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DIMENSIONS OF NATIONAL CULTURE – CROSS-CULTURAL THEORIES

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Abstract:

Over the past three decades, after Hofstede presented his proposal about cultural differences, many authors have presented their dimensions of national culture. The aim of this article is to give a synthesis of the proposal from significant authors and show a set of models of cultural dimensions based on theoretical and pragmatic analysis such as models of Hofstede, Trompenaars, GLOBE, Inglehart, Schartz. Also, examples used in this paper help more to understand the importance of research national culture.

Key words: culture, national culture, cultural dimensions, Models of national culture, Hofstede, Trompenaars, Globe

1. Introduction

There are many definitions of culture that contain elements like: values, beliefs, attitudes. From a conceptual perspective the term “culture” is preserved from Latin, where initially was defined as “land culture” (Hofstede G., Hofstede G.J., Minkov M., trad. Zografi M., 2012) and later explained as: „the combination of agricultural engineering necessary for major harvesting”. Over time, culture has become a broader activity, including activities from all fields, having the same purpose: the achievement of results and benefits. From a narrow perspective, culture means „civilization”, „soul polishing” in most western languages through education, art, literature.

Many researches and analyses have been conducted regarding a clear and concise definition of culture. The Romanian dictionary defines culture as: „all material and spiritual assets created by humanity and institutions necessary for communication with these assets” (Romanian Dictionary, 2019).

2. General considerations of national culture.

From a wider perspective, sociologists and anthropologists use the term “culture” as a mental soft: thought process, feeling and action of an individual. Over the years,

philosophers from Baden School, represented by V. Windelband and H. Rickert. (Herciu, 2007), have developed a reasoning process regarding. In Romania, Tudor Vianu has focused on this topic and considered that “cultural assets are items of desire and desire includes these assets as correlative objects.” (Vianu, 1942)

Geert Hofstede described culture as: “the collective planning of mind is the process that distinguishes members of a group or class from other people” (Hofstede G., Hofstede G.J., Minkov M., trad. Zografi M., 2012). In other words, being considered a collective phenomenon, shared with individuals from the same social environment, it is learned and developed in time, in the environment in which it exists, differing by human nature and individual personality. (Hofstede, 2012).

According to hierarchical levels of mental planning of Hofstede, human nature is a common human trait and triggers the mental and physical functioning which can be learned and developed through accumulated and inherited experience. The development of each person as an individual or in a group, evolves our ability to react to various psychological circumstances, feelings, urges, uniquely to our culture.

On the opposite side, personality represents inherited features, it even associates with hereditary genes of each individual.

From the actual standpoint, each nation is a generator of unique and personal culture, possessing specific traits. This way, culture was laminated in 3 layers: inner (basic concepts about life), middle (virtues and standards) and outer layer (symbols and products). (Burdus, 2004)

At first glance, the cultural layers have been similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, in which shape. It is important to distinguish virtues and needs. Virtues of a person determine the manner this individual will proceed in order to satisfy a need.

Therefore, the outer layer is represented through symbols on one side and through products on the other side. Here, the reference is made both on symbols such as: actions (deeds, gestures and behavior), verbal (catchphrases, words, specific expressions), as well as materials (clothing, architecture).

The middle layer is represented by virtues and standards. Standards highlight the opinion of an individual/group between what is right and wrong, while virtues are connected to an individual/group's ideals through understanding of good and evil.

The basic concepts about life represent the inner layer, the most profound, because it denotes the way resources are organized by different groups of people. Over time, this layer indicates the development pattern of each region.

3. The Model from Geert Hofstede's perspective of national culture

The dutch researcher Geert Hofstede expressed his urge and interest on cultural differences, at the end of 1960s. Therefore, 2 years later, after multiple researches, he published the book: Culture consequences. First, he focused on theoretical aspects, theories reasoning, so that he could follow up with several forms of his research: collection of statistical data, quizzes, teaching, replica studies.

Until defining culture, he described culture manifestations through 4 factors that comprise the fundamentals of cultural differences: a) symbols (words, gestures, images),

b) heroes (behavioral models), c) rituals (collective activities, lectures, ceremonies) and d) assets.

Thus, the in-depth research made by Hofstede, represented a study between the IBM company employees from over 40 states, need to understand the dynamic culture of nations. He demonstrated there are some national and regional cultural groups that affect directly the style life and improvement of society and institutions, which are resilient through time. Summarizing the most important differences from this study, according to Hofstede website (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/models/national-culture/>) and of course assuming it might appear in the cultural background, the 6-D's are identified:

Table 1. 6-D Hofstede Model (adjusted by author)

G. Hofstede's cultural dimensions - 6D	Characteristics
PDI (Power Distance Index)	Official or unofficial acceptance degree of the dominance phenomenon. Remoteness versus power > low chance of cultural development and low access to legacy Remoteness versus power < people equality regarding social development
IDV (Individualism versus Collectivism)	Independence and freedom of an individual regarding the group he/she belongs to Individualism > developed country Collectivism > under-developed country
MAS (Masculinity versus Femininity)	Equally distribution rights between genders Masculinity - performance and money Femininity- social assets and interpersonal relations
UAI (Doubt versus Confidence)	The expansion degree of cultural programs for its members to feel comfortable or uncomfortable In cultures which avoid strong uncertainty: formal attitude, leadership model based on rules and policy In cultures which avoid low uncertainty: leadership model based on flexible standards, informal attitude
LTO (Long term orientation versus Short term orientation)	Resources associated with long term orientation > control and persistence Resources associated with short term orientation < tradition and recognition
IND (Indulgence versus Constraint)	Indulgence - feelings and desires satisfaction (ex: free time, marriage, friends and shopping) Constraint - conditioning of desire fruition of its members and lack of life happiness

Without doubt, Hofstede has developed the most useful and practical cultural model. His framework was recognized by many researchers in various area of activity. In other words, Hofstede outline 6 essential issue which all countries face: a) The power distance of people- social difference; b) Inequality of gender; c) The relationship between the individual and collective; d) Certainty or uncertainty results for economic and social

processes; e) Which term is most affiliated, short or long? f) Conditioning of desires and pleasures;

As example, a comparison between countries (*Top 4 countries by population*) China, India, USA and Indonesia using the Hofstede model, according to Hofstede website (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/>), results in:

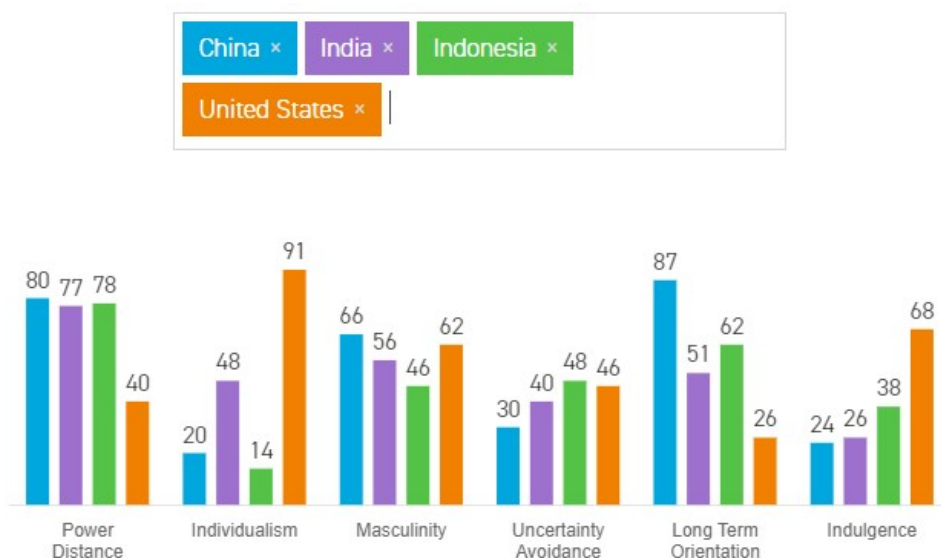


Fig.1. Compared countries using the Hofstede Model

(Source: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison>)

If we explore these countries through culture of the 6-D Model, presented by Hofstede website (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/china,india,indonesia,the-usa/>) we can get:

Table 2. Country comparison used 6-D Hofstede Model

6-D Model	CHINA	INDIA	USA	INDONESIA
PDI	At 80 score, China is in top rankings of PDI – i.e. a So, inequalities amongst nation are acceptable. The relationship between superior subordinate- tends to be contradictory.	India mark huge on this dimension is 77, illustrate an appreciation for hierarchy from top-down structure.	The little low result on PDI (40) is presented as the expansion to which fewer influential representatives of institutions and organizations within a country hope and accept that influence and power is shared unequally.	Indonesia has score 78 - a big result dimension which demonstrate the Indonesian profile: respect to hierarchy, admiration to top management.
IDV	At a score of 20 China is a extremely	India, with a score of 48, is a society with both characteristics	USA is one of the most Individualist cultures in the world,	Indonesia is a Collectivist society with a low score of

6-D Model	CHINA	INDIA	USA	INDONESIA
	collectivist culture where people act in the interests of the group.	collectivistic and Individualist.	scored 91, according to Hofstede website. It confirmation for significance on equal rights in society and institutions.	14.
MAS	China is a Masculine society 66 score –success adjusted and driven. So, many Chinese people will prefer work over family.	India is considerate a Masculine society with 56 score of this dimension. Is actually very Masculine in definition of success and power.	USA is also Masculinity country, identify a score 62, and this can be look in the exemplary American role patterns.	Indonesia record 46- low masculinity, considered more feminine nation.
UAI	China has a low score on Uncertainty Avoidance – 30.	India on this dimension scores 40 and has a medium low choice for avoiding uncertainty.	The US scores below medium with a low score of 46, on this dimension.	Indonesia scores (48) on this dimension and means that it has a low preference for avoiding uncertainty.
LTO	China record 87 LTO, which result that it is a very rational culture. In this type of societies, it is considered that truth depends on condition and time	India is a dominant choice in Indian culture cannot be identified.	Americans are very practical and prefer to verify new information, for example to check time if it is true. So, they are oriented to short time.	Indonesia determines that it has a rational culture similar with China, with the same beliefs.
IND	In this dimension, China has a score low of 24, that means China restrained society. It is characteristics for this society cynicism and pessimism.	India Restraint culture-low score of 26.	USA scores as an Indulgent (68) This, is reflected by the following contradictory perspective and behavior	Indulgence score for Indonesia is low of 38 Restraint culture, such as China and India.

(Source: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/china.india.indonesia.the-usa/>)

On a different note, Hofstede's 6-D model has been applied in cross-cultural research many years, and has an important contribution to understanding different cultures in many types of context.

4. The Model from Fons Trompenaars 's perspective of national culture

The economist, Fons Trompenaars's concern regarding culture began from his master's research, in which he addressed the organizational pattern of different cultures. Conducting his activity in business, the majority of global companies which he interacted with offered him the opportunity to examine cultural differences, as well as permanent access to data. Trompenaars developed a model with 7 scales (A.Maleki,M.de Jong, 2014).

Table 3. 7-D Trompenaars Model (adjusted by author)

Trompenaars's cultural dimensions	Research question
Universalism versus Particularism	What is most important: Law or relations?
Individualism versus collectivism	We or I? How do we operate? Individual interests or collective interests?
Neutral culture versus emotional culture	Do we expose our feelings? Introverted or extroverted?
Specific culture versus dissipated culture	How do we split private life from work? How much do we engage?
Earned statute versus granted statute	Do we need to prove our statute or is it granted to us? Motivation or lack of motivation?
Sequential culture versus synchronic culture	One at a time or all together? How do we perceive time? Synchronic - collectivism and particularism/sequential - relation cause-effect
Internal control versus external control	Do we deal with the environment or work with it? The relationship between humankind and nature

In the book "*Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity Cultural in Business*", authors Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden - Turner declared that cultural differences happen between societies and institutions, and the manner of conducting activities is directly affected by it. So, according to them, culture is describe "as the way in which a group of people solves problems and reconciles dilemmas" (Trompenaars & Hampden- Turner, 1997, p. 6).

5. Model from GLOBE perspective of national culture

The GLOBE research program or otherwise called "Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness" was illustred in 1991 by Robert J. House of the Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania. In his volume I, on the study of

cultural differences was "Culture, leadership and organizations: the GLOBE study of 62 companies" results about 17,300 intermediary managers from 951 different organizations from activities like: food processing, financial services and telecommunications industries

In volume II, dedicated to the same research topics, "Culture and Leadership worldwide: The GLOBE book of in-depth studies of 25 companies", completed the conclusions of the volume I with analyzes of leadership literature in the country, information achieved from interviews, focus discussion groups and formal analyzes of print media to contribute in-depth profile of leadership concept and leadership behavior across the 25 cultures. Thus, the GLOBE model identifies 9 cultural dimensions:

Table 4. 9-D GLOBE Model (adjusted by author)

GLOBE cultural dimensions	Definition
Uncertainty avoidance	The size of company, organization or group depend on social norms, rules and strategy to reduce the uncertainty of eventual events.
Performance Orientation	This dimension can be explained for motivations and remunerations group members for developing achievement and excellence
Collectivism in the group.	It is expressed by honor, dignity and loyalty in organizations or societies.
Power distance	Members of a community/collective expect influence to be shared equally.
Gender equality	Gender inequality in a collective try be decreased
Human orientation	The dimension which inspire and remunerate individuals for being honest, attentively to others altruistic, caring and helpful.
Institutional collectivism	The organization and the society motivate the collective disseminate of resources, activities and the collective decisions.
Assertiveness	People are self-assured and aggressive in their relationships with others.
Future Orientation	People can involve in future-oriented behaviors, like as delaying pleasure, planning and investing in time.

6. Model from SCHWARTZ'S perspective of national culture

Shalom Schwartz, an Israeli sociologist, collected between 1988 and 1992 data from 38 nations describing 41 cultural groups. His study conducted in a model of cultural values, identified in three basic societal issues:

- a) The relationship between the individual person and the group;
- b) Social behavior;
- c) The purpose of people in social world.

All of these issues were adapted to cultural framework, which consists of seven dimensions, such as (S. Schwartz, 2008):

Table 4. 7-D SCHWARTZ'S Model (adjusted by author)

SCHWARTZ'S Dimensions	Cultural values
Embeddedness (Conservatism)	A cultural significance on perpetuation of the characteristic and control of decisions. (social order, respect for tradition, security)
Harmony	In a harmony culture, rather than follow self-improvement, people accept their place in the world happyful. People here put greater emphasis on the group than on the individual
Egalitarianism	In this kind of culture, everyone is considered to be equal and everyone is expected to show concern for everyone else. And, so what?
Intellectual Autonomy	Determine the independent pursuit of ideas and plans, can be theoretical, political and so one. In embeddedness cultures it is hard to control what people are thinking, though actions can be taken to manage intellectual
Affective Autonomy	Is the independent pursuit of pleasure, seeking happiness by any means without censure. In many societies there are limits.
Mastery	In a mastery culture, individuals are looking for success through personal action. This may benefit the person and/or the groups to which they exist. It's characterized independence, courage, ambition and competence.
Hierarchy	In hierarchical cultures, there superior positions and inferior. It's a clear and specific structure.

7. Model from Inglehart's perspective of national culture

Ronald Inglehart has done a research paper on cultural changes, their interconnections with various aspects of social life, as well as their measurement. Thus, together with Christian Welzel they defined two predominant dimensions on the cultural map: (*Inglehart, Welzel, 2005*)

- a) Traditional versus secular-rational values – in this culture, religion is significant, parent-child relation, difference to authority and traditional family beliefs. People who adopt these beliefs also reject divorce, abortion and suicide. Nations with secular-rational values have the contrary preferences to the traditional values. These nations place less emphasis on religion, traditional family beliefs or authority. Divorce, abortion, and suicide are seen as relatively acceptable.
- b) Survival versus self-expression values - place attention on economic and physical security. Self-expression values offer high priority to environmental protection, growing tolerance of newcomers, gender equality and origin, and

rising demands for participation in decision-making in economic and political life.

Conform to the authors: "These two dimensions explain more than 70 percent of the transnational variation in a factor analysis of ten indicators and each of these dimensions is strongly correlated with scores of other important orientations." (Inglehart, Welzel, 2005)

Later, in 2017, Inglehart and Welzel's cultural dimension map was shared in clusters: Latin America, Baltic Cluster, South Asian, English, Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Europe, Confucian, African-Islamic, and Cluster speakers.

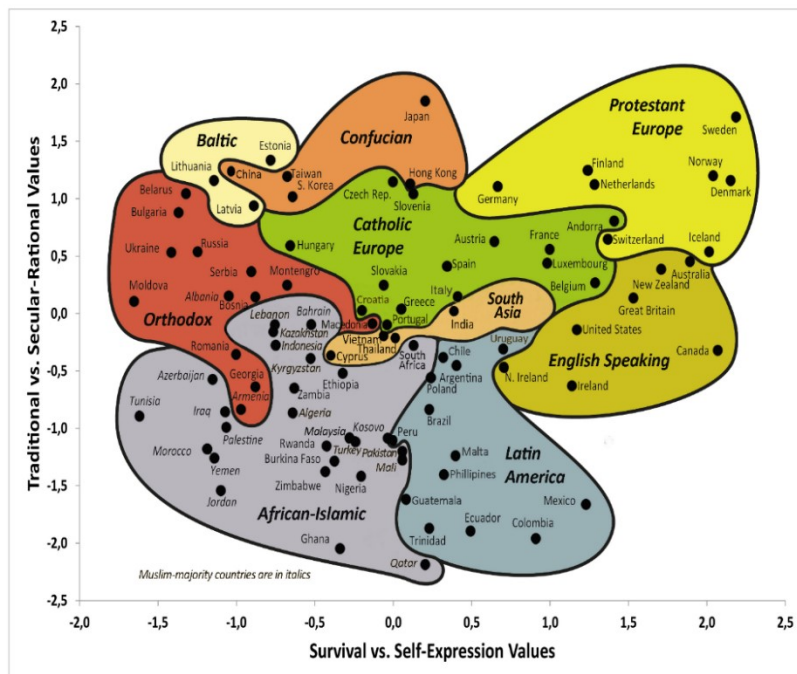


Fig. 2. The Inglehart Cultural Model

Source: https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2015/12/151201_chile_conservador_crz

The Inglehart cultural map result the societies emphasis on traditional and survival values. The countries with traditional vs secular-rational values are represented by Confucius and South Asia cluster, especially islamic societies. The strongest on survival versus self-expression values is represented by protestant cluster, countries such as Sweden, Denmark and Canada.

So, the most important conclusions for Inglehart cultural model, are:

- In modern world values is changing with elements of modernity;
- Values differ from society to another by generation, religion, ethnicity, education;
- Culture zone reflect different culture pattern result by historically pathways .

8. Conclusions

Culture is one of the most important treasure of the nation. It can be compared with the precious arm in an unpredictable and modern world that is able to move things. The result of this synthesizing work is the emphasize the different concerns about culture.

The purpose of this paper was: a) to identify some methods on measuring nation culture (from comparative culture theory); b) to give a theoretical and conceptual brief analysis; c) to teste Hostede's Cultural Model to 4 countries;

Comparative analysis in this paper has contribution to dissemination of academic knowledge and result that all countries have individual cultural profile determined by norms, beliefs, religions, traditions.

From the Hofstede model (6-D) to the Globe project (9D), is clearly understanding that those models are applicable in research of national culture. In comparision above, using Hofstede Model it was illustrated that these four countries with similar population are different regarding cultural dimensions. According to these analysis, USA has a power culture that believes in unequally and democratic values, harmony between gender and equal rights, pattern behaviors, taking responsibilities themselves, strong support to indulgence. In other words, is a national culture model, in that case.

It is likely clear that the Hofstede Model is the most practical and known to understand management in a country. A good overview on cross cultural comparison offers us the possibility to better understand with what kind of people or organizations we have to work or to collaborate. Applications of these models can be used in different ways, such as economics, international business and of course in management.

Finally, in conclusion, in a dynamic and modern environment a strong culture can be a significant driver oriented by performance and success of nation.

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