

**Reflection of National Culture in Civil  
Hospital, Jalna**  
HS490: Course Project

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## Abstract

This report explores the reflection of national culture on Indian government organizations. The study draws on Hofstede's dimensions of culture to analyze the impact of cultural values on the functioning of Indian government organizations. Specifically, the report examines the dimensions of power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term vs. short-term orientation.

The findings of the study indicate that Indian government organizations reflect the cultural values of the society they operate in. Power distance is high in Indian culture, and this is reflected in the hierarchical structure of government organizations. Collectivism is also a significant cultural value in India, and this is reflected in the emphasis on teamwork and group decision-making in government organizations.

Masculinity and femininity were found to be relatively balanced in Indian culture, and this is reflected in the diverse roles of men and women in government organizations. Uncertainty avoidance was found to be high in Indian culture, and this is reflected in the preference for established rules and procedures in government organizations. Finally, long-term orientation was found to be a significant cultural value in India, and this is reflected in the emphasis on long-term planning and policy-making in government organizations.

Overall, the findings suggest that the reflection of national culture on Indian government organizations is significant and should be taken into account in organizational decision-making and management.

## Acknowledgement

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# 1 Introduction to National Culture

## 1.1 What is Culture?

Culture is collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the member of one social group from another. -Greet Hofstede

Culture refers to the shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that characterize a particular group or society. It includes every aspect of the society be it food, music, religion. The culture can be learned and is passed on generation by generation.

One common theory is that culture developed as a way for early humans to adapt to their environments and survive in challenging conditions. For example, the development of agriculture and animal domestication allowed early humans to settle in one place and build complex societies, which in turn led to the development of language, art, religion, and other cultural practices. Hence group of people having same culture can be identified with how they perceive the environment around them.

Initially, anthropologists believed that culture was a product of biological evolution, and that cultural evolution depended exclusively on physical conditions. Today's anthropologists no longer believe it is this simple. Neither culture nor biology is solely responsible for the other. They interact in very complex ways, which biological anthropologists will be studying for years to come.

The culture is characterized by few basic elements. The elements of culture are

- Symbols: anything which carries a particular meaning recognized by people of same culture
- Language: system of symbols with which people communicate
- Values: culturally-defined standards that serve as broad guidelines
- Beliefs: specific statements that people hold to be true
- Norms: rules and expectations by which a society guides the behavior of its members

Although, the culture is very big umbrella term which includes various terms social behaviour, institutions and norms, there have been attempts made to try to analyse the culture. The first attempt in modern times was done by Samuel Pufendorf, "culture", he quoted, "*refers to all the ways in which human beings overcome their original barbarism, and through artifice, become fully human.*"

## 1.2 National Culture

National culture refers to the shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that characterize a particular country or nation. It is a complex and multifaceted concept that has a significant impact on every aspect of society,

including business, education, government, and social interactions. Understanding national culture is important for individuals and organizations that operate in multiple countries or interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

National culture is affected by wide ranging factors such as :

- History
- Geography
- Religion
- Language
- Political systems

As is common knowledge, every country has a unique history. Different countries' histories are unique; some were extremely wealthy, some had limited resources, some frequently experienced natural disasters, and some had fertile territory. The morals and emblems of various nations vary. Different nations have various forms of administration. These variables, which are particular to each country, result in those nations having distinctive cultures.

### 1.3 Hofstede's Study on National Culture

First major attempt at analysing the culture of people according to their nationalities was done by Geert Hofstede. This was carried out in the 1970s. It was a significant research for understanding national culture. Many multinational corporations, who were attempting to expand into new nations as globalisation grew throughout the globe, saw the importance of this study.

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory [1] is a framework for cross-cultural communication, developed by Geert Hofstede. It shows the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members, and how these values relate to behavior, using a structure derived from factor analysis. In 1965 Hofstede founded the personnel research department of IBM Europe (which he managed until 1971). Between 1967 and 1973, he executed a large survey study regarding national values differences across the worldwide subsidiaries of this multinational corporation: he compared the answers of 117,000 IBM matched employees samples on the same attitude survey in different countries. He first focused his research on the 40 largest countries, and then extended it to 50 countries and 3 regions, "*at that time probably the largest matched-sample cross-national database available anywhere.*" The theory was one of the first quantifiable theories that could be used to explain observed differences between cultures.

Initially he proposed four dimensions along which cultural values could be analyzed:

- individualism-collectivism: degree to which people in a society are integrated into groups
- uncertainty avoidance: a society's tolerance for ambiguity



Index	India	World Average
Power Distance	77	56.5
Long-Term Orientation	61	48
Masculinity	56	51
Individualism	48	40
Uncertainty Avoidance	40	65

Table 1: Cultural dimensions scores for India

- power distance (strength of social hierarchy): the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally
- masculinity-femininity (task-orientation versus person-orientation): masculinity is defined as "a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material rewards for success"

Later on, two extra dimensions were added to the list. The fifth one was added by independent researchers in Hong-Kong, long-term orientation and last one was added recently in 2010 by Hofstede, indulgence versus self restraint.

## 2 National Culture of India

### 2.1 Introduction

India's national culture is distinctive. India has been thriving since primordial times. Because of its size, the widespread practise of faith, the availability of food due to its fertile land, and the wide range of climates and landforms throughout the nation, there is a very diverse population. Politically and demographically, this nation was formed as a result of the people's fight against repeated foreign invasions over thousands of years and 250 years of slavery as a colony of an external power 7,000 kilometres away. These all leads to unique characteristics in national culture.

### 2.2 Hofstedes Research on National Culture of India

Hofstede's research on national culture of India[2] has shed light on the complex and diverse cultural landscape of this vibrant nation. By identifying dimensions such as power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term vs. short-term orientation, Hofstede has provided a framework for understanding the cultural norms and values that shape Indian society.

The result of his cultural analysis can be summarised in Table 1. We will cover what does individual score mean in this table.

### **2.2.1 Power Distance**

The power distance measures the extent how much the people with less power are ready to accept unequal power distribution. A high number indicates that the respondents have no trouble following orders from those in higher positions in the hierarchy.

The score of India on this parameter is very high. This indicates that people appreciate vertical hierarchy, acceptance of un-equal rights is high. This results in accessibility in immediate seniority but not so for above layer and loyalty is rewarded for the employee. The power structure tends to be centralized.

### **2.2.2 Long-Term Orientation**

This dimension describes how the society sees the past and how much it think the future will be affected by current action. Normative societies, which rank poorly on this metric, favour upholding time-honored customs and standards while being wary of societal change. On the other hand, high-scoring cultures adopt a more practical approach: they promote thrift and efforts in contemporary education as a means of future preparation.

The score of India in this parameter is not tilted significantly to any side. Hence there is no dominant preference among Indians implying different behaviour for different situation. Although, Indians value thrift and perseverance; they have high amount of respect for tradition and they do tend to manipulate things for immediate success.

### **2.2.3 Masculinity**

A low score implies that society has feminine characteristics. Hofstede found that in majority of the societies, the characteristics of caring and nurturing are associated with women.

With score of 56, India can be considered a masculine society. He also found that, overall, the India is not equally masculine all characteristics. In terms of visual display of success and power, Indians are highly masculine but in daily life, they also show high humility and abstinence with their ancient culture.

### **2.2.4 Individualism**

A high sense of individualism means interpersonal bonding of people is quite loose, and people tend to think about themselves and their immediate families. In the opposite spectrum, in cultures with high collectivism, members in a group can look at other members for unquestioned loyalty.

Again, the score of India is very balanced and not tilted towards any side. This again shows selectivity of the Indians towards few types of groupings. Although, Indians generally associate themselves with certain groups and assign high status for those in group and those leaving groups feels intense emptiness. Yet religious learning of Indian keep them self oriented with their concept of death and rebirth.

### **2.2.5 Uncertainty Avoidance**

Future can never be known but you can make yourself prepared for possible futures. This dimension of cultural analysis tests how much people are willing to tolerate uncertain in future.

Compared to the other world, the India has a very low score. India is traditionally a patient country where tolerance for the unexpected is high; even welcomed as a break from monotony. People generally do not feel driven and compelled to take action-initiatives and comfortably settle into established rolls and routines without questioning.

## **3 Assessment of Reflecion of National Culture of India in Government Hospital**

Now that we are up to speed on the theory of national culture of India, we will attempt to evaluate India's national culture in relation to the aforementioned dimension proposed by Hofstede and determine whether we can see the national culture affecting the working of a critical public healthcare offering.

### **3.1 Why survey a Government Hospital for Reflection National Culture?**

Surveying a government hospital can be a useful way to reflect on the national culture of a country for several reasons. Firstly, government hospitals are a crucial part of the healthcare system in most countries, and they provide healthcare services to a large section of the population, including the vulnerable and marginalized sections.

By studying the culture of a government hospital, we can gain insights into the values, norms, and beliefs that shape the healthcare system and its interaction with society. The as the name suggest, the government hospitals are managed by the government and hence they have to follow government regulation and policies[3]. The hospital also offers a unique blend of employess from well trained and educated doctor to a sweeper who is 10th pass offering wide range of perspective.

### **3.2 Need for Survey**

In order to assess any information, a proper survey needs to be done. Surveys are a valuable tool for collecting data and measuring cultural values and practices. By analysing patterns and trends in the data collected by the survey one can reach good conclusions which forms basis of any study.

### **3.3 Choosing the Sample Set**

While choosing a target audience for study, we need to have sample size of good number and quality. In order to study the reflection of national culture in hospital which typically has working staff of about 80 employee, we need to interview about 20. Also, in any given organisation, the role of employee and his/her vertical position in hierarchy can affect the answers, hence we should have people from multiple categories. After considering the accessibility to conduct survey, the District Government Hospital, Jalna, Maharashtra- 431213 was selected.

### **3.4 Creating a Questionnaire**

A good questionnaire is essential for collecting accurate and relevant data in any research project. A well-designed questionnaire helps to ensure that the information collected is reliable, valid, and free from bias.

The importance of a good questionnaire cannot be overstated, as it is the primary tool for collecting data in many research projects. Without a well-designed questionnaire, the data collected may be inaccurate or incomplete, leading to flawed conclusions and recommendations.

The questionnaire used in this assesment was made by studying book on Organisational Behaviour by Robbins and reading various websites containing national cultures. And it was reviewed by persons from position to provide multiple perspective.

### **3.5 Analysing the Survey**

Analyzing the survey is an important step in any research project, as it helps to identify patterns and trends in the data collected. The first step in analyzing the survey is to clean and organize the data, removing any errors or inconsistencies that may have arisen during data collection. This was done with utmost care with help of modern software such as Microsoft Excel and using various graphs and charts.

## **4 The Survey**

Using a Google(TM) Form, the project's survey was conducted. Every employee was urged to take part in the survey. In total, 19 responses were given. It was attempted to keep the form from being too lengthy while maintaining the crucial questions in light of the importance of the time of the employees.

### **Composition of Questionnaire**

The questionnaire consisted of 8 section with first section being just write you name and your role in organisation. The sections were made according to

the dimension of the culture they are trying to enquire. The eight sections are as following:

1. Introduction
2. Display of emotions
3. Meetings
4. Pattern of context
5. Achievement or Ascription based
6. Long-Term Orientation
7. Individualistic or Collectivistic
8. Control vs Subjugation

The question were of different type some being simple factual agree-disagree question, some multiple choice type and some true false type. In many question, option of custom answer was kept available as the given options may not be there. Finally, after each section, an optional question to add any comment was incorporated to make sure to collect any specific input any employee might want to give. Questionnaire of the survey can be found in this link [\[4\]](#).

## 5 Analysis of the Survey

The initial analysis of the survey was done section wise of the questionnaire in order to simplify the process. After completing the sectionwise analysis the results were combined to analyse the survey as a whole on the 5 dimensions of the Hofstede's cultural analysis. The full responses of the form can be seen here [\[5\]](#).

### 5.1 Introduction

Other than noting the role of the responder, this section doesn't feature any question, although this can be useful in relating the other answers of the responder. Answers given to this question establishes the variety in the responders of the form as the people doing following roles are there, see Table [2](#)

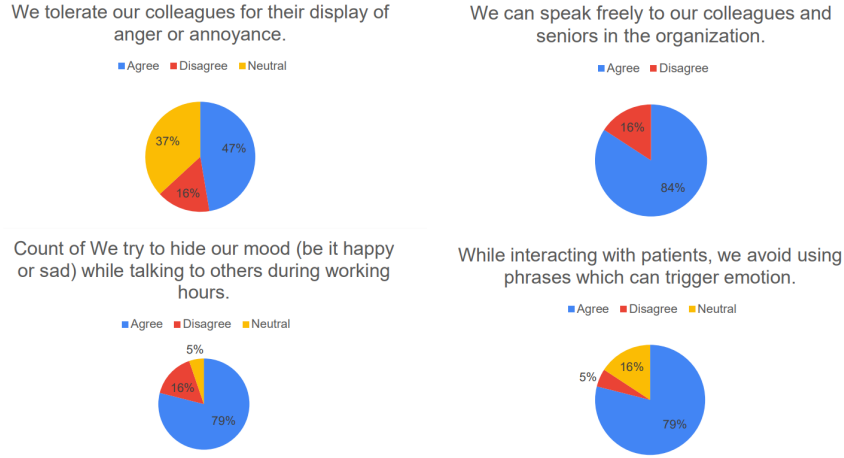


Figure 1: Result of questions on emotion

Role	Frequency
Sister incharge	1
Medical Officer	4
Nurse	4
Ophthalmic Officer	6
Psychiatrist	1
Skin Specialist	1
Ward Servent	1

Table 2: Role in the organisation

## 5.2 Display of Emotions

The objective of this section was to test how freely the people can express themselves. This section generated some interesting results. The results can be seen in the Figure 1.

Although everyone agrees about being able to express emotion in the employee circle only half of them agree about being tolerable to the others when they express their feelings. As we can expect from a professional, they try to hide their mood while speaking to patients and others. This implies intermediate amount of both masculinity and individualism.

## 5.3 Meetings

This section try to cover official handling of the organisation specially regarding the procedure of the meeting specially the orientation of time and uncertainty avoidance. In this section four questions were asked. The result of

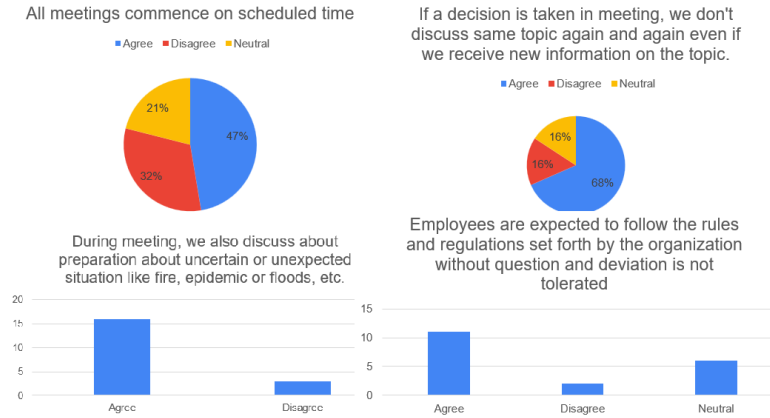


Figure 2: Responses of Questions based on meeting

which can be seen in the Figure 2.

Just like typical polysynchronous culture, the meetings tend to get delayed but the fact that the most employees agree that same topic is not repeated again and again denies total polysynchronism. Also, unlike typical view of India, the hospital is indeed seen as well prepared against uncertainty which stands out with relation to the general public sector unit.

#### 5.4 Pattern of context

A single question was asked on this parameter. This question has a clear majority. Among all the factors which affect the course of action, the position of senior is the one which affects the most. The responses had a about half ( 52%) the votes. This strengthens the Hofstede's claim on high power distance.

#### 5.5 Achievement or Ascription based

This section tests how the employees are rewarded for their good work. Since most of the employees responded that the employees are not rewarded, this is not very useful to analyse.

Interesting fact is that, another question asking for criteria for judging the performance of the employees is again divided in equal halves. Half of the responders agree that actual performance is the metric of their judgement and half believe that position and people in association makes more significant impact.

#### 5.6 Long-Term Orientation

This questions try to ask how the goals of organisation are with respect to time, are they short term or long term. Responses can be seen in Figure 3.

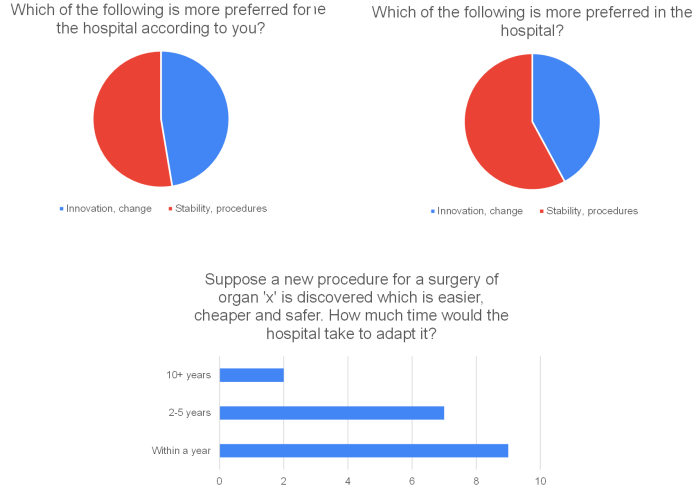


Figure 3: Responses of Questions Long-Term Orientation

Responsible	Success	Failure
Head	5	4
Management	5	1
Whole team	11	8

Table 3: Responses for Responsibility

Now, for the first two questions, both have narrow majority as stability and procedures. This symbolises the fact that, the hospital is looking for long term goals. Even while this is true, 90% of the participants agreed that the hospital is pretty fast to incorporate new technology in medical field.

## 5.7 Individualistic or Collectivistic

When it comes about responsibility for both success and failure, majority (60% and 50%) voted it is shared between the team. The full result can be seen in Table 3A point to note that is, amongst other options, when the matter for success came in, the responsibility of management was rated higher. This is a typical trait of collectivistic organisation.

## 5.8 Control vs Subjugation and communication

In the last section of the form, the questions related to control and communication were asked. When it comes to control, unlike the typical perspective, the



employees felt that the power is not centralized to the head and others also have some say in decision making along with the fact that the conflicts are generally solved internally.

We can also see the mode of communication being sliding towards the on-line communication such as Whatsapp, interestingly, majority of the people who responded as one of the medium are officers at the hospital. Only 10% of respondents said that communication is not transparent which is also very fitting that it is a government hospital.

## 6 The Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of the survey conducted at Civil Hospital has provided valuable insights into the reflection of national culture in the healthcare system of the country. The survey has revealed that the healthcare system is heavily influenced by cultural factors in few aspects of culture, including hierarchical relationships, respect for authority, and collectivism. Meanwhile, it is not influenced strongly when it comes to certain attributes of national culture such as uncertainty avoidance.

The result of Hofstede's study are true here, although, some characteristics are not as strongly expressed as they seem to be in the ratings of the India. According to the survey, the subjugation is not very high amongst the member and hence the power distance would be low. The long-term orientation is still similar of what Hofstede finds. The extent of individualism also seems lower than what Hofstede found. Although, one of the reason can be the long term posting of a employees which might be creating a close family like structure amongst the employees. The dimension which is contrasting most is the uncertainty avoidance. In general, the Indians tend to accept the uncertainty but the hospital had also prepared for all basic uncertainties. This is probably the result of the healthcare system in which hospitals are obviously involved are.

We can see this into making play in the recent event of Covid-19 pandemic. Although, it was a unprecedented event, India as a whole emerged strong from it while many advanced countries failed in such a strong response. Every member of the team worked for long duration and whole team was awarded.

Still, we should keep in mind that the sample size used is only of 1 hospital, hence it should be generalized to all the hospital in this vast country of  $3.92 \text{ km}^2$  area.

## References

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- [3] *Indian Public Health Standerds*
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