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Project 1: Culture and Language Profile Assignment

Saudi Arabia is a country that has gone through a long age of change and through three stages before reaching a time and period where civil war became something of the past. However, this experience that the country has gained gave it a very unique and noticeable presence that can be expressed through the Hofstede cultural dimensions.

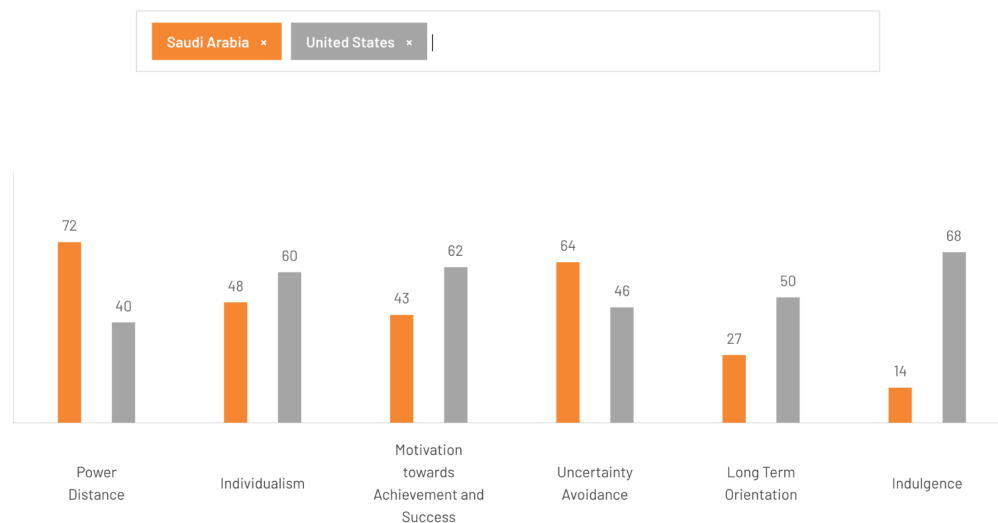


Figure 1: Hofstede Cultural Dimension Values

1. Power Distance: In Saudi Arabia, we have a large power distance with a score of 72 based upon the Hofstede dimensions and I agree. We see this often whether it be between the

royal family and citizens or between youth and their elders but how I see it, it's something we should be proud of. First of all this power distance gives you a feeling of reliance on those that are higher which from my personal experience builds a better bond between government and citizens.

For example during lockdown when people didn't know the real danger of the illness it was none other than the Saudi government that paid for all flights of Saudi citizens back to the country to stay close to their families, and without that large power distance, I just don't think that could be possible or a reasonable expectation.

2. Individualism: In the past, it was common practice for tribes to stay together and think more like a collective group and that shows in current families with a score of 48 where we try to help each other and keep our bonds very close, but it doesn't mean that people still don't look for the best for themselves. Now many students are pursuing educations outside the country me included.

3. Motivation towards achievement and Success: Here is where I disagree with the Hofstede measurement. While we have a score of 43 according to Hofstede, Saudis come from a long line of Arabic descendants that in the past helped bring about some of the most influential sciences in the world, and while we don't hold the same status I feel that more and more Saudis are looking for a better life.

My country has begun many new projects such as being the host of the 2034 World Cup and a similar desire of growth is being found in young of my generation.

4. Uncertainty Avoidance: Saudis from my family many times over and over avoid any slight risk even when in most cases it's most likely to help them. I feel that the idea of risk has been created into an idea that it's bad or should be avoided at all costs when I feel that it's more a part of life that we should learn to embrace to a healthy degree. A score of 64 is very high however, once again my generation is changing this notion by taking risks in learning abroad and trying to get the best chance they can get at success.

5. Long-Term Orientation: Saudis like to live day to day not worrying about the future and try to enjoy their current time. While I try to disagree when I think it's true. I wouldn't say it's an indulgent society but for example, the idea of long-term saving for a car or house doesn't please the majority and would prefer to get a loan and get the house faster giving us a score of 27. I believe living in a country that allows for free college education and less worries about retirement makes people care much less about saving.

6. Indulgence: As a Muslim in an Islamic country it comes as no surprise that indulgence is at a very low level of 14 in Saudi , but I believe that the definition of indulgence is wrong as a measure. Back home every month I go to 3-4 weddings and almost every weekend I'm with one of my cousins until 2 am watching football and going to different events around the city. In general, I felt like I indulged in lots of dopamine-rich activities without the need or want of things that could be considered indulgent like alcohol or relationships.

1. Family

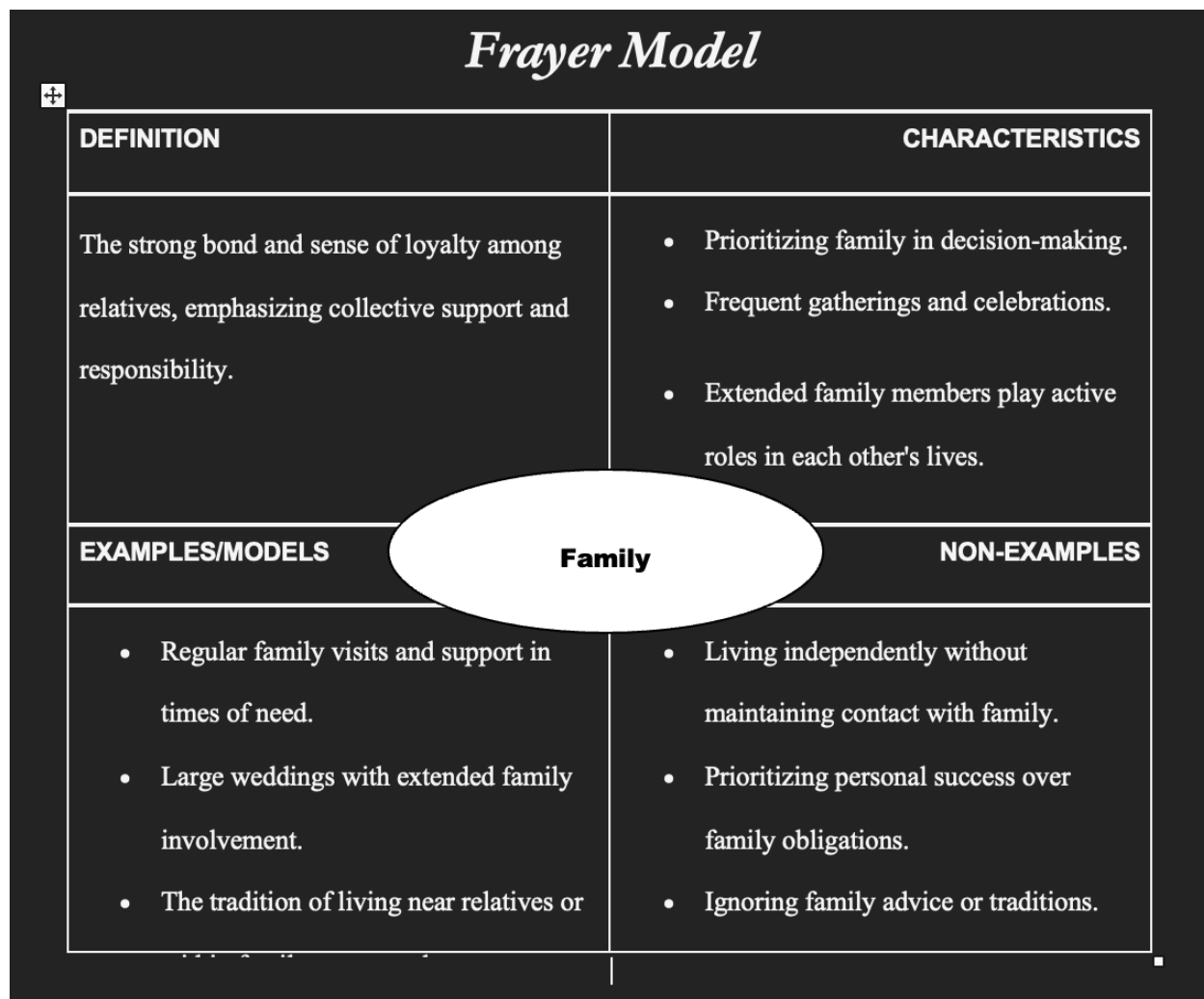


Figure 2: Frayer model of Family

Family is a fundamental aspect of Saudi culture, deeply rooted in traditions and social structures. The collectivist mindset that was historically part of tribal life still influences modern Saudi families, where extended family members play an active role in each other's lives. It plays a pivotal role in my daily life knowing no matter what problem I may be involved in my family always has my back and the reverse is also true.

Once when I was a kid I was walking around at night in the neighborhood and a group of older kids showed up. I was scared and didn't really know what to do, yet my cousins who were just around the corner immediately lept in action defending me when we barely met each other the morning of that day. That is because of our blood tie and the natural urge to help those like you.

I came to this conclusion by understanding what I think of when I say the word “Saudi Arabia”. Furthermore, I asked my family and friends what they think and the thing the most answered was family.



الدم لا يصير ماء - “Blood does not turn into water.”

This idiom emphasizes the unbreakable bond of family. No matter what happens, family ties remain strong, and relatives will always support each other. It reflects that even when there may be a weak bond that bond of blood will never change and always remain.

- الأقربون أولى بالمعروف - “Those closest to you are most deserving of kindness”

This saying highlights the responsibility to prioritize family and relatives in acts of generosity and support. It aligns with Saudi values, where it is common for extended families to help each other financially and emotionally, which I believe is a helpful resource for me and many others.

2. Respect

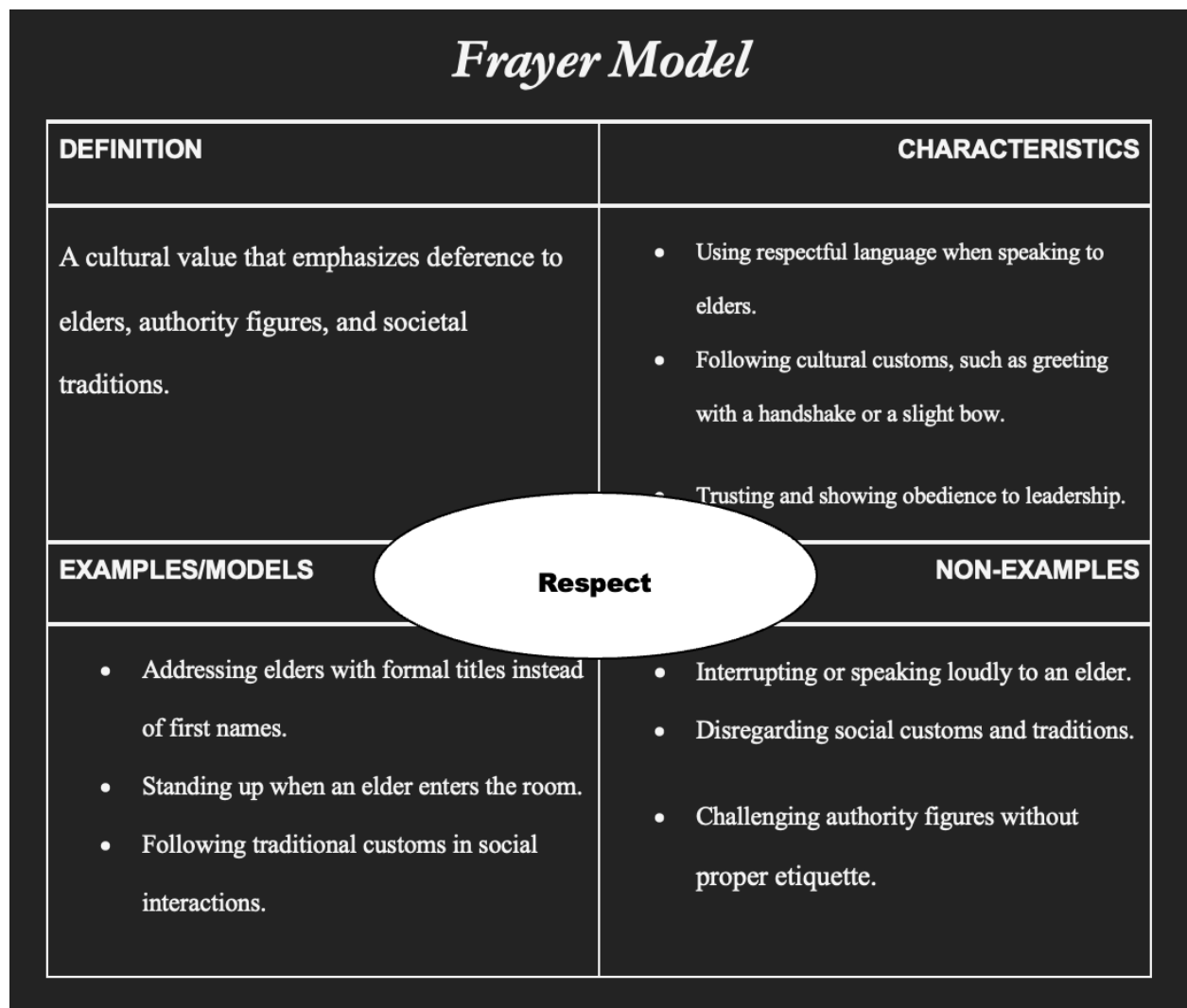


Figure 3: Frayer model of Respect

Respect is an essential value in Saudi culture, especially when it comes to relationships between elders and younger generations, as well as between citizens and authority figures. It is a well-known fact that when you respect others, people will reciprocate the same.

In my own family, we always listen to the advice of elders and consult them on important life decisions. Additionally, the way citizens show trust and reliance on the government—such as during the COVID-19 lockdown when the Saudi government took care of repatriation flights—reflects the culture of respect for leadership.

Respect is an understandable value of Saudi culture. From day to night you are showing respect in some sort of way whether it be to those in your house or to the rules of the country it is something that holds great value. Without understanding the weight of respect I believe a society cannot be at its most optimum peak and as my dad told me “Respect is the first step in getting to know someone.”

- “Whoever teaches me a letter, I become his servant” - من علمني حرفاً صرت له عبداً

This idiom emphasizes the profound respect for teachers and mentors in Saudi and Arab cultures. It reflects the tradition of valuing knowledge and showing deep gratitude and deference to those who provide guidance

- “When your son grows up, be his companion” - إذا كبر ابنك خاويه

This proverb teaches that respect is not only about hierarchy but also about understanding. As children mature, they should be treated with mutual respect and companionship rather than strict authority.

3. Intellect

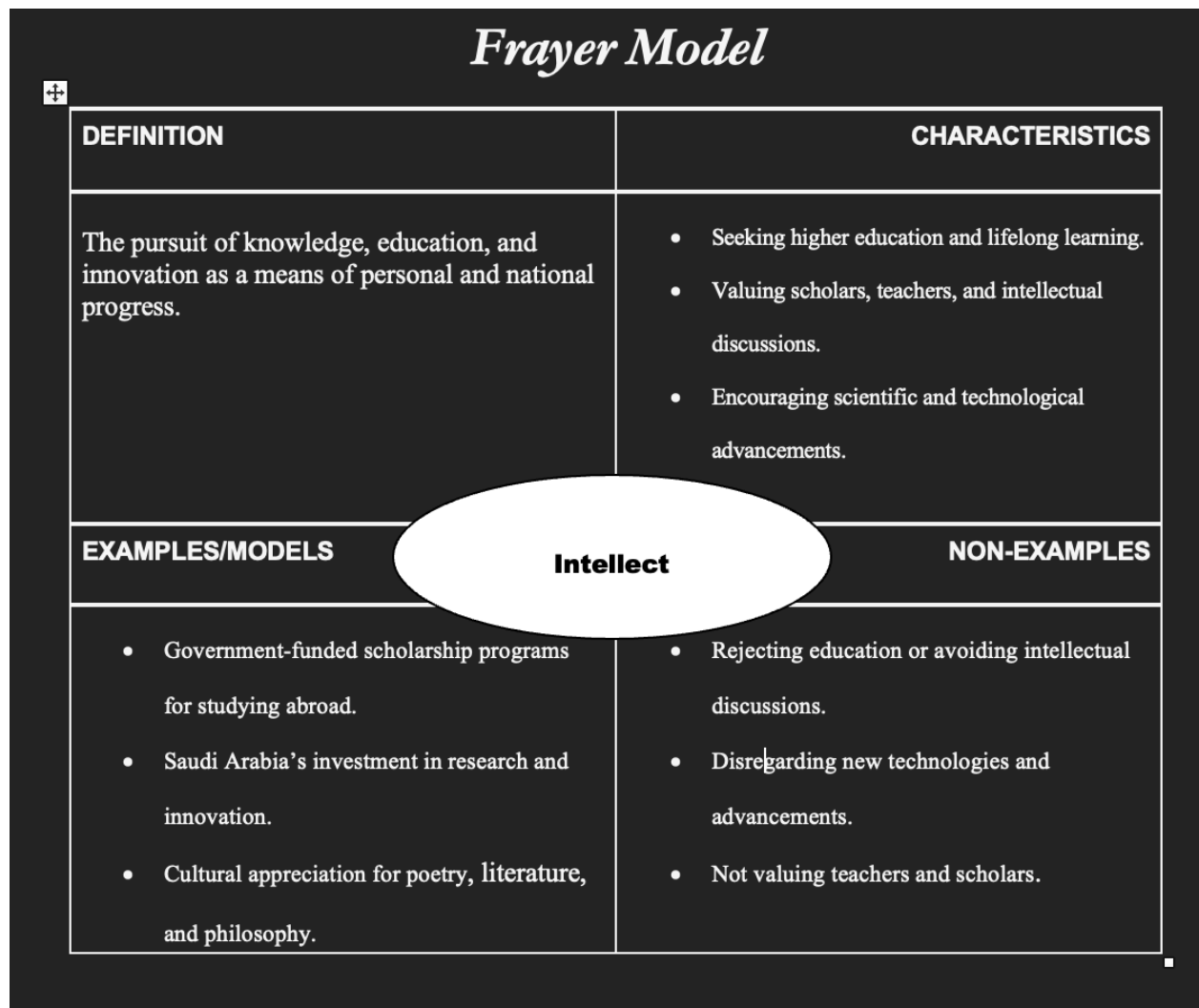


Figure 4: Frayer model of Intellect

Saudis have a long history of contributing to intellectual and scientific advancements, from Islamic scholars in the past to modern-day ambitions in education and technological progress. Even though Hofstede suggests a low motivation towards achievement, I disagree because I see a strong push for knowledge and success among Saudi youth.

A significant example is the increasing number of students, including myself, who pursue higher education abroad. The Saudi government's scholarship programs, which fund students to

study in prestigious universities worldwide, highlight the national emphasis on intellectual growth

I was able to identify this through the motivation of the country and change over the years. Throughout the past ten years, Saudi Arabia has made many changes for the better whether it be finally allowing females to drive, or increasing funding towards research at KAUST one of the biggest pursuers of research in the MENA region. Saudi Arabia without a doubt has shown that the past of intellectuals is once again upon us with the new generation of students.

- - اطلب العلم ولو في الصين - “Seek knowledge even if it's in China”

This saying encourages the pursuit of education and wisdom, no matter how far one has to go. The country of China does not give any addition to the idiom apart from the idea of distance and how far it is from home. This idiom reflects Saudi Arabia’s historical appreciation for learning. With many Saudis pursuing education abroad and the country investing in scientific progress.

- - المعرفة كنز لا يفنى - “Knowledge is a treasure that never fades”

This proverb highlights the eternal value of education and wisdom. It reflects Saudi Arabia's historical contributions to science and philosophy and the current push toward intellectual development and innovation.