



THE BUCHAREST UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC STUDIES
THE FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
2nd International Conference: Synergies in Communication
RETHINKING EDUCATION - RESHAPING THE WORLD.
LANGUAGES, BUSINESS AND COMMUNITIES
Bucharest, 28-29 November 2013

**AN OVERVIEW OF INTERCULTURAL ASPECTS
IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

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Abstract

The paper firstly defines the terms interculturality, pluriculturalism (pluriculturalism), multiculturalism so as to clear up some common confusions. Then, it presents theoretical models for culture/cultural differences, applied to business communication, and attempts a comparison and criticism of the models. The models presented are the ones developed by Hofstede, Hall, Trompenaars and Lewis. In the last part, we offer examples of how we teach intercultural aspects of business communication in the Bucharest University of Economic Studies.

Key-words: interculturality, pluriculturalism (pluriculturalism), multiculturalism, business communication

1. Interculturality, pluriculturalism (pluriculturalism), multiculturalism

To begin with, we would like to define the terms we shall be using in in this paper and clear up some common confusions. We would also like to dwell a little longer on the wider significance of one of the terms (*multiculturalism*), as we think this will better explain the key term we shall use in the paper (*intercultural*).

'Pluriculturalism is the desire and ability to identify with several cultures, and participate in them. Interculturality is the ability to experience another culture and analyse that experience. The intercultural competence acquired from doing this helps individuals to

understand cultural difference better, establish cognitive and affective links between past and future experiences of that difference, mediate between members of two (or more) social groups and their cultures, and question the assumptions of their own cultural group and milieu'.¹

Furthermore, pluriculturalism is defined as follows:

'Pluriculturalism - identification with two (or more) social groups and their cultures – and interculturality – the competences for critical awareness of other cultures – may complement each other: active discovery of one or more other cultures may help learners to develop intercultural competence'.²

As we have shown elsewhere³, the term *multiculturalism* started to be used in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when Australia and Canada declared their support for the concept. (Rattansi, 2011: 7)⁴ It was the period when Australia and Canada had begun to allow a new immigration that was now 'Asianizing' these nations. Until then, Australia had a whites-only immigration policy, as Ali Rattansi points out in his book on multiculturalism. The policy was set out in the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, and made both Asians and Jews be regarded as inassimilable. The situation changed in 1971, with the official recognition of the need to assist in the development of a multicultural society. In Canada, the debate began with strained relations between the English and French-speaking regions in the 1960s. In 1969, the Bicultural and Bilingual Act recommended that English and French be seen as official languages. By 1988, there was a Multicultural Act, which widened the terms of inclusion to other minorities in Canada. (Rattansi, 2011: 8)

There are two 'elephants' in the room, as Rattansi puts it: one of them is the undeniable connection between issues of race (and, unfortunately, racism, as an unwanted consequence of

¹ *Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education*, Jean-Claude Beacco, Michael Byram, Marisa Cavalli, Daniel Coste, Mirjam Egli Cuenat, Francis Goullier and Johanna Panthier (Language Policy Division), www.coe.int/lang

² Idem 1

³ **Ionciă Diana-Eugenia**, *Multiculturalism, Multilingualism, Economic Development and Personal Development: An Exploratory Study*, International QUEST - ASE - ISQALE Conference 2013 "Improving Standards of Quality in Language Education and Research" within the framework of the Conference series: "Languages for Specific Purposes and Teacher Development" (ISSN 2285 – 1623) Bucharest, 1 - 2 March 2013

⁴ **Rattansi, A.** 2011. *Multiculturalism. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: OUP

migration, and/or, as we shall see in the following, a feature sometimes embedded in the majority culture) and multiculturalism. The second one is the matter of global inequality, a factor justly 'blamed' by Rattansi for the ever-increasing phenomenon of migration from the poorer countries (in the East) to the wealthier ones in the West.

In the United States, multiculturalism entered the public vocabulary later, in the 1990s, 'with demands for cultural recognition in school and university curricula by these non-white ethnic groups. Thus issues of race have always been significant, and sometimes paramount, in US debates about multiculturalism.' (Rattansi, 2011: 11)

I would add that although included a little later in the public/academic vocabulary in the US, the spread and effects of multiculturalism as an educational policy have more than made up for the initial handicap, and that, despite criticism from both the left and the right (especially far-right) of the political spectrum, multiculturalism is still alive and well, and could be said to dominate (especially academic) discourse.

According to the HarperCollins Dictionary of Sociology (1991):

Multiculturalism: The acknowledgement and promotion of cultural pluralism...multiculturalism celebrates and seeks to promote cultural variety, for example minority languages. At the same time it focuses on the unequal relationship of minority to mainstream cultures.

In the book we quoted earlier in the paper, Rattansi makes a surprising statement:

'It seems obvious that European nation states have decided that the period of multiculturalism is over. Multiculturalism seems now to be regarded by governments, intellectuals, and large sections of the national populations as either disastrous or at least a serious wrong turn in the response to immigration by non-white populations, usually from former colonies of the European powers in the period after 1945 at the end of the Second World War.' (Rattansi, 2011: 143)

The reason why we find this surprising is multifold: one, would be the feeling that multiculturalism is far from dead, but alive and kicking. This is confirmed by the multitude of sources to be found when trying to conduct research on the subject: a simple test – searching for

‘multiculturalism’ as a key word, at the date of writing the present paper, yields a staggering 7,930,000 results. That would be too much for a ‘deceased’ subject.

Ali Rattansi ends his book with a plea for ‘interculturalism’, or, as we would put it, ‘multiculturalism 2.0’. He says:

‘Interculturalism also requires that bridges are built along cross-cutting lines of gender, age and a variety of other identities and interests; it must move away from a world which privileges ethnicity and faith above all other forms of identification. And it leaves untouched the global inequalities which are major drivers of the migration of people from South to North and East to West.’ (Rattansi, 2011: 164)

Thus, he argues for the replacement of multiculturalism with *interculturalism*, seen as a concept focusing on closer relations between the many cultures forming a multicultural society, on cultural exchanges and contact.

While acknowledging the benefits which would be reaped from such exchanges, we cannot help but signal some alarming points: to begin with, we see no need for giving up issues of faith and ethnicity, which are essential components of a nation’s spiritual being; secondly, the fact that, as Rattansi puts it, interculturalism ‘leaves untouched’ the matter of global inequalities is in our view a serious shortcoming of the notion, and shows that, before embracing it wholeheartedly, we should first weigh what we are giving up in order to pursue ‘the intercultural dream’.

2. Theoretical models for culture/cultural differences applied to business communication. Comparison/criticism

Hall, Lewis, Trompenaars, Hofstede

The works of Geert Hofstede and Edward Hall are fixtures in nearly all of the academic literature having anything to do with cross-cultural comparisons, particularly in the management and communication fields (Driskill, 1997; Hunsinger, 2006; Thatcher, 2001; Varner, 2000, 2001;

T. Weiss, 1992).⁵ One indicator of the influence of these cross-cultural researchers and theorists is how frequently they are cited. According to Peter Cardon,

*'As of July 2007, according to the Web of Science Social Sciences Cited Reference Index (2007), Hofstede had been cited over 6,100 times for his three major works: 4,138 times for the first edition of Culture's Consequences (1980), 532 times for the second and highly revised edition of Culture's Consequences (2001), and 1,488 times for Cultures and Organizations (1991). Hall had been cited over 3,300 times for his three major works: 1,552 times for The Hidden Dimension (1966), 1,124 times for Silent Language (1959), and 659 times for Beyond Culture (1976). Their works have also become integral parts of intercultural communication textbooks and courses. In particular, Hall's contexting model has been identified as the most commonly used cultural model in intercultural communication courses (Fantini & Smith, 1997).'*⁶

As Peter Cardon shows in his paper, the works of Hofstede and Hall have been treated quite differently. He gives some surprising figures.

*'Whereas Hofstede's works have been published in refereed journals (Hofstede, 1983; Hofstede & Bond, 1984, 1988) and extensively tested, replicated, refined, and critiqued (Hofstede, 2001; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorman, & Gupta, 2004; Schwartz, 1999; Trompenaars, 1994), none of Hall's works about contexting have been published in refereed journals, and they have escaped close scrutiny by other researchers. Studies that use contexting as an explanatory framework for cross-cultural variation almost invariably accept the contexting continuum (Hall's ranking of cultures from low context to high context) and fail to critically examine exceptions. Hermeking (2006) suggested that Hall's model has received little criticism because Hall was vague in his presentation of the model and ranked cultural groups rather than national cultures.'*⁷

⁵ Peter W. Cardon, *A Critique of Hall's Contexting Model. A Meta-Analysis of Literature on Intercultural Business and Technical Communication*, Journal of Business and Technical Communication, Volume 22, Number 4, October 2008 399-428, © 2008 Sage Publications, <http://jbt.sagepub.com> hosted at <http://online.sagepub.com>, p.399

⁶ Idem 5

⁷ Idem 5

The main work from which Hall (1976) created his contexting model was *Beyond Culture*. When he explained the model, he defined high-context and low-context messages as follows:

'A high-context (HC) communication or message is one in which most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. A low-context (LC) communication is just the opposite; i.e., the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code.' (p. 79)

As Cardon shows⁸, Hall made a number of distinctions between HC and LC cultures. In summary, the distinctions are the following: in HC cultures, information is widely shared and thus requires extensive cultural programming whereas the opposite happens in LC cultures, as information is less widely shared and thus requires less cultural programming. HC cultures emphasize stability whereas LC cultures emphasize change and mobility. In HC cultures, providing too much information is considered talking down to others whereas in LC cultures, doing so is considered being thorough. In HC cultures, communication is an art form that is unifying and cohesive and thus displays sophistication, nuance, and cultural identity. In LC cultures, communication is primarily task oriented. HC cultures appreciate slow, indirect messages whereas LC cultures insist on fast, direct messages. HC cultures extensively use informal information networks whereas LC cultures prefer formal information networks. HC cultures interpret laws with personal involvement and thus bend rules to accommodate relationships whereas LC cultures interpret laws impersonally and thus maintain strict adherence to rules.

The conclusion would be the following: fundamentally, HC cultures tend to employ more holistic thinking whereas LC cultures tend to employ more linear thinking.

Hall (1976) described cultures as being either primarily HC or primarily LC. But he explained that cultures could be arranged on a continuum from extremely LC to extremely HC cultures. He classified the following cultures on such a continuum in order of lowest to highest context: Swiss-Germans, Germans, Scandinavians, Northern Americans, French, English, Italians, Latin Americans, Arabs, Chinese (added in Hall & Hall, 1987, 1990), and Japanese.

⁸ Idem 5

Cardon makes another interesting observation⁹: this contexting continuum (i.e., ranking of cultures from LC to HC) is frequently credited to Rosch and Segler (1987) as an extension of Hall's contexting model; however, Rosch and Segler merely placed Hall's ranking in a graphical format, which is often replicated in intercultural communication texts (e.g., Beamer & Varner, 2008; Victor, 1992).

There is an important distinction between Hall and Hofstede:

*Hall (1976) provided numerous anecdotes of various cultures but, unlike Hofstede (1980), never mentioned his method for developing his model. Hall provided in one paragraph his rankings of cultures from LC to HC, but he did not describe how he conceptualized or measured these rankings. Although he provided few indications about how he collected data, several of his comments suggest that he did so primarily through qualitative interviews and observation. He did not mention using methods for qualitative data collection that would be considered rigorous by today's standards.*¹⁰

Hall frequently described his intentions of helping individuals improve their intercultural relationships. He stated that one of the reasons for his work was his desire to help American executives understand the often confusing behavior of executives from other cultures. We shall resort here again to Cardon's paper, who made an extremely interesting observation: 'But close examination of Beyond Culture indicates that Hall (1976) generally characterized HC cultures in more favorable terms than he did LC cultures.'¹¹

Throughout his work, Hall strongly criticized LC U.S. institutional behavior in government, businesses, courts, and schools, which each represents the interests of the powerful at the expense of common people. He criticized many of the American tendencies directly tied to LC culture, including engaging only in linear thinking, looking at ideas not events, not taking the time to get to know people, ignoring important parts of context such as relationships, producing bad art, creating bureaucracy, relying on modern management methods, depending on management consultants, using government funds inefficiently and unfairly, conducting inaccurate research in social and biological sciences, manipulating the legal systems to benefit

⁹ Idem 5

¹⁰ Idem 5

¹¹ Idem 5, p. 400

the powerful, having less personal work relations, behaving with ethnocentrism, and scapegoating to protect the powerful. For example, Hall expressed his disappointment with American LC behavior in the following statement:

“Given our linear, step-by-step, compartmentalized way of thinking, fostered by the schools and public media, it is impossible for our leaders to consider events comprehensively or with priorities according to a system of common good” (p. 9).

Conversely, he frequently mentioned the positive aspects of HC cultures in terms of maintaining effective relationships and examining issues from a holistic perspective.

Trompenaars (1994), in his survey of managers in 43 countries, identified six cultural dimensions. He considered the dimension he labeled specificity–diffuseness as being analogous to Hall’s contexting model because cultures that emphasize specificity (LC) are “direct, to the point, purposeful in relating, precise, blunt, definitive, and transparent” whereas cultures that emphasize diffuseness (HC) are “indirect, circuitous, seemingly aimless forms of relating, evasive, tactful, ambiguous, even opaque” (p. 98).

Similar to Victor (1992), Trompenaars identified a close relationship between diffuse (HC) cultures and the importance of face. In diffuse cultures, ideas and people are inseparable. Thus, using indirect and ambiguous speech helps people in these cultures to maintain harmony and avoid losing face. Thus, in diffuse cultures, avoiding criticism is important, and people’s work and personal lives are enmeshed.

Trompenaars' model of national culture differences (1997. *Riding The Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business* with Charles Hampden-Turner)

Trompenaars' model of national culture differences is a framework for cross-cultural communication applied to general business and management, developed by Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner. This model of national culture differences has seven dimensions.

1. Universalism vs. particularism (*What is more important, rules or relationships?*)
2. Individualism vs. collectivism (communitarianism) (*Do we function in a group or as individuals?*)

3. Neutral vs. emotional (*Do we display our emotions?*)
4. Specific vs. diffuse (*How separate we keep our private and working lives*)
5. Achievement vs. ascription (*Do we have to prove ourselves to receive status or is it given to us?*)
6. Sequential vs. synchronic (*Do we do things one at a time or several things at once?*)
7. Internal vs. external control (*Do we control our environment or are we controlled by it?*)

According to Cardon¹² Trompenaars's (1994) rankings, however, contradict many of Hall's rankings. For example, Trompenaars ranked the only Arab country in his list (United Arab Emirates) as being LC. He likewise ranked Japan as being LC. He ranked the United Kingdom as being more LC than Germany or the United States. His ranking of Chinese cultures is particularly problematic because he ranked mainland China as HC but placed Singapore and Hong Kong in the middle of the rankings. His ranking of Latin Americans also contradicts Hall's ranking because he classified the two Latin American countries (Mexico and Uruguay) as moderately to extremely LC, respectively.

Richard Donald Lewis (born 1930) is a British linguist, cross-cultural communication consultant, and author. He speaks 10 languages (French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, German, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Finnish and Japanese).

The Lewis Model of Cross-Cultural Communication was developed by Richard D. Lewis and sets out to improve on other models in providing better treatment of Asian cultures, and being suited for practical usage in professional contexts.¹³

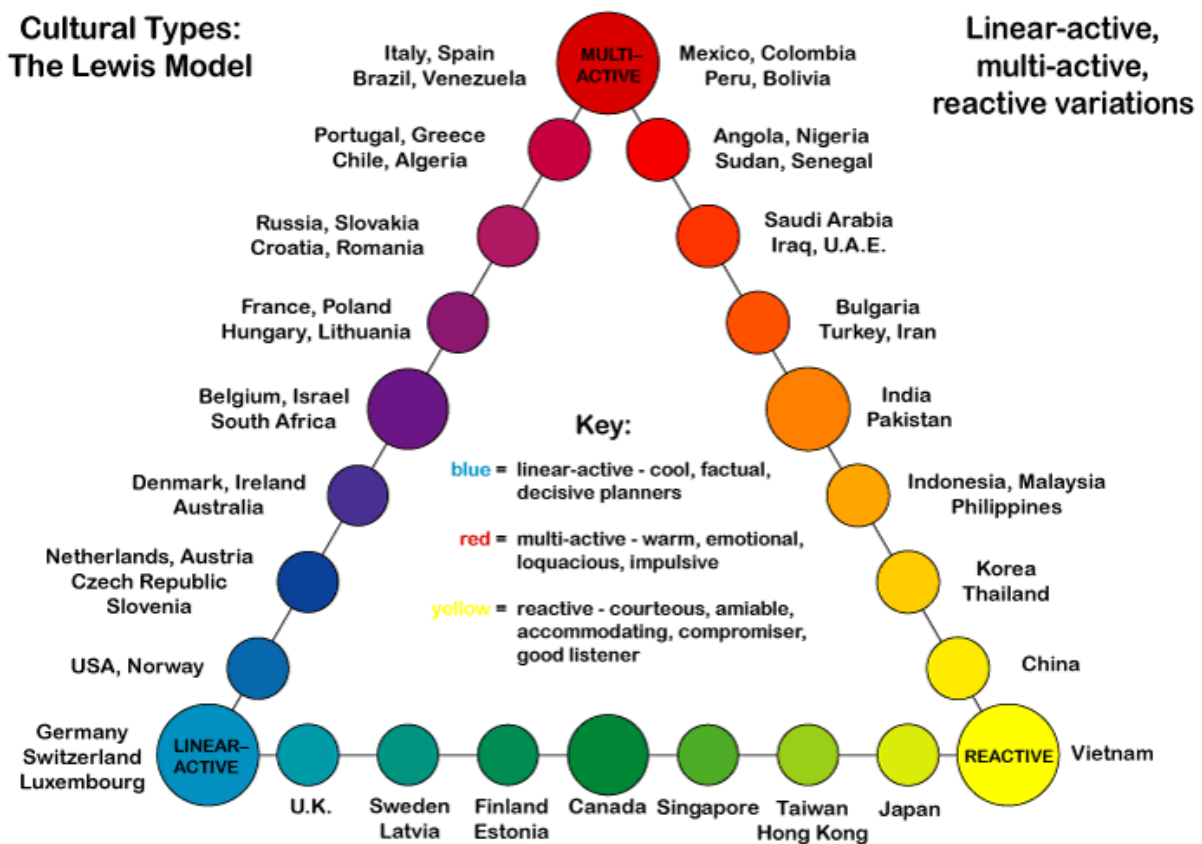
The core of the model classifies cultural norms into Linear-Active, Multi-Active and Re-Active, or some combination. Broadly speaking, Northern Europe, North America and related countries are predominantly Linear-Active, following tasks sequentially using Platonic, Cartesian logic. Southern European, Latin, African and Middle-Eastern countries are typified as

¹² Idem 5

¹³ The triangular Model of cross cultural communication patterns, is taken from the book *When Cultures Collide: Leading Across Cultures* (2006, 1999, 1996), by Richard Lewis, published by Nicholas Brealey International

Multi-Active, centred on relationships and often pursuing multiple goals simultaneously. East Asia is typically Re-Active, following harmonising, solidarity-based strategies.

Whilst Lewis' writings recognise these can only be stereotypes, his model provides a practical framework for understanding and communicating with people of other cultures. The model can readily be expanded with other features, such as Hoefstede's cultural dimensions, seen in relation to Lewis' triangular representation.¹⁴



The Lewis Cross Cultural Communication Model

“Cultural behavior is the end product of collected wisdom, filtered and passed down through hundreds of generations as shared core beliefs, values assumptions, notions and persistent action patterns. In other words, culture is a collective programming of the

¹⁴ <http://bestcareermatch.com/cross-cultural-communication/>

mind, that distinguishes the members of one human group from another.” Richard Lewis¹⁵

The Lewis Cross Cultural Communication Model above shows:

- how people from different cultures vary in their concepts of time and space: handle interpersonal distance, silence, and eye contact
- how their communication styles are reflected in the language patterns they use
- how they view the truth: as absolute or negotiable i.e. modifiable according to the situation
- what their values, attitudes and world views are.

Most of the countries in the world fall somewhere along the continuum between the points on this triangle, which Lewis calls Linear-Active, Multi-Active and Reactive.

The countries located at the points most strongly represent those cultural patterns.

For example, the most Linear-Active countries are Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg, with the US and UK on either side.

The US leans slightly toward the multi-active pattern because of the presence of a large Spanish speaking population in America.

The UK leans toward a reactive pattern because of the large Asian presence.

Canada is located right in the middle between Linear-Active and Reactive because in Canada, you'll find a large Linear-Active population and a large population with Reactive Communication Patterns.

3. Examples of how we teach intercultural aspects of business communication in the Bucharest University of Economic Studies

¹⁵ Idem 14

Below, we shall give some excerpts from a book published in the Uranus Publishing House¹⁶, this year, and used in our university for teaching intercultural issues in business communication (among other subjects). The unit focuses on Hofstede's cultural model.

5. Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

National cultures can be described according to the analysis of Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede, outlined in his book *Cultures and Organizations, Software of the Mind*. These ideas were first based on a large research project into national culture differences across subsidiaries of a multinational corporation (IBM) in 64 countries. Subsequent studies by others covered students in 23 countries, elites in 19 countries, commercial airline pilots in 23 countries, up-market consumers in 15 countries, and civil service managers in 14 countries. Together these studies identified and validated four independent dimensions of national culture differences, with a fifth dimension added later. The dimensions are: **power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long term orientation** (added later).

5A. Work in groups of five. You are participating in an international conference on the topic *Cultures and Organizations*. Use the role cards to fill in your name, affiliation, etc. One of you will be the Chair of this section of the conference. Each of you will be presenting a short paper on one of Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Study your role cards and prepare for the conference. At this stage, you are asked

only to present to your colleagues, in your own words, the information on your role-card.



5B. In the Q&A section, after hearing your colleagues' presentations, you are invited to take part in a discussion in your group. Answer the questions below and add others.

1. Have you worked in intercultural teams and want to share your experiences?
2. Are there examples of situations, in which cross cultural differences played a role, you would like to share?

5C. As a follow-up to this exercise, write an extended paper on the topic that you presented in the conference. For more information, read the book mentioned above, visit the web-site www.geerthofstede.com and watch the wonderful interview with the author (taken by his son, Gert Jan Hofstede), featured on the web-site.

The role cards are the following:

¹⁶ Diana Ioncica, *New Mastering English for Economics*, Uranus, Bucharest, 2013

STUDENT 1: CHAIR

POWER DISTANCE INDEX

Participant details

Name (First name, Surname):
Country:
Title (Professor, Doctor, Ph D Candidate, Assistant Lecturer, etc):
Institution:
Contact details (E-mail, Telephone):

Hofstede's Power distance Index measures the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This represents inequality (more versus less), but defined from below, not from above. It suggests that a society's level of inequality is endorsed by the followers as much as by the leaders. For example, Germany has a 35 on the cultural scale of Hofstede's analysis. Compared to Arab countries where the power distance is very high (80) and Austria where it is very low (11), Germany is somewhat in the middle. Germany does not have a large gap between the wealthy and the poor, but has a strong belief in equality for each citizen. Germans have the opportunity to rise in society. On the other hand, the power distance in the United States scores a 40 on the cultural scale. The United States exhibits a more unequal distribution of wealth compared to German society. As the years go by, it seems that the distance between the 'have' and 'have-nots' grows larger and larger.

STUDENT 2: PARTICIPANT

INDIVIDUALISM VS COLLECTIVISM

Participant details

Name (First name, Surname):
Country:
Title (Professor, Doctor, Ph D Candidate, Assistant Lecturer, etc):
Institution:
Contact details (E-mail, Telephone):

Individualism is the one side versus its opposite, **collectivism**, that is the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. On the individualist side, we find societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family. On the collectivist side, we find societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families (with uncles, aunts and grandparents) which continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. For example, Germany can be considered as individualistic with a relatively high score (67) on the scale of Hofstede compared to a country like Guatemala where they have strong collectivism (6 on the scale). In Germany people stress on personal achievements and individual rights. Germans expect from each other to fulfill their own needs. Group work is important, but everybody has the right to his own opinion and is expected to reflect those. In an individual country like Germany, people tend to have more loose relationships than in countries where there is collectivism, where people have large extended families. The United States can clearly be seen as individualistic (scoring 91). The "American dream" is clearly a representation of this. This is the Americans' hope for a better quality of life and a higher standard of living than their parents'. This belief is that anyone, regardless of their status can 'pull up their boot straps' and raise themselves from poverty.

STUDENT 3: PARTICIPANT

LONG-TERM ORIENTATION

Participant details

Name (First name, Surname):
Country:
Title (Professor, Doctor, Ph D Candidate, Assistant Lecturer, etc):
Institution:
Contact details (E-mail, Telephone):

Long-Term Orientation is the fifth dimension of Hofstede, which was added after the original four to try to outline the difference in thinking between the East and the West. From the original IBM studies, this difference was something that could not be deduced. Therefore, Hofstede created a Chinese value survey which was distributed across 23 countries. From these results, and with an understanding of the influence of the teaching of Confucius on the East, long term vs. short term orientation became the fifth cultural dimension.

Below are some characteristics of the two opposing sides of this dimension:

■ Long term orientation

- persistence
- ordering relationships by status and observing this order
- thrift
- having a sense of shame

■ Short term orientation

- personal steadiness and stability
- protecting your 'face'
- respect or tradition
- reciprocation of greetings, favors, and gifts

STUDENT 4: PARTICIPANT

MASCULINITY VS FEMININITY

Participant details

Name (First name, Surname):
Country:
Title (Professor, Doctor, Ph D Candidate, Assistant Lecturer, etc):
Institution:
Contact details (E-mail, Telephone):

Masculinity versus its opposite, **femininity** refers to the distribution of roles between the genders, which is another fundamental issue for any society to which a range of solutions are found. The IBM studies revealed that (a) women's values differ less among societies than men's values; (b) men's values vary from one country to another, ranging from highly assertive and competitive and very different from women's values, on the one side, to modest and caring and similar to women's values, on the other. The assertive pole has been called 'masculine' and the modest, caring pole 'feminine'.

For example, Germany has a masculine culture with a 66 on the scale of Hofstede (Netherlands 14). Masculine traits include assertiveness, materialism/material success, self-centeredness, power, strength, and individual achievements. The United States scored a 62 on Hofstede's scale. So these two cultures share, in terms of masculinity, similar values.

STUDENT 5: PARTICIPANT

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

Participant details

Name (First name, Surname):

Country:

Title (Professor, Doctor, Ph D Candidate, Assistant Lecturer, etc):

Institution:

Contact details (E-mail, Telephone):

Uncertainty avoidance deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity; it ultimately refers to man's search for Truth. It indicates to what extent a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. Unstructured situations are novel, unknown, surprising, and different from usual. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimize the possibility of such situations by strict laws and rules, safety and security measures, and on the philosophical and religious level, by a belief in absolute Truth; 'there can only be one Truth and we have it'.

For example, in Germany there is a reasonable high uncertainty avoidance (65) compared to countries as Singapore (8) and neighbouring country Denmark (23). Germans are not too keen on uncertainty; by planning everything carefully they try to avoid uncertainty. In Germany there is a society that relies on rules, laws and regulations. Germany wants to reduce its risks to the minimum and proceed with changes step by step.

The United States scores a 46 compared to the 65 of the German culture. Uncertainty avoidance in the US is relatively low, which can clearly be viewed through the national cultures.

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