



SNS COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Coimbatore - 35

19BAE717 – Cross Cultural Management

Theories of Culture



Presented by

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Indian
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To
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Design
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Redesigning Common
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Towards Excellence



Recall



Dimensions of Culture





TODAY'S TOPIC:

Culture Theories





THEORIES OF CULTURE:

- Hofstede's Dimension Theory
- Hofstede's Contribution to International Management
- Trompenaars & Hamden-Turner's Seven Dimensions of Culture
- Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck's Cultural Dimensions



Hofstede's Dimension Theory

- One of the commonly used cultural dimensions is Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, where cultural data was initially collected from IBM employees from 70 countries, then further enhanced with data from commercial airline pilots and students in 23 countries, civil service managers in 14 countries, "up-market" consumers in 15 countries and "elites" in 19 countries.
- The contributions from all this research data validated earlier findings and helped Hofstede to develop a model that identifies four primary "Dimensions of Culture" to assist in differentiating cultures. A fifth dimension was added after conducting an additional international study developed with Chinese employees and managers and was applied to 23 countries.
- **Power Distance Index-PDI**
- **Individualism-IDV**
- **Masculinity-MAS**
- **Uncertainty Avoidance Index – UAI**
- **Long Term Orientation – LTO**



Power Distance Index-PDI:



- PDI refers to the degree of inequality that exists – and is accepted – especially by the less powerful members of a group, organization, institution or society. A high PDI score indicates that society accepts an unequal distribution of power and that people understand “their place” in the system. Low PD means that power is shared and well dispersed. It also means that society members accept themselves as unequal.
- In organizations, an illustration of a high PDI score is generally represented as a highly vertical hierarchical pyramid. Subordinates are often told what to do and do not feel entitled to discuss the decisions of their superiors.
- High PDI also means that the higher a person is in the hierarchy, the more difficult this person is to approach. Barriers can be in the form of persons such as secretaries who serve as ‘gatekeepers preventing access to the manager or symbols such as the executive dining room which is separate from the staff cafeteria.
- Low PDI would be found in organizations with a flatter hierarchical pyramid. Subordinates and superiors are in a more collaborative relationship and hierarchy tends to be perceived as a distinction of a task rather than of persons.



Individualism-IDV:

- IDV refers to the strength of the ties people have to others within the community. A high IDV score indicates loose connections.
- In countries with a high IDV score, there is a lack of interpersonal connection, and little sharing of responsibility beyond family and perhaps a few close friends.
- A society with a low IDV score would have strong group cohesion, and there would be a large amount of loyalty and respect for members of the group. The group itself is also larger and people take more responsibility for each other's well being.
- IBM respondents were asked to grade how important work goals were for choosing an ideal job. Independence from the organization was interpreted as an indicator of respondents individualism and they preferred to be managed as individuals who chose work goals dependent on the organization were seen as expressing collectivist characteristics –a preference for being managed as a member of an in-group (the organization).
- Illustrations of Individualism in the workplace can be found in employees preference to be able to work independently and to praise individual decision-making. Collectivism can be seen in the preference for the collective organization of work and responsibility.



Masculinity-MAS:

- MAS refers to how much a society sticks with, and values, traditional male and female roles. High MAS scores are found in countries where men are expected to be “tough,” to be the provider, and to be assertive whereas females tend to express preferences for the interpersonal aspect of work (‘working with people who cooperate well with one another, ‘having a good working relationship with your manager’).
- These differences relate to gender role patterns present in many societies. Hofstede labels this dimension as Masculinity versus Femininity. This dimension expresses values such as assertiveness of the person (Masculinity) and care and attention to the social surroundings (Femininity).



Uncertainty Avoidance Index :

- This relates to the degree of anxiety society members feel when in uncertain or unknown situations. High UAI-scoring nations try to avoid ambiguous situations whenever possible. They are governed by rules and order and they seek a collective “truth.” Low UAI scores indicate the society enjoys novel events and values differences. There are very few rules and people are encouraged to discover their own truth.
- From the IBM employees’ responses, Hofstede found that some questions provided an indicator of employees’ (in) tolerance of ambiguity. He argued that a high Uncertainty Avoidance is expressed for example, by a company’s need for regulations which endeavor to minimize uncertainties in the behavior of its employees.
- Company rules are seen as something that ‘should not be broken, even when the employee thinks it is in the company’s best interest’. In such an environment, work stress is often high. Conversely in a low Uncertainty Avoidance work environment, work stress is lower as employees seem to be less affected by uncertainty such as security of employment.



Long Term Orientation – LTO :

- This refers to how much society values long standing –as opposed to short term – traditions and values. This is the fifth dimension of national culture that Hofstede added in the 1990s in another study designed to counterbalance the potential Western bias of the IBM questionnaire after finding that Asian countries with a strong link to Confucian philosophy acted differently from western cultures. In countries with a high LTO score, delivering on social obligations and avoiding “loss of face” are considered very important.
- Hofstede’s interpretation of the two poles of this dimension is the unique importance given to values ‘fostering virtues oriented toward future rewards’(e.g., ‘persistence, perseverance’) as opposed to values ‘fostering virtues related to the present and past’(e.g., ‘stability’, ‘respect for tradition’). Hofstede adopted this cultural dimension as ‘Long-term versus Short-term Orientation’.



Hofstede's Contribution to International Management:

- Hofstede's contribution to management is worth mentioning where he could identify cultural dimensions with hard data and made comparisons across countries to show the culture's consequences in managerial behaviors.
- Previously, culture was viewed as a soft dimension that couldn't be quantified nor measured. Hofstede changed this perception of culture and showed that culture is composed of recognizable dimensions, centered on values and relatively stable over time. Hofstede shows that national cultures can be perceived and measured through 5 dimensions which have implications to management and performance of firms.



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- These dimensions are said to be universal because they appear to be fundamental issues with which all societies have to cope and have implications in work places. Power Distance deals with human inequality, Uncertainty Avoidance with the level of stress caused by an unknown future, Individualism versus Collectivism deals with individuals' relationships with primary groups, Masculinity versus Femininity relates to emotional role differentiation, and finally, Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation deals with people's choice of focus for their actions.
- Hofstede's definition of culture presents 'traditional' (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached 'values' as 'the essential core of culture' (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952: 181). Individuals raised in a society have acquired components of the national culture and its implicit values to which they are exposed from early childhood. Culture is learned partly unconsciously; cultural values are deep-rooted.
- This is what Hofstede calls the 'mental programming' that influences people's thinking and action. He argues that this mental programming is at the source of differences in management practices across countries.



Strengths of Hofstede's work:

- The information population (IBM employees) is controlled across countries, which means comparison can be made.
- The connotations of each dimension are highly relevant. The questions asked in the questionnaire relate to issues of importance to international managers.
- No other study compares national cultures in so much detail.

Weaknesses of Hofstede's work:

- First, concerns have been raised regarding Hofstede's methodology (the use of a survey questionnaire, the original IBM sample and a mismatch that can be perceived between some dimensions and their measurement).
- A second theme is the choice of nation to study culture (not respecting multicultural nations).
- A third one is the obsolescence of the data (collected between 1967 and 1973).



Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner's Seven Dimensions of Culture:

Like Hofstede, Trompenaars (1997) also proposed comparing countries using cultural dimensions. The Seven Dimensions of Culture were identified by management consultants Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner, and the model was published in their 1997 book, "Riding the Waves of Culture."

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner concluded that what distinguishes people from one culture compared with another is where these preferences fall on each of the following seven dimensions:

- **Universalism versus Particularism**
- **Individualism versus Communitarianism**
- **Specific versus Diffuse**
- **Neutral versus Emotional**
- **Achievement versus Ascription**
- **Sequential Time versus Synchronous Time**
- **Internal Direction versus Outer Direction**



Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck's Cultural Dimensions:

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck and their research associates identified a set of six basic cultural orientations with two or three possible variations each. The six value orientations are:

- **Relationships to nature:** People have a need or duty to control or master nature (domination), to submit to nature (subjugation), or to work together with nature to maintain harmony and balance (harmony).
- **Beliefs about human nature:** People are inherently good, evil, or a mixture of good and evil.
- **Relationships between people:** The greatest concern and responsibility is for one's self and immediate family (individualist), for one's own group that is defined in different ways (collateral), or for one's groups that are arranged in a rigid hierarchy (hierarchical).
- **Nature of human activity:** People should concentrate on living for the moment (being), striving for goals (achieving), or reflecting (thinking).



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- **Conception of space:** The physical space we use is private, public, or a mixture of public and private.
- **Orientation to time:** People should make decisions with respect to traditions or events in the past, events in the present, or events in the future.



Assessment



The book “The Folk culture of Yucatan’ is written by

- a. Oscar Lewis
- b. R.E.Park
- c. Redfield
- d. Max Muller \

Answer: Option C





Summary



- Hofstede's Dimension Theory
- Hofstede's Contribution to International Management
- Trompenaars & Hamden-Turner's Seven Dimensions of Culture
- Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck's Cultural Dimensions





REFERENCE:



- <https://www.geektonight.com/cross-cultural-theories/>





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