

Chapter 4

Contrasting Cultural Values

文化价值观比较

To be successful in international business and to be good citizens of the international community, we should learn to honor and respect our own cultures and also to develop an appreciation, tolerance, and respect for other cultures.

价值观是文化中最深层的部分，它支配着人们的信念、态度和行为。中国是有着深厚传统文化的国家，中国人受传统思想的影响非常深。中国古代的管理思想家们认为，人固然有生物属性，要谋取利益，但也有社会属性，有时也会“舍生取义”，因此人们的行为应符合集体要求。而在西方文化中却完全不同。比如，西方人富有冒险和创新精神，以利润最大化为终极价值目标，尊重个人，奉行能力主义，这些都与中国文化有着巨大差异。中西文化是两种不同的文化体系，在个人和群体的关系方面，中国思想家偏重于群体秩序中的个人，讲“人伦”；西方思想家偏重于个人组成的群体，尊“个性”。前者从群体的尊卑秩序讲个人，后者从个人利益讲群体，这些思想至今还影响着中西企业的管理模式和行为。在人生观与价值观方面，中国思想家强调“以修身为本”，把“善”放在价值观的首要位置；西方思想家强调“真”的重要性。不同的民族有着自己区别于其他民族的特殊的文化心理素质、思维方式、价值尺度、道德规范和情感取向。本章主要介绍霍夫斯泰德的四个维度，即：权力距离、个人主义和集体主义、男性气质和女性气质以及不确定性规避。这四个维度揭示文化之间存在价值观差异的缘由。

1. Cultural Values 文化价值观

Values fundamentally influence our behaviors in society. They do not describe how we act in a culture but dictate what we ought or ought not to do. Values tend to be the basis of all the decisions we make and provide standards for us to evaluate our own and other's actions. Thus a value can be defined as a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action.

Values are a learned organization of rules for making choices and for resolving conflicts. These rules and *guideposts* are *normative* and teach us what is useful, good, right, wrong, what to strive for, how to live our life, and even what to die for. A value system represents what is expected or hoped for, required or forbidden. It is not a report of actual conduct but is the system of criteria by which conduct is judged and *sanctions* applied.

guidepost <i>n.</i> 准则
normative <i>a.</i> 标准的, 规范的
sanction <i>n.</i> 认可, 准许

Values are useful in explaining and understanding cultural similarities and differences in behaviors; thus, understanding values and their cultural basis is helpful for managers in international business. If they understand how values vary from culture to culture, they are more likely to accept and interpret correctly behavioral differences. This acceptance and correct interpretation, in turn, enables managers to interact effectively with others whose values and behaviors are different.

Every culture has its ways of doing things in daily life, such as ways of eating, drinking, dressing, finding shelters, making friends, marrying, and dealing with death. People have to learn the cultural ways of their community to satisfy their basic human needs. These ways are not something that the people in the group are born with. Instinctive behavior, on the other hand, is a pattern of behavior that an animal is born with. Spiders spinning their webs is an example. The mother spider does not teach her babies how to spin webs. In fact, she is not even there when they are born. Young spiders know how to do it when they are born.

We have to remember that, most of the time, the different customs of different cultures are neither right nor wrong. It is simply that different people do things in different manners.

Although each of us has a unique set of values, there are also values that tend to *permeate* a culture. These are called cultural values.

1.1 Comparison Between Chinese Values and Western Values 中西价值观比较

Many scholars have written about cultural differences between the West and the East. Among these differences, three are highlighted here: cognition, relationship with nature, and the concept of truth. Western people are said to incline to think in a *linear* fashion. A cause leads to an effect. In Eastern culture, a cause can lead to an effect and it can be an effect as well. Past, present and future are interconnected and affect one another. Western culture tends to be oriented toward mastery over nature while Eastern culture seeks harmony with nature. Regarding the concept of truth, the view of Western culture on ultimate truth or reality is based more on scientific and *empirical* explanation while that of Eastern culture is based more on existing truth. Cultural differences between the East and the West have a significant impact on the communication behavior and pattern. As a result of the differences in cognition, relationship with nature and the concept of truth, people from the West and the East are further different in the following aspects.

permeate v. 渗透, 充满 linear a. 直线的, 线性的 empirical a. 经验主义的 APEC 亚太经济合作组织 summit n. 最高级会议

Differences in expressing gratitude. The Chinese and Westerners are different in expressing their gratitude. The Chinese who are close to each other seldom express their gratitude in public or in words. Look at the following situation. A mother is busy in the kitchen. She suddenly asks her son to fetch a bowl for her. Then the son does so. The mother just continues cooking without any word of gratitude. Later at table, the mother hands her son a bowl of rice. The son just takes it and begins eating without any word of gratitude either. If such a situation happens in the United States, both the mother and her son will say “thanks” or “thank you” for fetching the bowl and serving the rice.

Differences in symbolization. Symbolization is how people imagine or regard something. It actually reflects the way people think. The Chinese and Westerners are different in symbolizing. In the *APEC summit* held in Shanghai in 2001, with

the closing day coming, Presidents from all over the world were invited to wear the traditional Chinese Tang suits for a photo together. The Tang suits were ready, and then the Presidents were asked to choose the colors of the suits by themselves. However, it was quite interesting to find that most of the Easterners chose red while most of the Westerners preferred blue. Red means luck and fortune in most Eastern cultures but stands for blood, revolution in the West. Blue means something noble or significant in the Western culture.

Differences in attitudes toward women. The Chinese and Westerners are different in attitudes toward women. “Ladies First” has a long history in the West. But in China there is no such a tradition. For example, a respectable elderly gentleman is having dinner with a young lady in a restaurant. In China, it is normally the elderly man who gets the service first, because hierarchy is *prevalent* in China and it is the elderly or the superior who is supposed to get special respect. But in the West, it is likely the young lady who is first served because of their “Ladies First” tradition.

prevalent a.
普遍的, 流行的

With changes in women's roles, there have been changes in customs. Women used to expect that men would open doors for them, but now they open their own. When a man invited a woman out for dinner in the past, he was expected to pay for everything. Today, a woman might share the bill when she goes out with a man. She can be the one who calls a man up and asks him out. She may even pay for the entire date.

1.2 Comparison Between Chinese Values and American Values 中美价值观比较

It is true that Chinese people and American people enjoy different cultures, which influence their life, customs and behaviors, beliefs and values, aesthetic and interest. The following is going to provide us with a better understanding of the differences between Chinese and American cultures.

Differences in friendship. Friendship means a lot to the Chinese. There is a Chinese saying: “One more friend, one more road.” Whenever they have made friends with someone, they will try all their efforts to make the friendship as close as

possible, and keep him as a lifelong friend. Lifelong friends feel deeply obligated to give each other whatever help might be required. Americans, however, change their friends and acquaintances over time and have limited mutual obligation. They will try to help their friends in difficulty with some advice but avoid making a decision for them.

Differences in time consciousness. The Chinese relatively pay more attention to the past. They cherish old classmates and friends. If they happen to visit a city, they will squeeze their time to have a get-together with friends there. Americans usually are less interested in the past. Instead, they focus on what is going on for the time being. They believe that life is like a fast moving train. If you miss it, you are out of date.

In 2001, I attended a TESOL conference in St. Louis. I planned to stay in the States for a few more days after the seven-day conference. Before I started my traveling, I called or e-mailed some of my old friends in the cities I had planned to visit. To my great delight, they all agreed to take me anytime I arrived. I spent one day in Chicago, three days in Los Angeles, and five days in Seattle. All of the old friends went to the airports to meet me in their cars and showed me around the cities during my stay. My traveling, my food and my overnight accommodations were all free.

Differences in conception of the self. The Chinese are collectivist, placing high value on group cooperation and individual modesty. So many Chinese are used to beginning their English conversation with "My English is poor." Americans are individualist, placing high value on self-reliance and freedom from externally imposed constraints. At the beginning of a presentation, the American will say: "I believe that my presentation will be of great value to anybody present."

A Chinese visited an American friend in the United States. It was 11:00 p.m. He thought it was time for him to leave. Then he said, "Mr. Steve, it is too late, you should have a rest. I bother you so much; I am sorry for that." The American friend angrily answered, "No, come on. I don't think you are bothering me. We had a good talk. Listen, if you want to go, it is because you want to go, not because of me."

Differences in approaches to tasks. The Chinese are relationship-oriented. They often maintain a harmonious relationship with some people, which has priority over accomplishing tasks. They don't care as much about schedules or timelines. Meetings may run long. Americans are task-oriented. They focus on a scheduled timeline and would like to do one thing at a time. In their opinion, relationships are less important than getting the work done.

Differences in social relationships. The Chinese have formal and hierarchical social relationships. They feel uncomfortable while they are chatting with someone who holds a higher position. Americans have informal and *egalitarian* social relationships. People tend to minimize the importance of social rankings.

2. Cultural Dimensions 文化维度

For those who work in international business, it is sometimes amazing how different people in other cultures behave. We tend to have a human instinct that all people are the same—but they are not. Therefore, if we go to another country and make decisions based on how we operate in our own country, the chances are we will make some poor decisions. Geert Hofstede's research gives us insights into other cultures so that we can be more effective when interacting with people in other countries.

Geert Hofstede is an international authority on intercultural social psychology. He analyzed a large database of employee values scores collected by IBM between 1967 and 1973 covering more than 70 countries, from which he first used the 40 largest only, and afterward extended the analysis to 50 countries and 3 regions. In the editions of his work since 2001, scores are listed for 74 countries and regions, partly based on *replications* and extensions of the IBM study on different international populations. Subsequent studies *validating* the earlier results have included 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. From the initial results, and later additions, Hofstede developed a model that identifies four primary dimensions for differentiating cultures: power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity and uncertainty

egalitarian	a.
平等的	
replication	n.
复制	
validate	v.
使有效	
elite	n.
精英	

avoidance. The value survey model has been widely discussed in international management literature and it appears to provide information of relevance from a managerial point of view.

2.1 Power Distance 权力距离

Power distance means the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country, expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. It just shows how much subordinates can consent or dissent with their superiors. It is the distance between the superior and the subordinate. Among most **oriental** corporate cultures, there is hierarchism, greater centralization, sometimes called “poser-oriented culture,” due to historical reasons. The superiors make the decision and are entitled more privileges. Their decisions and supervision are always positively evaluated by subordinates. In this situation, it does not matter if subordinates have a disagreement with their managers, especially in China, Japan and India.

In China and some other Asian countries, power distance is also associated with “the family culture” (Trompenaars, 1993). “Family culture at their least effective drains the energies and loyalties of subordinates to **buoy up** the leader.” (Trompenaars, 1993) In this kind of corporate culture the manager is like the “caring father” who knows better than his subordinates what should be done and what is suitable for them. The subordinates always esteem the managers because of their position and experience. There are both positive and negative aspects in the family cultures. It is just an easy managing system. But sometimes it is hard to get young creative employees work well because of the hierarchy.

oriental a. 东方的 buoy up 鼓舞 ridicule n. 嘲笑，揶揄

2.1.1 Small Power Distance Culture 小权力距离文化

Small power distance culture values horizontal relationships where everyone is on a level playing field. Status symbols and privilege invite **ridicule**, and those who would set themselves above others are cut down to size. While a boss has power and authority, he must be careful to respect workers and share the benefits of that power whenever possible. Everyone is expected to have a voice in decision-making and each

person or group has rights and feels free to complain when those rights are violated. There is a strong sense of what is fair, and when workers sense they are being treated unfairly, they feel free to complain and negotiate to improve their situation.

Hofstede found countries, like Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Denmark, and Finland enjoy small power distance culture. In these cultures, superiors and subordinates feel relatively comfortable with shared decision-making and decentralization. Employees are not expected to rigidly **conform** to authority, and people have a certain **latitude** for disagreement.

Small power distance countries hold that inequality in society should be minimized. People in these cultures believe that they should have access to power. To them, a hierarchy is an inequality of roles established for convenience. Subordinates consider superiors to be the same kind of people as they are, and superiors perceive their subordinates the same way. People in power, such as supervisors or government officials, often interact with their **constituents** and try to look less powerful than they really are. In small power distance societies the emphasis is on impersonal “truth” that can be obtained by any competent person. Small power distance culture is characterized by the following:

<p>conform v. 遵照, 遵守 latitude n. (行动、言论等的) 自由 constituent n. 委托人 prerequisite n. 先决条件</p>

- Americans assume that informality is a **prerequisite** for sincerity. They become uncomfortable when faced with the type of ceremony, tradition, and formalized social rules found more widely throughout Europe. Moreover, they are likely to feel uneasy when others treat them with too much deference.
- Delighted with informal behavior. Americans generally take considerable delight when those in particularly high or powerful positions behave just like the everyday person on the street.
- Authority figures, such as priests, professors, and supervisors, are often called by their first name rather than their official title and last name.
- In many egalitarian societies, informality (for example, deemphasizing status differences) is reflected in the structure of everyday language. The distinction between the formal and informal *you*, found in such languages as German and French, requires speakers to make linguistic choices that reflect the social

status of the people being addressed. In contrast, English language makes no such distinctions.

- Authority figures, such as supervisors or college professors, are allowed to admit that they don't have all the answers. Also, they will not lose respect because of mistakes.

2.1.2 Large Power Distance Culture 大权力距离文化

Large power distance culture emphasizes the unequal distribution of power in institutions and organizations in a hierarchy of privilege. A few people have a lot of power; the vast majority has little. Power is experienced as a personal attribute, something to be felt rather than enforced. Members of large power distance culture will usually be quiet, soft-spoken, and polite, whether they are powerful individuals or not. And if they feel that you are being unfriendly or uncaring, they will be silent. People of large power distance culture will show their trust in you by asking for help and direction and will show their respect by remaining formal and lowering their eyes.

Hofstede found that countries, such as China, Malaysia, South Korea, Mexico, Indonesia, Pakistan, India, and Japan, enjoy large power distance culture. In these societies, people respect formal hierarchical authority, and employees seldom violate chains of command or openly question decisions by their superiors.

In large power distance societies, communication is traditionally superior-centered. The superiors initiate all communication, outline the path of progress, and the subordinates should follow. The superiors are never publicly criticized or *contradicted*. The emphasis is on the personal "wisdom." Large power distance culture is characterized by the following:

contradict v. 否定, 反驳

- High-status people are expected to maintain their high-status and prestige at all costs. Don't expect to see Queen Elizabeth wearing Levi's in public.
- Languages are structured in such a way as to ensure that one's relative status is reflected in the very construction of a sentence.
- High-status people are expected to be addressed by their formal title followed by the last name ("Dr. Wang") rather than the first name ("Jianguo").

- Children defer to their parents, the younger defer to the older, women defer to men, employees defer to employers, students defer to teachers, sellers defer to buyers, and everyone defers to the head of state.
- Highly respected authorities are reluctant to admit they don't know certain things or they've made a mistake.

2.2 Individualism Versus Collectivism

个人主义和集体主义

Hofstede defines the second dimension as “individualism *pertains* to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: Everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism as its opposite *pertains* to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, *cohesive* groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.” (Hofstede, 1994)

pertain v.
属于, 关于
cohesive a.
凝聚性的
salient a.
显著的, 突出的

Individualists prefer self-sufficiency while collectivists give more recognition to their interdependent roles and obligations to the group. Studies of social categorization and intergroup relations show that people use *salient* characteristics as the basis to “group” others. The group that the categorizer feels similar to and identifies with is called the “ingroup” and other groups are called “outgroups.” People from all types of culture categorize others in this way, but the importance of the distinction is much greater for people from collectivist cultures. Whereas individualistic societies are loosely knit, collectivist societies are composed of tight networks in which people operate as members of ingroups and outgroups, expect to look after other members of their ingroup in need and expect their group to look after them.

2.2.1 Individualistic Culture 个人主义文化

Individualistic culture believes that people are supposed to take care of themselves and remain emotionally independent of groups, organizations, or other collectives. Self-emphasis is important, even in budding friendships. Individuals can do whatever they want, and their “freedom” and their “rights” are of necessary

values. They build contracts to protect their rights from others and to protect their dignity. Their high level of self-respect does not keep them from enjoying a good time and an occasional adventure, even if they might feel guilty later. When they are with friends, they are very open, but they can be very critical toward enemies. Individuals like to debate but will withdraw and become defensive with somebody they don't trust. When they are interested, they can be loud with lots of questions but they are likely to look away when they get bored. They judge others by how much they need them. Individuals are major units of social perception.

The United States, Australia, and Great Britain are societies high in individualism, where individual achievement is highly valued and clearly a mark of success. The characteristics of individual-oriented societies can be clearly shown in the following table:

Characteristics of Individualistic Culture

1. Others' behavior is explained by personal traits.
2. One's success is attributed to his own ability.
3. Self is defined as individual entity.
4. One knows more about self than others.
5. Achievement is made for one's own sake.
6. Personal goals are over group goals.
7. Self-assuredness is valued.
8. Autonomy and independence is valued.
9. Dependence on others is avoided.
10. One bears casual connections to many groups.
11. Task completion is important.
12. One has few obligations to others.
13. **Confrontation** is acceptable.

Individualism, as described above, is the attitude of valuing ourselves as separate individuals with responsibility for our own destinies and our own actions. **Proponents** of individualism believe that self-interest is an appropriate goal. In American

confrontation *n.*
对抗
proponent *n.*
拥护者

culture for example, the individual-collective dimension displays in the following aspects:

- The ideal of the individual is deeply rooted in the social, political, and economic institutions. The individual is the source of moral power, totally competent to assess the effects of his own actions, and is expected to be responsible for those actions.
- Family ties tend to be relatively unimportant. Family remains the primary group to which most Americans have their strongest loyalties. Nevertheless, when compared with other cultures, Americans divide their time and emotional energy between family and a wider variety of social groups, including church, school, labor union, workplace, and a host of voluntary organizations.
- The physical *layout* of the typical American house, designed to maximize individual space, clearly reflects the emphasis placed on individualism and personal privacy. There are doors on bathrooms and bedrooms, parents are expected to *acknowledge* the private space and possessions of their children's rooms, and children are usually restricted in their use of the space that is considered the *domain* of the parents.
- The concept of individualism is instilled from an early age in the United States by constant encouragement of children to become self-sufficient. Children are taught to make their own decisions, clarify their own values, form their own opinions, and solve their own problems. Children are encouraged to search out answers for themselves, rather than rely on teachers or adults.

layout *n.*
安排, 设计
acknowledge *v.*
承认
domain *n.*
领地, 领域

In the United States, emphasis on individuality can be seen in Americans' love for the automobile. Most Americans express their individuality by becoming fully mobile, capable of traveling in any direction at any time, rather than being dependent on the schedules and routes of public transportation facilities.

"Everybody takes care of his own business and the cows will be well guarded" is a Swiss saying. People do not like to get involved in others' affairs; problems and things are usually kept within the family. A common saying is "One washes his dirty laundry in the family." People will assume that if you are in trouble, it must be because you have done something wrong and until you prove

the contrary, they will not interfere. Not that their hearts are made of stone, but remember that this is a people who had nothing but mountains and poverty 100 years ago, so they just do not blindly expect everything to come from the state or from others. Heaven helps those who help themselves.

2.2.2 Collectivist Culture 集体主义文化

Collectivist culture emphasizes the ingroup, such as the organization or the extended family. Collectivists value harmony and avoid direct confrontation. They emphasize building relationships with others through *rituals* and politeness, and task accomplishment becomes an indirect or secondary goal. Each individual represents the group to which he belongs, so if an individual is hurt, the group is hurt; if an individual is helped, the group is helped; if an individual is shamed, the group is shamed. The communication style is typically indirect.

ritual <i>n.</i>
礼节
endorse <i>v.</i>
认可
consensus <i>n.</i>
一致
ostracism <i>n.</i>
放逐, 排斥

Asian, Latin American, and West African nations are societies low in individualism but high in collectivism. In these societies, people would likely *endorse* group harmony, social order, conformity in group relationships, deference to group norms, family relationships, loyalty, and *consensus* of viewpoints. The characteristics of collective-oriented societies can be well illustrated in the following table:

Characteristics of Collectivist Culture

1. Groups are major units of social perception.
2. Others' behavior is explained by group norms.
3. Success is attributed to the help of group.
4. Self is defined in terms of group.
5. One knows more about others than self.
6. Achievement is for the benefit of group.
7. Ingroup goal is over personal goal.
8. Modesty is valued.
9. Interdependence is valued.
10. *Ostracism* is feared.

11. One has strong connections to a few groups.
12. One has many obligations to others.
13. Harmony is expected.
14. Relations are important.

Collectivism emphasizes common interests, conformity, cooperation, and interdependence. It regards a group of individuals as having a single identity similar to a person. It has purposes, and it acts to achieve goals. The individual-collective dimension displays in the collective-oriented societies in the following aspects:

- People tend to identify or define themselves primarily as members of a group rather than as individuals. When asked “Who are you?”, most Americans would give their name, profession, and where they live, probably in that order. When asked the same question in China, for example, one is likely to give his name only, including his given name and surname, no more.
- Property, such as land or *livestock*, is controlled by the large group rather than being individually owned. Whereas Americans own property (to the extent that they have total control over it), people in collectivist societies have only limited rights to property that is ultimately controlled by the large group.
- Basic life choices, such as who you will marry or what profession you will follow, are not made exclusively, or even primarily, by the individual. For example, marriages in some cultures are arranged by parents and other influential members of the two family groups involved.
- Collectivist societies have a strong sense of responsibility to the group (e.g. country, family, company). In China and Japan, for example, if an individual does not make his best effort, it is seen as letting down the entire group. In other words, both success and failure are kind of “team affairs” in China and Japan.
- There is considerably less privacy. Children, even in homes with ample rooms, frequently share the same sleeping areas with their parents and *siblings* until well into *adolescence*. Clearly, they do not share the American value that children are disadvantaged if they have to share a room with other siblings.

livestock <i>n.</i> 家畜
sibling <i>n.</i> 兄弟姐妹
adolescence <i>n.</i> 青春期

2.3 Masculinity Versus Femininity 男性气质和女性气质

Masculinity focuses on the degree the society reinforces, or does not reinforce, the traditional masculine work role model of male achievement, control, and power. In high masculinity cultures, males dominate a significant portion of the society and power structure, with females being controlled by male domination. A country of low masculinity culture has a low level of differentiation and discrimination between genders. In these cultures, females are treated equally as males in all aspects of the society.

2.3.1 Masculine Culture 男性气质文化

In high masculinity societies, people tend to believe that matters of material comfort, social privilege, access to power and influence, status and prestige, and ability to consume are related to ability and that with enough opportunity any individual who wants these benefits of society can have them. High masculinity societies tend to reward financial and material achievements with preferential social prestige and status, and to attribute strong character and spiritual values to such high achievers.

In societies labeled masculine, such as Japan, Austria, Mexico, and Argentina, men are expected to hold the primary jobs and women are expected to remain at home and raise families. Male *offspring* are *groomed* for work roles and higher education, while female children are *relegated* to supporting roles. More detailed characteristics are given in the following table:

offspring *n.*
子孙, 后代
groom *v.*
为特定身份或目的
而准备
relegate *v.*
使降级
segregation *n.*
分开, 隔离
mandatory *a.*
命令的

Characteristics of Masculine Culture

1. There is a high occupational *segregation* by gender.
2. Gender inequality is common.
3. Careers for males are *mandatory*.
4. Few women are in powerful jobs.
5. Accomplishments are highly valued.
6. High level of job-related stress.
7. People are highly competitive.

8. People are task-oriented.
9. The art of combat is valued.
10. The bigger, the better.
11. Family and work life are separated.
12. One lives to work.

In masculine culture, power means the right to make others do what you want them to do. Masculine people like to show off by being the biggest, best, and fastest. They like to be noticed when they come into the room. They like to dominate discussions and to compete, especially when there is a chance of winning. The males in particular like sports, often **roughhouse** with other males, and love to use sports metaphors. People in masculine culture tend to argue and criticize others, even when they do not intend to be **antagonistic**. They look up to heroes and look down on losers.

roughhouse *v.*
玩闹，打闹
antagonistic *a.*
对抗的，敌对的
legislator *n.*
立法委员，国会议员
contraceptive *n.*
避孕药，避孕用具

The following are some illustrations of masculine culture.

- There is a great deal of gender-role segregation; women are expected to do certain jobs and men do others.
- Fewer women will be in high government positions. To illustrate, in Morocco less than one percent of national **legislators** are women compared with 43 percent in Sweden.
- Adult women in certain African and Middle Eastern countries cannot receive a driver's license, bank account, passport, or **contraceptives** without the explicit permission of either their fathers or their husbands.
- People (particularly men) tend to be defined in terms of what they do for a living, i.e., one's occupation defines the individual. Consequently, when people retire, they have great problems of adjustment because "who they are" has been taken from them.
- Competition is considered a good thing, even though sometimes the competition can be so fierce that it becomes aggressive and unethical.
- People take relatively few vacations or allow themselves little leisure time with

friends and family. When vacations are taken, the phone and laptop are often taken along.

- Teachers reward and praise their best students because academic achievement is highly valued. Male students in particular are highly competitive, assertive, and task-oriented.
- The priorities of family and work life are kept as separate as possible. Corporations generally disregard the well-being of employees' families in their strategic planning. For example, employees are transferred without consideration of the disruptive effects on children's education or the workers' obligations to aging parents.
- People (particularly men) display high levels of stress and frequent incidence of high blood pressure and heart disease. Ross Buck (1984) found that men may be generally less healthy physically because they cannot express their emotions as openly as women. This internalizing of emotions, both negative and positive ones, leads to higher blood pressure and higher levels of stress.
- People place a high value on growth for its own sake. Increases in market share take precedence over quality of life, social programs, or environmental protection.
- A strong emphasis is placed on achievement, with the greatest respect given to those who are the high achievers.

2.3.2 Feminine Culture 女性气质文化

In feminine societies, men and women are considered socially equal. Homosexuality is not a threat. Love and tenderness are for men and women alike. Intimate relationships without sex are allowed. Children need love, and parents spend much time with them.

So-called feminine societies include all the *Scandinavian* countries, Portugal, Spain, and several *Pan-American* nations. In these cultures, women are more prominent in management and professional fields. Organizations accommodate women's needs for *maternity leave* and childcare, and working environments tend to be less assertive and stressful. We can see more information about the feminine culture in the following table:

<p>Scandinavian a. 斯堪的纳维亚的 Pan-American a. 泛美的, 全美洲的 maternity leave 产假</p>

Characteristics of Feminine Culture

1. There is little occupational segregation by gender.
2. There is relative gender equality.
3. Careers for males are optional.
4. More women are in powerful jobs.
5. Nurturing is highly valued.
6. The level of job-related stress is low.
7. People are highly cooperative.
8. People are relationship-oriented.
9. The art of compromise is valued.
10. The smaller, the more beautiful.
11. Concern for family issues is present in workplace.
12. One works to live.

Feminine culture expects both males and females to be cooperative and nurturing in their relationships. They are supposed to be sensitive to the needs of the disadvantaged and are quick to offer help to those who need it. Modestly, they **downplay** their accomplishments or power in society and depend on soft negotiation and compromise rather than forcing a conclusion by confrontation. To say how good you are is considered **bragging** and very unacceptable. Small talk is a favorite pastime. Femininity considers the feelings of others important to a relationship.

downplay v.
贬低, 轻视
brag v.
吹牛, 自吹
accommodating a.
随和的

Some illustrations of feminine culture are listed below.

- Employers are likely to provide parental-leave programs for both mothers and fathers.
- People prefer shorter working hours to higher salaries. (Hofstede, 1998)
- Men and women are more likely to study the same subjects in college than are men and women in tough societies. (Hofstede, 1998)
- Students are not praised for their accomplishments because cooperation with others is considered the most important goal. Male students strive to be **accommodating** and work to develop a sense of community and solidarity

with their classmates. Friendships, obligations, and loyalty are all more highly valued than academic brilliance or accomplishments. Courses are selected because of their inherent interest rather than because they might lead to a better job.

- There is a preference for smaller companies over increasingly larger companies. (Hofstede, 1998)
- People in general and managers in particular acknowledge personal success and accomplishments much less frequently than in masculine culture. It is generally thought that noteworthy achievements in an organization are seldom due to the efforts of a single person. People tend to play down their own strengths and assets while praising those of others.
- Family issues are taken into consideration as part of the corporate decision-making process. Thus, the sanctity of family vacations is preserved at all costs, maternity and paternity leaves are generous, and persons who work abroad are selected, at least in part, with an eye toward family responsibilities. In short, the role of the employee as a family member is more clearly recognized and respected.
- Tender societies spend much more money per capita on foreign aid than do tough societies. (Hofstede, 1998)
- Governments lean more toward a welfare state (helping the needy). Progressive income taxes are used to support a wide range of social welfare programs.
- Dominant religions stress complementarities of the sexes, not male dominance.

2.4 Uncertainty Avoidance 不确定性规避

According to Hofstede (1998), uncertainty avoidance refers to the lack of tolerance for **ambiguity** and uncertainty and the need for formal rules and high-level organizational structure. The unpredictability of the future, and the resultant anxiety that this produces, is part of the human experience. Nevertheless, cultures differ in the degree to which they can tolerate ambiguity, cope with uncertainties, and adapt to the future. Hofstede's uncertainty-avoidance measure indicates the extent to which a culture conditions its members to feel either comfortable or uncomfortable in unstructured, ambiguous, and

ambiguity *n.*
含糊. 不明确

unpredictable situations.

In cultures with high uncertainty avoidance, emotions are displayed in the way that everything different is dangerous. They resist changes and worry about future. They are open for new things and changes. They don't have feelings of uncertainty about future.

2.4.1 Low Uncertainty Avoidance 低度不确定性规避

Cultures of low uncertainty avoidance have less concern about ambiguity and uncertainty and have more tolerance for a variety of opinions. This is reflected in a society that is less rule-oriented, more readily accepts change, and takes more and greater risks.

Societies with *dualistic* social philosophies or multidimensional religions place little value on any absolute truth. Instead, these “uncertainty-accepting” cultures practice religious and social relativism, and they tolerate ambiguity relatively easily within their organizations. The United States, Canada, Great Britain, and several African nations are examples of such societies. Company practices in these societies tend toward an informal model relative to societies with highly structured environments, and they associate comparatively little ceremony with meetings and company rituals. The critical components of low uncertainty avoidance dimension can be depicted in the following way:

dualistic a.

二元的

initiative n.

主动

Characteristics of Culture of Low Uncertainty Avoidance

1. There is a strong willingness to live day by day.
2. There is less emotional resistance to change.
3. People are more risk-taking.
4. There is a willingness to change the employer.
5. One hopes for success.
6. One shows little loyalty to one's employer.
7. Sometimes rules can be broken.
8. Conflict is natural and to be expected.
9. *Initiative* of subordinates is encouraged.
10. Differences are tolerated.

11. People have low level of stress.
12. There is little emotional expression.
13. *Superordinates* may say "I don't know."
14. Less formal organizational structures are desired.

People of low uncertainty avoidance take life easy. They tolerate and even celebrate ambiguous situations; the more unfamiliar the challenge, the greater the adventure. There is a tendency to avoid setting rigid rules and laws but to resolve any conflict that might arise. There is an easygoing attitude toward structure and schedules along with a tendency to "*wing it*," to work out solutions to problems *on the spur of the moment*. They tolerate very different behaviors and avoid conformity whenever possible. They believe in common sense and feel that formal *protocols* are for stupid people. Characteristics of business culture of low uncertain avoidance can be further interpreted in the following.

- Employees are willing to have their pension funds invested in the stock market rather than a low interest-bearing account.
- Employees are more willing to experiment with new techniques and procedures.
- Employees are not as threatened by workers from other countries as are those from high-uncertainty avoidance cultures.
- Employees are better able to function in meetings with a loose agenda.
- Employees have relatively little loyalty to employers because they do not depend on the company for security.
- Employees have a preference for a broad set of guidelines rather than a formal set of rules and regulations.
- Bosses, professors, and other authority figures are not reluctant to say "I don't know the answer to that question." But, they will take the initiative to find out the answer.
- Employees are more likely to function effectively in work teams.
- Leaders are more likely to be innovative, creative, and approachable.

superordinate *n.*
等级高的人
wing it
即兴表演
on the spur of the moment
一时冲动地, 立刻
protocol *n.*
礼节

2.4.2 High Uncertainty Avoidance 高度不确定性规避

Cultures of high uncertainty avoidance have a low tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. This creates a rule-oriented society that *institutes* laws, rules, regulations, and controls in order to reduce the amount of uncertainty.

institute v. 制定

To prevent uncertainty societies set up laws and rules. In companies, duties and rights (internal and external) are controlled by authorities. Some cultures tend to have strong uncertainty avoidance like France. In France many strict regulations are used and tasks are heavily centralized in companies. There will be a much higher demand for details when creating a contract. This is to avoid any circumstances which could cause any kind of uncertainty. Organizing is therefore rather inflexible concerning changes which occur in business life. The critical components of high uncertainty avoidance dimension can be depicted in the following.

Characteristics of Culture of High Uncertainty Avoidance

1. There is greater anxiety about the future.
2. There is more emotional resistance to change.
3. People are less risk taking.
4. There is a tendency to stay with the same employer.
5. Failure is feared.
6. One shows considerable loyalty to employers.
7. Rules should not be broken.
8. Conflict is undesirable.
9. Initiative of subordinates is discouraged.
10. Differences are considered dangerous.
11. People have high level of stress.
12. Emotional expression is acceptable.
13. Superordinates have all the answers.
14. Formal organizational structures are desired.

People of high uncertainty avoidance have no tolerance for ambiguity. They like a safe and predictable world. When they are friendly, they will respond in details, being formal and unambiguous. When they are unfriendly, they become vague in

their responses and seek to end the interaction. They trust you; they will debate and argue heatedly from either side of a **polarized** right/wrong, good/bad position, seeking to find the truth through argument. If they distrust you, they will be openly critical and challenge your **credentials** directly. They show interest by being task-oriented and by asking many questions. The following will help you understand high uncertainty avoidance business culture more.

polarize v.
使两极分化
credential n.
资格

- Employees would prefer to keep their pension funds in a safe low interest-bearing account (or under the mattress).
- Employees are not likely to try anything new because its results are highly unpredictable.
- Employees are likely to resist the hiring of immigrants or others seen to be “outsiders.”
- People feel much more secure with a highly structured set of policies, rules, and regulations. Moreover, they have little tolerance for bending the rules under any circumstances.
- Employees have a generally high level of loyalty to their employers and expect the same in return. For this reason, relatively little job turnover will occur.
- Fewer members of the workforce are willing to travel abroad for overseas assignments.
- Employees prefer a manager who they perceive to be competent and whose authority cannot be questioned.
- Employees are considerably less comfortable working in problem-solving teams.
- Leaders are not likely to be innovative or approachable.

Summary

Cultural Values

1. A value system represents what is expected or hoped for, required or forbidden. It is the system of criteria by which conduct is judged and sanctions applied.
2. Cultural differences between the West and the East can be highlighted in cognition, relationship with nature, and the concept of truth.

3. The Chinese are collectivist, placing high value on group cooperation and individual modesty. Americans are individualist, placing high value on self-reliance and freedom from externally imposed constraints.

Cultural Dimensions

1. Power distance is the degree to which power differences are expected and accepted by society.
2. Individualism is the degree to which individual decision-making and action is accepted and encouraged by the society.
3. Masculinity is the degree to which traditional male values are important to a society.
4. Uncertainty avoidance is the degree to which the society is willing to accept and deal with ambiguity and uncertainty.

Exercises

I. Matching the terms with their definitions.

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| A. power distance | B. values | C. uncertainty avoidance |
| D. masculinity | E. individualism | |

1. () A learned organization of rules for making choices and for resolving conflicts.
2. () The degree to which power differences are expected and accepted by society.
3. () The degree to which individual decision-making and action is accepted and encouraged by the society.
4. () The degree to which traditional male values are important to a society.
5. () The degree to which the society is willing to accept and deal with ambiguity and uncertainty.

II. Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F).

1. () Where power distance is large, the society believes that there should be a well-defined order of inequality in which everyone has a rightful place.