

MTO Team Extra Credit Assignment

Group F.I.V.E members

Tanya Arya

Pankti Antani

Yukta Butala

Eugene Antony

Hritik Bhansali

While delving into the assignment, our group noticed that all members were from the same country - **India**. We decided to enhance our understanding of the assignment by individually scoring and averaging our country based on Hofstede's dimension before going through Hofstede's country comparison scores. This gave us a better and unbiased understanding of how each of us perceived the Indian culture as compared to Hofstede's insights but it also highlighted the differing perceptions we had amongst ourselves. A comparison table is shown below:

Dimension	Hofstede's Score	Our Avg Score
Power Distance	77	75
Individualism	48	27.5
Masculinity	56	52.5
Uncertainty Avoidance	40	38.75
Long Term Orientation	51	88.75
Indulgence	26	42.5

Through our analysis, we were quick to notice that all members agreed on the Indian mindset being **long-term oriented** and was the dimension that all individual members regardless of their culture found and rated the most similar. However, when it came to the most dissimilar dimension, reflected by different individual scores was **uncertainty avoidance**. A key reason for these differences is the fact that India is a multicultural nation and our members come from different states, religions, and cultures sharing contrasting upbringings and perceptions of society around them. A more detailed analysis of the dimensions, how it will affect our team coordination and performance, and ways our group can mitigate it is explored below.

Power Distance

Hofstede's power distance dimension touches upon the willingness to accept the unequal distribution of power in an organization leading to a gap between the hierarchy levels in a conservative structure. India has a high power distance as people like structure and hierarchy both in society and organizations.

As we're all from India, the high power distance culture in our country may impact our group negatively as some individuals can be more dominating and authorize more power over others. It can also lead to conflicts if all the members are dominant and are fighting for power or rightfulness when stating opinions. Some of the solutions we brainstormed, to address power distance conflicts are:

1. **Group Dynamics Coordinator:** If a member asserts power or influence and doesn't make other members feel heard, the group dynamic coordinator is responsible for bringing that to attention and making sure everyone gets a chance to share their opinions and insights before the team makes a decision.
2. **Switching roles bi-weekly:** After discussing how we're going to function as a team, we decided to assign each individual a role and switch roles bi-weekly so that not only everyone gets to experience each role but also there's never one leader assigned for a task.
3. **Open Communication:** Our team is very committed to focusing on communicating openly with each other taking everyone's emotions and comfort into consideration. If someone has an issue with another member, we're encouraging each other to have one-on-one conversations or a group conversation to address the issue.

Individualism vs Collectivism

Based solely on a cultural standpoint, individualism has played a significant role in shaping the modern Western world. Collectivism however is an observable characteristic primarily in communities like India, Latin America, and so on. It nurtures a sense of oneness and belonging in an individual and molds an alternate perspective that defines and has proved to be a positive paradigm shift in cultural inclusiveness.

India, being rated 48 by Hofstede is rather debatable for our group. From a sociopolitical perspective and a cultural standpoint, Indian tradition has emphasized collectivism despite its diverse attributes. The group discussion has brought the score of individualism to 27 since all were convinced India is more collective than individualistic. However, a parallel viewpoint is that urbanization and modernization have shifted certain regions from collectivism to individualism.

As individual members, we will focus on having a shared mindset and a common goal throughout our course to mitigate any possibility of individualism over collectivism.

Masculinity vs Femininity

Often misinterpreted, Hofstede's masculinity-femininity dimension evaluates societal emotional values rather than gender roles. A high score (Masculine) indicates a focus on competition, achievement, and success, while a low score (Feminine) emphasizes caring for others and quality of life.

Hofstede rates India at 56, indicating a balanced society with a slight lean towards Masculine values. This is reflected in preferences for symbols of success like materialistic gifts, jewelry, brands, and ostentatious displays. However, India's rich cultural traditions promoting family values, humility, and abstinence, along with structural and legal changes promoting work-life balance, contributed to a rating of 52.5 by our group members. Having all group members from India can reinforce a Masculine orientation, potentially leading to intense competition and neglect of work-life balance. To mitigate this we have undertaken the following steps:-

Structured Work Hours: We have implemented fixed work hours for each project or assignment as well as group meetings to maintain a balance between work and personal life. This ensures that work doesn't encroach upon personal time.

Flexibility: For those members who have a certain preference for work schedules, we have ensured to offer flexible work timings to accommodate various personal commitments and preferences as long as their part of the project is submitted within time. This promotes a healthier work-life balance and reduces stress.

Promote Collaboration: Encourage teamwork and collaboration within the group through several group roles at a primary and secondary level. For example, one of the roles of the Group Dynamics coordinator is to ensure extroverts aren't speaking over others and introverts aren't staying quiet, actively ensuring collaboration in more ways than one. We often emphasize as a group that collective achievements are as valuable as individual success to foster better group cooperation and improved results.

By implementing these strategies, we are confident that as a group, we can strike a balance between Masculine and Feminine values and ensure a more harmonious and productive working dynamic.

Uncertainty Avoidance

“Uncertainty avoidance” measures the degree to which people in a society are comfortable with risk, uncertainty, and unpredictability. People with a low on this measure are comfortable with risk, change, and unpredictability.

India scored a 40 on the uncertainty avoidance parameter according to Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Our average score was similar, at 38.75. We do believe that is because India has a huge youth population that is open to new ideas, starting up, taking risks, and incorporating change. However, a large chunk of the orthodox older population is bound by rules not accepting of modern ideas or beliefs, and is fearful or threatened by change. As individual members, given our educational background and understanding of the modern world, we must ensure to be open and receptive to new ideas from all team members and develop strong traits of openness to change.

Long term orientation (LTO)

Long-term orientation is about having a long-term view through planning. Hofstede provides India an average score of 51 in this dimension, indicating a diverse opinion on this dimension throughout the country. This diverse view of thinking could have caused issues for our team as none of our work styles or core thinking would have aligned and created negative conflict.

However, this may not be an issue for us as we all believed India to have a high score of 88.75 on this dimension. We all were brought up in segments of India that maintained long-term orientation and we suppose that blinded us. But since we all align with the long-term orientation we all will be on the same page to plan our assignments in advance and have similar long-term oriented perspectives while solving cases.

Our common thinking on this matter may only be a problem if we get distracted by overplanning things and take fewer actions. We may not be able to get our work done in this case. Thus, we have two designated “planning coordinators” (one primary and the other secondary) in our team, who will not only be responsible for planning work around deadlines but also keep track of time management. In case they observe a team spending a lot more time on redundant matters, they will point it out and help us get past it.

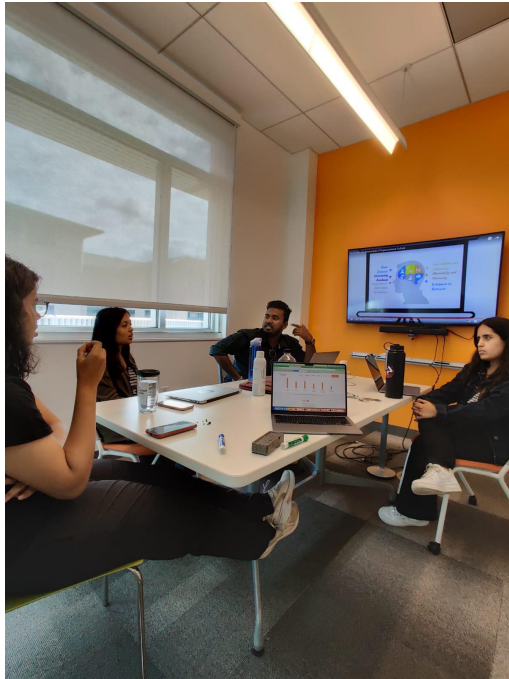
Indulgence vs Restraint

Hofstede's indulgence versus restraint is an important dimension because it indicates how likely our team members are to indulge in instant gratification versus staying restrained or disciplined for the team. India's low score on this dimension may be a good thing for our team as we could let go of our comforts or pleasures for the sake of this team. It also indicates that we all will have a great work ethic.

However, issues may arise if teammates do not understand their desires, thus what incentivizes them. In the long term, staying restrained, and fulfilling your desires can lead to demotivation. Thus, actively creating work-life balance, sharing our likes and dislikes, and having conversations outside of work would be most important to us. It would include having occasional social nights to understand each other's personalities and backgrounds better thus fostering improved collaboration.

All in all, our group effectively pointed out similar and dissimilar dimensions in our discussion and incorporated effective measures to mitigate upcoming risks associated with a lack of diversity considering all of us are from the same country. Post the discussion, we have noticed an increased importance placed on differing viewpoints arising from an increase in respect and understanding for individuals' cultural backgrounds. While we may not wholeheartedly agree with Hofstede's analysis, we noticed several key factors highlighted by his analysis that helped us understand our team and team structure better.

(Snippets from our discussion)



INDIA		
	Hofstede Score	Our Score
1> Power Dynamic	77	75
2> Individualism	48	27.5
3> Masculinity & Femininity	56	52.5
4> Uncertainty Avoidance	40	38.75
5> Long Term Oriented	51	88.75
6> Indulgence	26	42.5

Bibliography

"Hofstede's Country Comparison Tool." *Hofstede's Insights*, www.hofstede-insights.com/. Accessed 2 Sept. 2023.

"Hofstede's Six Dimensions of Organizational Culture." *YouTube*, uploaded by Trim Tab, www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKKruTRQ_2A.