance with ethical clearance and I was met with enthusiasm and eagerness to assist. In fact, I was assigned a research assistant to help me with the data collection process at this large university. However, I was given space and time to work, observe, and explore independently. In my observations, South African participants were reserved and compliant. It felt as if they were hesitant to decline my invitation to take part in the study and I had to double check that they were actually available to take a part. I wondered if it was because I was perceived as an authority figure or whether it was due to our race difference. At the University of Reading, British participants seemed to be familiar with taking part

in research: they required no explanation and they had no questions. However, they shared their thoughts about the study and some criticised questionnaires after the participation. Communication with the University of Warsaw was particularly difficult, as the protocol about data collection was not clear and my queries were getting lost between departments. However, Polish participants were keen to participate and they seemed focused in providing questionnaires with accurate answers in a timely fashion. On reflection, my connection with participants and experience of their environments fits well with this study findings on emotional communication.

The use of a quantitative approach in the context of this cross-cultural study felt safe and grounding at first. However, the exploratory factor analysis took away the security of certainty and left me with a concern about whether any emotional factors would generate and if they did what I would find. Although I was not surprised about the set of factors the analysis produced, it felt strangely comforting to see a structure in emotional expressivity. I wondered if the feeling of relief on discovering an organisation of emotional expression was related to my past experience of working with colleagues and clients who perceived intense emotions as something uncontainable and damaging. Furthermore, all my chosen clinical placements throughout the doctoral training were specialised in treating clients with severe emotional difficulties. As a counselling psychologist trainee, I worked at Personality Disorder services, specialist trauma teams, and complex depression and anxiety psychology departments. Most of my clients suffered from intense emotions and a great difficulty in regulating their emotional experiences and expressions. My interest and drive in working with this particular client group seemed to have a parallel with my motivation and commitment to this research study exploring emotional expressions and psychological distress. I feel I have always been very rational in approach to my own emotions and it felt important to control my emotional expressions, but all aspects of the counselling psychology course including clinical practice, research, personal therapy, and academic training has pushed me to experiment and be flexible with my emotions which seemed unnatural and overwhelming. On reflection, I now recognise that the need for certainty about my own emotions led me to a structured approach of research methods in an attempt to explore and understand emotions and their expressions.

At the heart of counselling psychology clinical practice and research are the relationships we have with our clients. Counselling psychologists take active parts in those relationships by informing, collaborating, and shaping the way stories are told and knowledge is constructed (Norcross & Wampold, 2011). Therefore, it feels disingenuous not to include ourselves when engaging in relationships as researchers. Burr (2003) suggested that psychologists who hold social constructivist beliefs and value reflexivity in their clinical practice may still be influenced by positivism that often discourages the use of self and personal experience when engaging in research. This results in a dilemma between remaining objective to avoid influencing the research and not ignoring the involvement in the research process. My clinical experience prior to commencement of the counselling psychology doctorate course, making sense of cultural inclusiveness in clinical practice, eagerness to resolve frustration and confusion relating to my own cultural identity has formed assumptions about culture-specific emotional expression styles and psychological distress levels. A part of me hoped that there was an ultimate truth about how culture influences stress levels or emotional expressions and sought a definite answer. On reflection, I recognise that this part of me leaned on a quantitative approach for this project with the hope that an objective reality exists independent of human perception.

My beliefs about the world and its realities have shifted through academic learning, reflective practice, clinical experience, clinical and research supervisions, and personal therapy during the Counselling Psychology training. My professional and personal growth has changed my worldview and allowed me to appreciate the complexity of human experience, meaning-making processes, and the existence of multiple truths. I reflected through journaling and personal therapy about my biases, values, and assumptions during the research process. However, I felt that a quantitative approach was appropriate and suitable for this project taken in consideration the gaps in cross-cultural research exploring emotional expression and psychological distress. This led me to navigate between the quantitative approach that lends itself to positivism and my social constructionist epistemology. At the heart of this research was meaning making of cultural constructions of emotional expressions, an exploration of constructed realities, and a contribution to the cultural inclusiveness. My attempt to co-construct meaning and be actively involved in the research process,

whilst considering the limitations of the quantitative approach, may have influenced my decision to recruit participants in their country of origin and to conduct the data collection in person. Furthermore, my influence on the research process by carefully designing questionnaires, employing complex statistical analysis, and interpreting factor analysis with a flexible approach to statistical rules was influenced by my attempt to negotiate the importance of counselling psychology values, social constructionist epistemology and quantitative methodology.

The interpretation of the results confirmed a simple, but powerful and very much-needed message in this current socio-political climate worldwide: psychological pain is non-discriminatory of cultural background. I felt a sense of sadness when I was exploring the results and reflecting on my own assumptions. I was still secretly hoping that the culture factor would be proved to have an impact on the level of psychological distress. Perhaps, I was looking for an uncomplicated justification of my own depressed and anxious feelings. However, the findings also demonstrated that understanding cultural features in emotional expression is important. This is an informative and encouraging guidance into how clinicians and researchers could work with cultural difference. More specifically, tuning in and exploring expressions of positive emotions among Indian individuals and the expressivity of distress among South Africans may inform the source of psychological distress. Furthermore, results highlighting the relationship between psychological wellbeing and Expression of Distress, Expression of Positive Emotions, and Comfort Over Emotional Expression is one of the key messages that I hope will fuel curiosity about emotional expressivity in future research and clinical work.

The experience of researching and writing up this thesis has been emotionally and physically challenging yet very rewarding. It has pushed me to think and feel in ways I did not think were possible before. And in return it has enriched my understanding about myself, others, and the world. I am grateful for the opportunity it has given me to learn about the cross-cultural research process and I believe this research project makes a valuable contribution to the existing literature. I also believe that my findings bring new knowledge about cultural differences and raise awareness of ‘working with the difference’ not only in therapy rooms but also in all clinical environments.

5.3 Implications and Relevance to Counselling Psychology

Given the increasingly diverse nature of society, the awareness of culture and diversity is a fundamental element of good professional practice for healthcare professionals. Growing evidence indicates that ethnic minority clients using mental health services are more likely to be misdiagnosed, have poorer access to services, higher drop-out rates, and less satisfactory treatment outcomes (Fountain & Hicks, 2010; Singh et al., 2007). Bhui et al. (2007) highlight that lack of organisational and individual cultural competence is a key to the disparities in the experience of poorer quality mental health care for ethnic minority clients in the United Kingdom. The mental health sector recognises the need to provide healthcare that meets the needs of a culturally diverse population, and there is a range of theoretical perspectives and practical guidance to inform the clinical practice. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines for common mental health disorders (NICE CG 123, 2011) recommend training in cultural competence for all healthcare professionals to address inequalities for ethnic minority populations. The Department of Health (DoH) aims to bridge the gap in mental health care provision for minority groups by developing policies and guidance such as Inside Outside (2003), The Single Equality Scheme (2003b), and Delivering Race Equality: A Framework for Action (2003a).

Culturally competent practice underpins three key awareness themes: self, other, and socio-political context (Bassey & Melluish, 2013). Self-awareness refers to the practitioners' reflective position of their own values, assumptions, and behaviours, while awareness of the other relates to knowledge and sensitivity towards the cultural identity of the client. Awareness of the socio-political context involves an understanding of external cultural forces that have an impact on a client. Furthermore, the American Psychological Association (2017) recommends that practitioners have an understanding of theory and acquire knowledge about the values, family systems, emotional display rules, behaviours, and communication styles relevant not only to specific cultural groups but all cross-cultural communication. It is important not to stereotype and assign a set of values, behaviours, and emotional display rules to a cultural group as it may lead to neglecting within-group differences as well as a client's individuality. During the process of cultural group change, individuals

implement various degrees of identification with a new culture and a culture of origin as they learn to navigate an unfamiliar environment. Moodley and West (2005) suggest adopting a hypothesis-testing method in an open communication with a client to understand whether cultural factors are unique to the client or typical to a particular cultural group. Therefore, cultural competency guidelines underline that practitioners can only be effective in working with ethnic minority populations if they have the skills to integrate cultural group knowledge, awareness of their own cultural values, and a sense of curiosity regarding a client's individuality (Collins & Arthur, 2007).

The findings of this research project could point towards an important addition to the current cultural competency recommendations. The results extend the evidence supporting the cultural dimensions model individualism-collectivism in relation to disclosure of positive emotions and expression of distress. However, findings also demonstrate that the theoretical model should be interpreted with caution particularly when cultural values are incongruent within a specific culture group. Such variance was especially evident in Expression of Distress scores between the British sample and other cultures in the study. Another important finding indicating no significant culture effect on overall emotional expression supports theorists who argued that cultural competency is motivated by 'political correctness' and leads to prejudicial and stereotypical practice (Satel, 2000; Weinrach & Thomas, 2004). Although the importance of cultural competency has been widely documented in national guidelines and policies, the lack of clarity around what cultural competency is still persists (Alladin, 2009; Sue, 2009). Thus, the findings of this study could potentially influence guidelines and policies on how to bridge the gap between different aspects of cultural competence.

The Standards of Proficiency for Practitioner Psychologists (HCPC, 2015) states that counselling psychologists should be aware of the impact of cultural differences on psychological wellbeing and behaviour. The guidelines require that counselling psychologists are skilled in recognising how culture and ethnicity affect characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication, and in turn adapt their practice to meet the needs of clients from different culture groups. The key role of counselling psychologists is to understand how all clients suffering with depression and anxiety disclose their emotions regardless of cultural background.

Emotional expression helps clients to process their emotional experience, resolve distress, and problem solve (Farber, 2006). Therefore, promoting, accurately recognising, and interpreting emotional expressions are at the heart of the practice of counselling psychologists. Emotional expression has been linked to a number of positive therapeutic outcomes including greater decrease in perceived levels of stress, intensity of negative emotions, symptomology, and reduction of intrusive thoughts (Barr et al., 2008; Lepore et al., 2000).

Just as emotional expression has been linked to positive outcomes, emotional nondisclosure or suppression has been linked to negative outcomes (Kahn & Garrison, 2009). However, not all emotional expressions have equal meaning. These study findings are consistent with existing research suggestions that pay attention to the context, valence, and intensity of emotional expression needed for accurate interpretations and evaluations of client presentations (Whelton, 2004). Results demonstrated that expression of distress, positive emotions, and ambivalence over expression are significantly related to psychological distress, while verbal disclosure of negative emotions including anger and lack of affect are not. This research project provides a valuable addition to current recommendations that emotional disclosures in therapy may be misleading and that a deeper understanding of emotional expression and psychological distress is required (Greenberg, 2016). For example, depressed clients frequently engage in emotional disclosures, but these are often related to experiences that are not the key cause of distress and in turn create a blind spot for psychologists in identifying more intense emotional experience and facilitating deeper emotional disclosures (Farber et al., 2004). On the other hand, clients who do not meet the criteria for psychological disorder, or report symptoms that are below the clinical ‘cut-off’ level, may experience significant deficit in emotional regulation (Barr et al., 2008). By integrating knowledge of emotional expression theory and focusing collaboratively on emotions with the client, psychologists may achieve more effective treatment for their clients.

When working with clients from different cultural backgrounds, accurate recognition and interpretation of emotional expression is especially important as cultural values and rules affect emotional displays in a multitude of ways. This research project demonstrated that people express distress and positive emotions

differently depending on cultural background. There is an expanding body of literature that highlights the importance of transforming cultural knowledge into therapeutic work, because cultural values are likely to affect communication, therapeutic relationships, case formulations, and treatment strategies (Hutchison et al., 2018; Sue & Torino, 2005). The quality of therapeutic relationship is a key factor of therapeutic success and making adjustments to communication and intervention style may be necessary in order to achieve a strong therapeutic alliance when working with clients from different cultural backgrounds. Tseng (2004) highlights the fact that culture has an impact on communication in relationships especially with authority figures, and emphasised that some clients may not be able to express genuine emotions in a therapeutic relationship due to perceived power differences.

It has also been noted that such communication clashes may occur when psychologist and client share the same culture but not the same social class (Hammer & Alladin, 2010). Similarly, the research results indicated that British participants did not differ in distress expression compared to other cultures, which adds to Hofstede's (2005) observations that there may be within-group differences based on social class. Furthermore, failing to consider the cultural component in emotional expression in the process of assessment and case formulation may lead to incorrect interpretation of a client's presenting concerns. For example, Day-Vines et al. (2007) suggested how the client's lack of emotional expression might be incorrectly recognised as a symptom of psychological disorder instead of a norm learned about expression through cultural expectations. Cultural awareness and knowledge can also improve development and delivery of appropriate treatment when working with clients from different cultural backgrounds. Several studies exploring the psychological treatment preferences of clients of Asian descent in the United States found that less acculturated individuals preferred rational, problem focused, and directive approaches, while more acculturated clients tended to lean towards affective focused, reflective, and relational approaches (Kim et al., 2003; Kim et al., 2005). Cognitive Behaviour Therapy manuals have been developed with the view to improve access and experience of psychological therapy for ethnic minority clients in the United Kingdom (Rathod et al., 2010). However, cultural competence research argues against the use of categorical approaches and promotes training to improve cultural knowledge and skills in working with culturally diverse populations (Betancourt & Green, 2010). The

findings of this cross-cultural project provide new valuable new information about emotional expression and psychological distress that may guide all mental health practitioners who assess, diagnose, and treat clients. Furthermore, these findings may be especially useful for counselling psychologists who critically evaluate and integrate a range of therapy models and interventions in order to facilitate a meaningful change for different individuals (HCPC, 2015).

In addition, this cross-cultural research raises important themes of self-reflection for counselling psychologists and other mental health practitioners. Professionals should explore their own emotional expressions and assess how their emotional norms affect their therapeutic work. Unconscious expectations about emotional expression may differ from client's emotional norms and it may lead to inaccurate interpretations of client's distress (Hutchison & Gerstein, 2017). For example, clients may be uncomfortable verbally disclosing certain emotions and signs of distress through facial expression, vocal tone, or body language, and this may be misunderstood if the practitioner is not attuned to differences between their own and their client's emotional expression norms. Awareness about the role of emotional expression is especially important when working with culturally diverse populations. Consistent with previous cross-cultural research, these study findings show that cultural groups vary in their pattern of emotional expression. Therefore, people are more likely to accurately assess and understand emotional expressions of a familiar style. It has been demonstrated that judgements of expressed emotions by people of the same cultural group are generally more accurate compared with people from a different cultural group (Elfenbein & Amabady, 2003). Collins and Arthur (2007) suggest that practitioners must be aware of their capacity to think and act prejudicially, and challenging their own assumptions about verbal and non-verbal emotional expressions, cultural values, and beliefs is essential for cultural competence.

An increasing interest in expanding psychological approaches concerning diversity integration within counselling psychology practice has raised discussions of cultural encapsulation (Vacc et al., 2003), culturally biased assessments (Diller, 2004), and lack of integration of all cultural variables (Moodley & Lubin, 2008). Pederson (2002) expressed criticism towards counselling psychologists for slow

response in identifying cultural biases within their practice. Several studies exploring experiences of seeking psychological help by Polish and South Asian populations living in the United Kingdom reported that participants felt isolated, apprehensive, and were disappointed by the available services in their inability to support cultural values (Farooq, 2012; Selkirk et al., 2012). However, there has been a significant progress in fostering cultural competence in counselling psychology and psychotherapy practice over the last few decades (Hook & Davis, 2012). This research study offers further understanding of cultural differences in methods for emotional communication, coping, and relating to others. The findings of this study relating to variations of emotional expression among the cultural groups that counselling psychologists are likely to work with in the UK could encourage and guide culture-centered adjustments in clinical practice. Although this study explored emotional expression and psychological distress among British, Indian, Polish, and South African participants living in their country of origin, the results are important for counselling psychologists working in the UK to keep in mind and incorporate into practice with ethnic minority clients who may hold various degrees of identification with a host culture and a culture of origin. Counselling psychologists could be more effective if they had knowledge of common contrasting cultural patterns in emotional expression and considered the unique level of clients' acculturative adjustment (Sue et al., 2009).

This study examines verbal and behavioural patterns of emotional expressions and comfort over expressions, which are key factors for all stages of intervention strategies and goals, reaching shared understanding, and building therapeutic relationships. Lo and Fung (2003) suggested that particular attention should be paid to verbal communication when working with diverse clients from different cultures, because verbal disclosure of emotions may generate different psychological associations and affect interpretive capacity of both psychologists and clients. Behavioural display of emotions can also have different meanings associated with those expressions in different cultures and in turn effect psychologists' interpretations of affect. This research study highlights the importance of verbal and non-verbal emotional communication differences among cultures. The results demonstrated that South African participants were significantly more expressive of distress compared to Polish and Indian participants; and the more South Africans express their distress, the

more expressive they are of their positive emotions. Furthermore, results indicated that Indian participants are significantly more expressive of their positive emotions compared with British, Polish, and South Africans, and the fewer positive emotions they express, the more expressive of distress they become. Therefore, this study encourages counselling psychologists to be aware of how they measure, interpret, and judge a normative standard of verbal and non-verbal emotional expression of Indian, Polish, and South African cultural groups living in the UK.

Studies suggest that to work with diversity psychologists must first develop awareness of their own personal, professional (e.g., theory, practice, research), cultural, and contextual identity factors (Collins & Arthur, 2007). Self-reflection is a lifelong process and counselling psychologists must habitually question their own position on values and worldview to promote the growth of competence (Sue et al., 1992; Eleftheriadou, 2002). Only through successfully considering and challenging our own positions can we be open to the views of others regardless of how different they are from our own. Such self-awareness is described as welcoming the other, which is one of the core humanistic values of counselling psychology (Levinas, 1969; Cooper, 2009; Roth et al., 2009). Throughout the doctoral training in counselling psychology I engaged in continuous personal therapy, clinical and research supervisions, and clinical practice, which has fostered my personal and professional growth. My effort and determination in exploring counselling psychology theory and challenging my own worldview and personal position has helped me to become an accepting and transparent towards my clients in clinical practice as well as this research process. Working on self-awareness of my own biases through personal therapy and research supervisions has allowed me to resolve filters of assumptions when engaging in the literature review, forming the research methodology, collecting data, and analysing and interpreting the results of this research study. I have been able to build a deep connection with this research project by adopting an open approach towards welcoming diversity in this research process itself.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

The analyses of the current research project were based on a large and gender-balanced sample using a broad evidence-based set of measures of emotional expressivity. However, there are several important limitations to this work. The first

limitation is that factor analysis could not fully resolve and separate between emotional expression constructs and instruments. Two factors (Disclosure of Negative Emotions and Lack of Affect) were formed of categories from a single instrument (the AEQ). Furthermore, the Disclosure of Anger factor was comprised of one subcategory from a single instrument. A possible explanation is that only one instrument was able to measure a given construct (e.g., lack of affect). Including measures of constructs, such as verbal and behavioural expressions of rage, hate, and aggression would have broadened the content of the emotional expression factors (Gross & John, 1998; Trierweiler et al., 2002). However, factors were not formed from multiple instruments even where several scales were measuring the same construct (e.g., negative emotions were measured by categories from the ESDS and BEQ). Furthermore, additional measures such as communicational skills (Takahashi et al., 2006) and coping styles (Greenaway et al., 2014) may add valuable information and understanding of emotional expression constructs.

A second limitation is that the current research project relied upon self-report measures. Although instruments used in this study have been validated with observer reports in the past, self-reporting bias may have influenced the results. After the completion of questionnaires several Indian and South African participants shared that they found a number of statements in the AEQ questionnaire had double meanings. Perhaps supplementing questionnaires with a semi-structured interview may allow for a richer exploration of individual differences in emotional expression. Mixed-method design could be considered to enable an assessment of cultural values and beliefs, social norms, and other personal identity factors that shape emotional expression. Furthermore, other methods than self-reporting emotional expression could be used. For example, a number of past studies coded behavioural expression from videotapes and photographs (e.g., Tucker & Friedman, 1993), analysed verbal disclosure using linguistic software (Kahn et al., 2007), and carried out observational studies (Gross & Levenson, 1997). Data collection for this research project was carefully designed considering the risk of overfitting the model and preventing the bandwidth in the factor analysis. However, it would be valuable to explore emotional expression using other than self-reported measure in future research.

A third limitation is related to the student sample used for this cross-cultural

study. Student samples are common in psychological and cross-cultural research due to accessibility and assumed lower variability and response bias (Saucier et al., 2015). In fact, Hanel and Vione (2016) explored differences between student participants and the general population in 59 countries and found that students were as heterogeneous as the general public. Their study findings demonstrated that students vary across and within countries and that universities do not influence the personality attitudes of students. However, the use of student samples for psychological research is often criticised because of generalisability and representativeness issues (Peterson & Merunka, 2014). There is a lack of clarity as to why generalisability from students to the general population is problematic within social and cross-cultural psychology. A possible explanation is that the context of the research is not considered for the replication; instead the focus is on ensuring a low power of the model (Button et al., 2013; Hanel & Vione, 2016). Although the sample of this study proved to be adequate in regard to comparability and generalisability, future research could build on this project and explore emotional expression in a general population sample.

A fourth limitation concerns applicability of this research to clinical practice in the United Kingdom. This study focused on contributing to a growing body of research on cultural differences in emotion expression with intent to expand on cultural competency for practitioners, in particular counselling psychologists, practising in the United Kingdom. Most prevalent cultures in the UK were explored with a view to inform clinicians of the diversity that they are most likely to work with. However, British, Indian, Polish, and South African participants were recruited in their country of origin instead of migrant groups in the UK. The decision for this methodology was made based on the absence of emotional expression research with Indian, Polish and South African populations. In addition, limiting participant recruitment in their country of origin enabled the control of acculturation factors. Acculturation adjustment varies greatly from person to person irrespective of immigrant generation (first, second, or later migrant generation), country of origin, and settlement (Berry et al., 2006). The process of acculturation is not based on a phase model but rather on an individual's orientation towards the native and host culture (Berry, 1997, 2005). Individuals may be entirely orientated towards their culture of origin, more or less orientated to their culture of origin compared to host culture, equally comfortable with both cultures, or not comfortable with either culture.

Therefore, practitioners must first acquire knowledge about culture groups including knowledge of emotional expression and communication styles, to be able to assess acculturation adjustment. However, the recruitment of participants in their country of origin makes it less possible to assume that the results from this study can be generalisable to individuals from the same cultures who are currently resident in the UK. Therefore, future research is needed to explore emotional expression among different generations of ethnic minority groups in the UK

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7 Appendix A

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

INFORMATION SHEET

Hello,

My name is Dovile Vore and I am Counselling Psychology trainee at the London Metropolitan University, United Kingdom. I am carrying out a cross-cultural research project on expression of emotion and psychological distress. In my study, I want to explore emotional expression among British, Indian, Polish, and South African populations. Also, I want to look at the relationship between psychological distress and different emotional expressions including verbal, behavioural, and individual comfort over emotion expression.

I would like to invite you to take part in this study. You are free to agree or disagree to take part in this study. You have a right to withdraw from the study by contacting me via email within three weeks after participation. You will not be asked any questions relating to your private and confidential information. You will be asked to choose a pseudonym in order for your questionnaires to be identifiable in case you decide to withdraw from the study at a later stage. You will not be asked to provide a reason for the withdrawal. Your data would be confidentially destroyed if you decide to withdraw from the study.

If you agree to take part in my study, I would ask you to complete a set of questionnaires that aim to measure the way you express emotions and your current level of psychological wellbeing. It will take you about 30-40 minutes to complete all questionnaires. Your data will be treated anonymously according to Data Protection Act 1998. If you would like to receive results of the study, please contact me via email and a copy will be send to you.

Thank you,

Dovile Vore
Contact Details: DOA0157@my.londonmet.ac.uk

THE CONSENT FORM

"The relationship between emotion expression and psychological distress: A Cross-Cultural Study"

Name of Researcher: Dovile Vore

Please read following statements carefully.

I.……(Please chose a pseudonym)

- Have received the Information Sheet about this study.
- Have read and understood the information about this study.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study without giving a reason.
- I am aware that information I will submit will be treated confidentially.
- I agree to take part in this study.

Signed:

Date:

DEBRIEF INFORMATION
Thank you for taking part in this study

This study aims to explore the relationship between expression of emotions and psychological distress. The study also looks at cross-cultural differences in emotional expression amongst British, Indian, Polish, and South Africans. A set of questionnaires measuring verbal and behavioural expression of emotions, ambivalence over emotional expression, and psychological distress/wellbeing are used in this study. In this study, participants are students from universities in India, Poland, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.

The expectation of this research is to learn more about how people express their emotions in diverse cultures and how it affects their psychological wellbeing. The study findings hope to inform clinicians about cultural variations in emotional expression. A better understanding of cultural differences can help practitioners to improve client engagement, treatment recovery rates, and decrease dropout rates in a psychological therapy.

If you have any further questions or if, for any reason, you would like to withdraw your data from the study please contact me via email DOA0157@my.londonmet.ac.uk within three weeks after participation

If you like to speak to an independent psychological support service please find contact details bellow:

- **University of Johannesburg**

Crisis Line is a 24-hour service offered to all who are in need of immediate support and guidance in a crisis situation. Please contact a counsellor for assistance on 082-054-1137. The crisis line can offer immediate emotional assistance, as well as practical referral information.
Walk-in (Advisory) Process at the PsyCaD: Every student who enters PsyCaD is seen for a brief 15-minute consultation with a professional. Student is then offered a formal appointment or referral to an appropriate support service. These services could include therapy, career assessment, or workshops.

- **University of Mumbai**

Crisis Line is a 24-hour service offered to all who are in need of immediate support and guidance in a crisis situation. When individuals have to cope with a crisis situation, they can contact a counsellor for assistance on 18001805522.

- **University of Reading**

The University Counselling and Wellbeing Service: Please call 0118 378 4216 or 0119 378 4218 to register and book an appointment to see a psychological practitioner. Alternatively you can visit the center: Room 106, First Floor, Carrington Building, University of Reading. Please see further details on www.Reading.ac.uk/internal/counselling/cau-home.aspx

- **University of Warsaw**

Student psychological support: Please call 22/ 55-24-221 or 22/55-24-222 to arrange an appointment with a psychological therapist. Lines are open between 8am and 4pm. Psychology sessions take place at Palacu Kazimierzowskim.

8 Appendix B

Emotional Self-Disclosure Scale This survey is concerned with the **extent to which you have discussed these feelings and emotions with others**. To respond: tick the box on the right of each statement that corresponds best to your response.		A = I have **not discussed** this topic	B = I have **slightly discussed** this topic	C = I have **moderately discussed** this topic	D = I have **almost fully discussed** this topic	E = I have **fully discussed** this topic
1	Times when you felt *depressed*					
2	Times when you felt *happy*					
3	Times when you felt *jealous*					
4	Times when you felt *anxious*					
5	Times when you felt *angry*					
6	Times when you felt *calm*					
7	Times when you felt *apathetic*					
8	Times when you felt *afraid*					
9	Times when you felt *discouraged*					
10	Times when you felt *cheerful*					
11	Times when you felt *possessive*					
12	Times when you felt *troubled*					
13	Times when you felt *infuriated*					
14	Times when you felt *quiet*					
15	Times when you felt *indifferent*					
16	Times when you felt *fearful*					
17	Times when you felt *pessimistic*					
18	Times when you felt *joyous*					
19	Times when you felt *envious*					
20	Times when you felt *worried*					
21	Times when you felt *irritated*					
22	Times when you felt *serene*					
23	Times when you felt *numb*					
24	Times when you felt *frightened*					
25	Times when you felt *sad*					
26	Times when you felt *delighted*					
27	Times when you felt *suspicious*					
28	Times when you felt *uneasy*					
29	Times when you felt *hostile*					
30	Times when you felt *tranquil*					
31	Times when you felt *unfeeling*					
32	Times when you felt *scared*					
33	Times when you felt *unhappy*					
34	Times when you felt *pleased*					
35	Times when you felt *resentful*					
36	Times when you felt *flustered*					
37	Times when you felt *enraged*					
38	Times when you felt *relaxed*					
39	Times when you felt *detached*					
40	Times when you felt *alarmed*					

Distress Disclosure Index Please read each statement carefully. To respond: tick the box on the right of each statement that corresponds best to your response.		**Strongly disagree**	Moderately disagree	Don't disagree or agree	Moderately agree	**Strongly agree**
1	When I feel upset, I usually confide in my friends					
2	I prefer not to talk about my problems					
3	When something unpleasant happens to me, I often look for someone to talk to					
4	I typically don't discuss things that upset me.					
5	When I feel depressed or sad, I tend to keep those feelings to myself					
6	I try to find people to talk with about my problems					
7	When I am in a bad mood, I talk about it with my friends					
8	If I have a bad day, the last thing I want to do is talk about it					
9	I rarely look for people to talk with when I am having a problem					
10	When I'm distressed I don't tell anyone					
11	I usually seek out someone to talk to when I am in a bad mood					
12	I am willing to tell others my distressing thoughts					

Emotional Expressivity Scale Directions: The following statements deal with you and your emotions. Please tick the box on the right of each statement that best describes you		**Never** True	**Rarely** True	**Occasionally** True	**Usually** True	**Almost Always** True	**Always** True
1	I don't express my emotional to other people						
2	Even when I'm experiencing strong feelings, I don't express them outwardly						
3	Other people believe me to be very emotional						
4	People can "read" my emotions						
5	I keep my feelings to myself						
6	Other people aren't easily able to observe what I'm feeling						
7	I display my emotions to other people						
8	People think of me as an unemotional person						
9	I don't like to let other people see how I'm feeling						
10	I can't hide the way I'm feeling						
11	I am not very emotionally expressive						
12	I am often considered indifferent by others						
13	I am able to cry in front of other people						
14	Even if I am feeling very emotional, I don't let others see my feelings						
15	I think of myself as emotionally expressive						
16	The way I feel is different from how others think I feel						
17	I hold my feelings in						

Berkeley Expressivity Questionnaire For each statement below, please indicate your agreement or disagreement. Do so by ticking in the box on the right of each statement.		1= **Strongly Disagree**	2 = Moderately Disagree	3 = Slightly Disagree	4 = **Neutral**	5 = Slightly Agree	6 = Moderately Agree	7 = **Strongly Agree**
1	Whenever I feel positive emotions, people can easily see exactly what I am feeling							
2	I sometimes cry during sad movies							
3	People often do not know what I am feeling							
4	I laugh out loud when someone tells me a joke that I think is funny.							
5	It is difficult for me to hide my fear							
6	When I'm happy, my feelings show.							
7	My body reacts very strongly to emotional situations.							
8	I've learned it is better to suppress my anger than to show it							
9	No matter how nervous or upset I am, I tend to keep a calm exterior							
10	I am an emotionally expressive person							
11	I have strong emotions.							
12	I am sometimes unable to hide my feelings, even though I would like to.							
13	Whenever I feel negative emotions, people can easily see exactly what I am feeling.							
14	There have been times when I have not been able to stop crying even though I tried to stop							
15	I experience my emotions very strongly.							
16	What I'm feeling is written all over my face							

Self-Concealment Scale This scale measures self-concealment, defined here as a tendency to conceal from others personal information that one perceives as distressing or negative. Please tick the box, to the right of each of the following 10 statements, that best describes how much you personally agree or disagree with the statement.		1=**strongly disagree**	Moderately disagree	3=don't disagree or agree	4=moderately agree	5=**strongly agree**
1	I have an important secret that I haven't shared with anyone					
2	If I shared all my secrets with my friends, they'd like me less					
3	There are lots of things about me that I keep to myself					
4	Some of my secrets have really tormented me					
5	When something bad happens to me, I tend to keep it to myself					
6	I'm often afraid I'll reveal something I don't want to					
7	Telling a secret often backfires and I wish I hadn't told it					
8	I have a secret that is so private I would lie if anybody asked me about it					
9	My secrets are too embarrassing to share with others					
10	I have negative thoughts about myself that I never share with anyone					

Ambivalence over Emotional Expressiveness Questionnaire

Please read each statement carefully. Please tick the box on the right of each statement that best describes you		1= **Strongly Disagree**	2 = Moderately Disagree	3 = Slightly Disagree	4 = Don't disagree or agree	5 = Slightly Agree	6 = Moderately	7 = **Strongly Agree**
1	I want to express my emotions honestly but I am afraid that it may cause me embarrassment or hurt							
2	I try to control my jealousy concerning my boyfriend/girlfriend even though I want to let them know I'm hurting							
3	I make an effort to control my temper at all times even though I'd like to act on these feelings at times							
4	I try to avoid sulking even when I feel like it							
5	When I am really proud of something I accomplish I want to tell someone, but I fear I will be thought of as conceited							
6	I would like to express my affection more physically but I am afraid others will get the wrong impression							
7	I try not to worry others, even though sometimes they should know the truth							
8	Often I'd like to show others how I feel, but something seems to be holding me back							
9	I strive to keep a smile on my face in order to convince others I am happier than I really am							
10	I try to keep my deepest fears and feelings hidden, but at times I'd like to open up to others							
11	I'd like to talk about my problems with others, but at times I just can't							
12	When someone bothers me, I try to appear indifferent even though I'd like to tell them how I feel							
13	I try to refrain from getting angry at my parents even though I want to at times							
14	I try to show people I love them, although at times I am afraid that it may make me appear weak or too sensitive							
15	I try to apologise when I have done something wrong but I worry that I will be perceived as incompetent							
16	I think about acting when I am angry but I try not to							
17	Often I find that I am not able to tell others how much they really mean to me							
18	I want to tell someone when I love them, but it is difficult to find the right words							
19	I would like to express my disappointment when things don't go as well as planned, but I don't want to appear vulnerable							
20	I can recall a time when I wish that I had told someone how much I really care about them							
21	I try to hide my negative feelings around others, even though I am not being fair to those close to me							
22	I would like to be more spontaneous in my emotional reactions but I just can't seem to do it							
23	I try to suppress my anger, but I would like other people to know how I feel							
24	It is hard to find the right words to indicate to others what I am really feeling							
25	I worry that if I express negative emotions such as fear and anger, other people will not approve me							
26	I feel guilty after I have expressed anger to someone							
27	I often cannot bring myself to express what I am really feeling							
28	After I express anger at someone, it bothers me for a long time							

Clinical Outcomes Routine Evaluation

This questionnaire has 34 statements about how you have been **OVER THE LAST WEEK.** Please read each statement and think how often you felt that way last week. Then tick the box on the right of each statement that best describes you answer.		**Not at all**	**Only Occasionally**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Most or all the time**
1	I have felt terribly alone and isolated					
2	I have felt tense, anxious or nervous					
3	I have felt I have someone to turn to for support when needed					
4	I have felt O.K. about myself					
5	I have felt totally lacking in energy and enthusiasm					
6	I have been physically violent to others					
7	I have felt able to cope when things go wrong					
8	I have been troubled by aches, pains or other physical problems					
9	I have thoughts of hurting myself					
10	Talking to people has felt too much for me					
11	Tension and anxiety have prevented me doing important things					
12	I have been happy with the way things I have done					
13	I have been disturbed by unwanted thoughts and feelings					
14	I have felt like crying					
15	I have felt panic or terror					
16	I made plans to end my life					
17	I have felt overwhelmed by my problems					
18	I have had difficulty getting to sleep or staying asleep					
19	I have felt warmth or affection for someone					
20	My problems have been impossible to put to one side					
21	I have been able to do most things I needed to					
22	I have threatened or intimidated another person					
23	I have felt despairing or hopeless					
24	I have thought it would be better if I were dead					
25	I have felt criticised by other people					
26	I have thought I have no friends					
27	I have felt unhappy					
28	Unwanted images or memories have been distressing me					
29	I have been irritable when with other people					
30	I have thought I am to blame for my problems and difficulties					
31	I have felt optimistic about my future					
32	I have achieved the things I wanted to					
33	I have humiliated or shamed by other people					
34	I have hurt myself physically or taken dangerous risks with my health					

9 Appendix C

Ethics Clearance

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

London Metropolitan University,
School of Social Science,
Research Ethics Review Panel

I can confirm that the following project has received ethical approval to proceed:

Title:	**The relationship between emotional expression and psychological distress: A Cross-Cultural study.**
Student:	Dovile Vore
Supervisor:	*Dr. Angela Ioanna Loulopoulou*

Ethical clearance to proceed has been granted providing that the study follows the ethical guidelines used by the School of Psychology and British Psychological Society, and incorporates any relevant changes required by the Research Ethics Review Panel. All participating organisations should provide formal consent allowing the student to collect data from their staff.

The researcher is also responsible for conducting the research in an ethically acceptable way, and should inform the ethics panel if there are any substantive changes to the project that could affect its ethical dimensions, and re-submit the proposal if it is deemed necessary.

Signed:

Date: 27/03/2017

Dr Chris Chandler
Head of Psychology
chandler@staff.londonmet.ac.uk

10 Appendix D

University of Johannesburg Ethics Clearance

FACULTY OF HUMANTIES

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

01 August 2017

ETHICAL CLEARANCE NUMBER	**REC-02-142-2017**
REVIEW OUTCOME	**Approved with recommendations**
APPLICANT	**D Vore**
TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT	**The relationship between emotional expression and psychological distress: A Cross-Cultural study**
DEPARTMENT	**London Metropolitan University** **UJ: Department of Psychology (Prof T Guse)**

Dear Ms Vore

The Faculty of Research Ethics Committee has scrutinised your research proposal and confirm that it complies with the approved ethical standards of the Faculty of Humanities; University of Johannesburg. We have made some recommendations and outlined some requirements, set out below, for consideration in consultation with your supervisor/s.

The REC would like to extend their best wishes to you with your research project.

Yours sincerely,

Prof Tharina Guse

Chair: Faculty of Humanities REC

Tel: 011 559 3248

email: tguse@uj.ac.za

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Please provide the REC with information sheets and informed consent letters to be provided to participants
- Arrangements must be made with PsyCaD (Student Counselling Service) to support students who may experience distress after completion of the questionnaire
- Approval must be obtained from the relevant UJ structure (DIPEM) following final ethical approval