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# Constructing a typology of culture in organizational behavior

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this study is to propose a typology of culture and to present a hybrid model to be used as the base in organizational behavior and cross-cultural management research.

**Design/methodology/approach** – This study provides a conceptual analysis and general review of the literature to clarify and to classify the usage of culture models and cultural orientations to reduce confusion concerning cultural studies.

**Findings** – The first part of the proposed typology covers only the concept of organizational culture which has been examined around qualitative and cognitive approaches. While the second part is related to the use of socio-cultural dimensions, the third part of the proposed typology covers universal cultural orientations (patterns) framework only. The outcome of this study is the presentation of a hybrid model which provides a comprehensive methodological framework for conducting culture research.

**Practical implications** – The typology of culture developed in this study would be of help for researchers designing their studies on the subject of culture, socio-cultural dimensions and cultural patternings from more appropriate theoretical perspectives and methods.

**Originality/value** – The theoretical framework in this study provides insight in selecting more suitable culture models to examine the subject in managerial organizational studies.

**Keywords** Organizational culture, Organizational behavior, Cross-cultural management, Cultural orientations, Socio-cultural dimensions, Typology of culture

**Paper type** Conceptual paper

## Introduction

An early but the most well-known definition of culture belongs to Tylor (1920/1871), accepted as the 'father' of anthropology, who defines it as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society". Culture is learned and shared by members of large human groups, is transmitted from one generation to another and tends to change in time. It is actually a complex and complicated high-level abstraction and represents the basic assumptions, beliefs and values of the members of social systems, such as an organization, a society, a country or even a geographical region. In the broadest sense, culture constitutes the nature of values, thinking styles and daily life patterns of large groups of people as well as the specific ways of their social interaction both with each other and with members of other groups.

Organizational culture is a 'borrowed term' from the discipline of anthropology, and in the light of current literature on organizational and management studies, one should be aware of the contributions by scholars from the disciplines of psychology, sociology

and social psychology. Academicians have developed numerous cultural categories, especially from an anthropological perspective and, later, from an organizational behavior perspective, starting with the publication of Pettigrew's (1979) seminal article on organizational culture.

The body of culture literature clearly indicates that almost all scholars and researchers have either examined organizational culture by concentrating on some of its main components (Ravasi and Schultz, 2006; Brewer and Selden, 2000), focusing on socio-cultural dimensions (Krujukova *et al.*, 2009; Abeysekera, 2008), or accepting a single relatively simple (Rashid *et al.*, 2003) or highly complex organizational cultural model developed by other academicians (Fey and Denison, 2003; Schepers and van den Berg, 2007).

In the light of the studies referred above and others not cited here throughout this paper, it is possible to suggest that authors of almost all theoretical books and research articles have mostly classified organizational culture in connection with the purpose of their own studies, which requires a starting point with the examination of the preferred or proposed culture model. They then provide knowledge regarding the most frequently used cultural models, generally in chronological order and under the heading of "theoretical background". In the opinion of the author of the present study, this is rather confusing as only some of these studies are, in fact, related to organizational culture models (Denison and Mishra, 1995; Cameron and Quinn, 1983; Handy, 1985) but mostly related to socio-cultural models (i.e. Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1992) and cultural orientations (Hall and Hall, 1990; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961). Although relevant literature in behavioral sciences includes a multitude of articles on culture, it lacks providing a classification of existing organizational culture models.

Construction of a typology basically aims to clarify and classify the complex content of a given concept. In this study, the author addresses "organizational culture", a concept of principal interest in organizational behavior and cross-cultural management research.

Accordingly, this paper starts with a detailed examination of the relevant literature on the classification of the concept of culture. The first part of this content-based classification covers only the concept of organizational culture which has been examined by making two different approaches to the subject, such as qualitative and cognitive approaches. Both approaches include some of the most frequently used organizational models by indicating their major specifications.

The second part is related to the use of socio-cultural dimensions, as they are inevitably used in the field of cross-cultural management and for intercultural studies. This part includes sets of socio-cultural dimensions which constitute common characteristics of human behaviors as well as universally recognized values and are applicable across the nations.

The last and the third part of the content-based classification covers universal cultural orientations (patterns) framework (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961) only. This framework covers value orientations of assumptions and attitudes of large group of people about their own basic nature, their interaction with the third parties and with the environment.

After having made this novel classification which identifies three distinct categories of culture paradigms in the literature, a hybrid model is developed. This model provides a comprehensive methodological approach in conducting organizational culture

research studies. Then, the application of this hybrid model in practice is explained by supplementary information in line with the existing theoretical frameworks. In addition, the model illustrates the differences between the organizational behavior and cross-cultural management approaches in terms of their approach to the study of organizational culture. The proposed three-domain hybrid model would be of help for the adoption of the research methodology most suited to the research objective in studies of culture.

## An overview of the concept of culture and culture paradigms

It is almost a must to begin with a holistic understanding of culture, even if a given study aims at focusing on organizational culture. Any attempt to develop a typology of organizational culture models should be made by recalling the classification of culture from an anthropological perspective. It is likely to develop particular categories of cultural thought (not the organizational culture) from an anthropological perspective, such as functionalists, structuralists, structural-functionalists, interpretivists (symbolists), cognitivists, poststructuralists and synthetic approach which are summarized below.

According to the functionalist school developed by Malinowski (1961), the impact of culture on members of societies is accepted as a functional tool to satisfy their physiological needs through the establishment of social institutions. Singh (2004) describes structuralist thought as a super organic-cohesive view of culture. Levi-Straussian structuralists focus on texts and symbols instead of concentrating on human behaviors. Structural functionalism which has been the contribution of Radcliffe-Brown to anthropology is about the influence of cultural patterns as interrelated structures on integration and stability of societies.

The interpretivist or the symbolic school is named after Geertz (1973), who describes it as "socially established, universally understood structures of meaning"; in other words, culture constitutes a body of meaningful symbols. Somewhat similarly, the cognitive school of culture is almost identical with the studies of Goodenough and Weick, and it focuses on the capability of human mental processes in terms of logical systems of thought and metaphoric use of knowledge. As Singh (2004) points out, while the poststructuralists are simply against all the theoretical assumptions of both interpretivists (symbolists) and cognitivists, the so-called synthetic approach to culture is basically a compound of cognitivist and interpretivist approaches by distinguishing the importance of self and society.

According to Reichers and Schneider (1990), following Smircich (1983), there have been two basic approaches to the definition of culture. While the first approach treats organizational culture as "something an organization is", the second one accepts culture as "something an organization has" (1990, p. 22). In his widely accepted definition, Schein (1992) defines culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that members of an organization learn and use for solving its problems of internal integration and external adoption for goal achievement. Because culture is a system which implies learned, accepted and widely shared value forms, it also includes thinking styles and modes of behaviors and naturally consists of semi-independent components. That is why Pettigrew (1979) once stated that the components of culture are interdependent in varying degrees.

Deshpande and Webster (1989) proposed a conceptual framework of organizational culture paradigms by pointing out the associations (Table I) between different conceptions of culture as quoted from their study. The first two paradigms which are rooted in sociological framework in contrast to the three remaining paradigms are grounded in the discipline of anthropology. Socio-psychological theories which focus mainly on the trade-off between values and behavior are related to basic social cognitions. Because patterns of values vary across cultures, the use of cognitive hierarchy approach to the subject is more comprehensive for the classification culture in the field of management and was inevitably preferred by a good number of scholars (Whittaker et al., 2006; Schwartz, 1992; Rokeach, 1973).

The last three organizational paradigms of Deshpande and Webster (1989), namely, organizational cognition, organizational symbolism and structural/psychodynamic perspective, treat culture as metaphor for the members of organizations. These three perspectives accept and examine organizations by focusing on their expressive, ideational and symbolic facets.

Fiske's (1991) confirmation theory strongly emphasizes cognitive relational structure regarding national cultures. According to Fiske, there are four elementary relational models consisting of a cognitive and motivated relational structure, which lead people to develop socially meaningful behaviors for people of all cultures (Fiske et al., 2009). The four relational models (universal traits) are communal sharing (sharing common essence, physical actions, such as feeding and dancing), authority ranking (hierarchical relationships based on iconically represented physical dimensions), equality matching (concrete activities in daily lives of people based on equal grounds) and market pricing (which implies a purely and intrinsically abstract term, is culture specific and is about numerical representations of materialistic objects such as money).

| Organizational paradigm | Key theoretical features | Locus of culture |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Comparative management | Grounded in functionalism (Malinowski, 1961) and classical management theory (Barnard, 1938) | Exogenous, independent variable |
| 2. Contingency management | Grounded in structural functionalism (Radclife-Brown, 1952) and contingency theory (Thompson, 1967) | Endogenous, independent variable |
| 3. Organizational cognition | Grounded in ethnoscience (Goodenough, 1971) and cognitive organization theory (Weick, 1979) | Culture as metaphor for organizational knowledge systems |
| 4. Organizational symbolism | Grounded in symbolic anthropology (Geertz, 1973) and symbolic organization theory (Dandridge et al., 1980) | Culture as metaphor for shared symbols and meanings |
| 5. Structural/psychodynamic perspective | Grounded in structuralism (Levi-Strauss, 1963) and transformational organizational theory (Turner, 1983) | Culture as metaphor for unconscious mind |

**Source:** [a]Quoted from Deshpande and Webster (1989, p. 7)

Table I.
Theoretical features of organizational culture paradigms[a]

Westrum's (2004) typology of organizational culture is another attempt that deserves attention: it focuses on the style and richness of information processing, because culture influences and shapes responses given by the organization's members to problems and the organizational functions used to overcome all kinds of challenges and problems. Westrum's (2004) typology is, in fact, connected with levels of organizational maturity, which can be divided into three categories, such as pathological, bureaucratic or generative organizational cultures.

Although the term 'organizational maturity' is used in health-care literature (Tapp et al., 2008), Westrum's typology depends mainly on leadership styles and the quality of communication flow among the members of an organization. According to this typology of organizational culture, while organizations with pathological type of cultures are power oriented and, broadly speaking, have low level of cooperation, bureaucratic ones are mainly rule oriented and have medium-level cooperation. In turn, organizations with generative type of organizational culture are performance oriented with well-developed organizational alignment, support empowerment and create high level of cooperation through skillfully established and rich communication channels. This typology is developed from a descriptive perspective by using a different kind of categorization of cultural traits, depending on the level of organizational maturity. Westrum (2004) indicates that his typology of organizational culture has certain restrictions, such as structures and ways of problem-solving, but he also underlines that it is vital to focus on social responses and the quality of social relations. As stated by Fiske et al. (2009), it is the utmost importance of social interactions that counts for the transmission of culture in social systems.

The concept of culture cannot at all be restricted to learning and sharing of its components. In contrast, it is associated with the meanings of these components, such as values, ideas, thoughts, attitudes and norms of behavior. It would be worthy to take Eisenberg's (2006) explanations into consideration that Weick's theory of sense-making is "about the ways people generate what they interpret" (p. 277, as cited from Weick p. 13). This conclusion deserves utmost attention: As noted by Daphne and Webster, Westrum and Fiske, the core issues are the nature of social relations and that methods and ways of communication are constitutive of organizational culture. In fact, the essence of these theoretical explanations is cognitive models, as learning, generating and transmitting cultural elements require the functioning of cognitive schemes in one's mind. Consequently, cognitive models are all developed to explain internally distinct qualities of organizations and their capacities for external adoptions within certain categories.

Existing organizational culture typologies focus on the main characteristics or components of organizational culture (Handy, 1985; Deal and Kennedy, 1982) or relate those characteristics to organizations' internal structure and external environment such as Competing Values Framework (Cameron and Quinn, 1983) or focus on personal and organizational values such as Wallach's (1983) organizational culture profile. The present study does not aim to criticize the contents of some of the leading studies but merely emphasizes the use of some methodological issues concerning the analysis of culture both at organizational and national levels.

It is necessary to define the level of analysis – organizational, national, etc. – when conducting cultural studies. Some researchers conducted studies at the national level to analyze the distribution of universally recognized values in a given country (Yahyagil

and Otken, 2011); some, across societies (Ralston *et al.*, 2011); and some others focused on universal cultural orientations (Gilbert and Rosinski, 2008; Aycan *et al.*, 2007). Clearly, researchers of cultural studies should decide and specify the level at which their analysis is to be performed. It is not uncommon to see studies in the literature which have blended dimensions of incongruent levels. The study of (Machado and Carvalho, 2008) is an example. Further, Joiner (2001) and Myers *et al.* (1995) attempted to understand the influence of both national and organizational culture alignment on job stress. These studies utilized Trompenaars' organizational culture typology but applied Hofstede's socio-cultural dimensions for organizational-level analysis. Although the link between socio-cultural dimensions and Trompenaars' model was established skillfully by the researchers, the trade-off between national- and organizational-level approaches has been arguable and confusing. Übius and Alas (2009) used Cameron and Quinn's competing values framework in their comparative study across eight different nations by analyzing the data only at the organizational level. Wallace *et al.* (1999) stated that the purpose of their study was to gain an understanding of the characteristics of culture of organizations, while, in essence, they provided information on the perceived nature and distribution of certain socio-cultural dimensions. It is, actually, one of the objectives of the present study to clarify the confusion about classifications of culture in differing levels of analysis.

Blending socio-cultural and organizational dimensions complicates the interpretation of research findings in clear organizational culture terms. Clearly, organizational culture differs from national culture or organizational climate (Rashid *et al.*, 2003; Denison, 1996). The difficulty involved in the utilization of culture models (Lukasova *et al.*, 2006) is of practical importance, as understanding the culture of the organization is an essential prerequisite to effective formulation of business strategies, efficient utilization of resources and the achievement of ultimate business goals. Consequently, the analysis of organizational culture has been emerging as a critical issue.

## A novel categorization of culture paradigms
The author of this study identified three prevailing culture paradigms in the current literature and developed a novel, content-based classification of organizational culture models. Each category is described below in detail.

### Organizational culture models
The author identified two principal approaches in the development of organizational culture models in the existing literature. The first approach aims at depicting and describing the most typical cultural components of organizations and is therefore 'qualitative/descriptive'. The second approach aims at creating, in extent, high-level abstractions concerning individual cognition by focusing necessarily on collective values and is therefore 'cognitive'. Previous works that have adopted the qualitative/descriptive and the cognitive approaches are summarized as follows:

### Hofstede *et al.* (1990)
**Nine basic categories (six practices, three organizational values)**
*Six practices*: 1) Process oriented versus result oriented, 2) Employee oriented versus job oriented, 3) Parochial versus Professional, 4) Open system versus closed system, 5) Loose and tight control, and 6) Market oriented versus Normative

*Three organizational values*: 1) Need for security, 2) Work centrality, and 3) Need for authority

**Trompernaars (1993)**
*Two dimensions*: Equity–hierarchy and person–task
*Four cultural categories*: 1) Family, 2) Eiffel Tower, 3) Incubator, and 4) Guided missile

**Deal and Kennedy (1982)**
*Two dimensions*: Risk and feedback speed
*Four cultural categories*: 1) Tough-Guy/Macho culture, 2) Work hard/Play hard culture, 3) Bet-Your-Company culture, and 4) Process culture

**Handy (based on Harrison's study) (1985, 1972)**
*Four cultural categories*: 1) Zeus/Power culture, 2) Apollo/Role culture, 3) Athena/Task culture, and 4) Dionysus/Person culture

**Kilmann (1985)**
*Two basic categories*: 1) Bureaucratic cultures, and 2) Innovative cultures

**Ouchi (1981)**
*Z-culture*

**Westrum (2004)**
*Three cultural categories based on style and quality of information processing*: 1) Pathological, 2) Bureaucratic, and 3) Generative

**Denison and Mishra (1995)**
**Four traits/12 sub-conceptual dimensions:**
*Involvement*: Empowerment–Team Orientation–Capability Development
*Consistency*: Core values–Agreement–Coordination and Integration
*Adaptability*: Creating Change–Customer Focus–Organizational Learning
*Mission*: Vision-Strategic Direction and Intent–Goals and Objectives

**Cameron and Quinn (1983)**
*Four quadrants*: Flexibility-discretion/stability-control/internal control/external positioning
*Four cultural categories*: 1) Clan culture, 2) Adhocracy culture, 3) Hierarchy culture, and 4) Market culture

**O'Reilly *et al.* (1991)**
*Seven (cultural) factor structure*: Innovation, outcome orientation, respect for people, team orientation, stability, aggressiveness and attention to detail
*Fifty-four value statements: (15 items randomly chosen out of 54)*: fairness/having a good reputation – offers praise for good performance/being analytical-having high expectations for performance/taking initiative-not being constrained by rules/stability-being aggressive/flexibility/adaptability – being supportive-being careful/confronting conflict directly

**Wallach (1983)**
*Three main dimensions*: Supportive/Innovative/Bureaucratic

*Twenty-four cultural attributes (ten items randomly chosen out of 24 attributes)*: Established, solid-Ordered-Stimulating-Regulated-Personal freedom-Hierarchical-Procedural Relationships-oriented-Being aggressive-Being team oriented

### Goffee and Jones (1996)

*Two main dimensions*: Solidarity vs. sociability

*Four cultural categories*: 1) Fragmented culture, 2) Mercenary culture, 3) Networked culture, and 4) Communal culture

Qualitative and descriptive organizational culture models have been developed by Handy (1985), Harrison (1993) or Ouchi (1981). These authors included observable and, in sense, relatively concrete, selected and the most typical traits of the categorizations of culture based on internal facets of the organization and its relation with the external environment. Harrison's (1993) model has four quadrants: power, support, achievement and role, each operating under two opposing modes: low versus high degree of formalization.

Another qualitative/descriptive categorization of organizational culture is provided by Trompenaars (1993). His model also covers four main quadrants: family, the Eiffel tower, guided missile and incubator type of culture. These four categories are created according to equity–hierarchy and person–task orientations. Two supplementary dimensions of his model are the degree of formalization and type of organizational structure.

Hofstede *et al.* (1990, pp. 291-292), in their well-known study, presented an organizational culture model focusing on "qualitative, emphatic and description of the cultures" of selected organizations based on a set of in-depth interviews. Their model includes three work-related cultural values and six organizational dimensions (Hofstede, 1998). In a following study, Dimmock and Walker (2000) extended the six-dimensional organizational culture model Hofstede *et al.* (1990) by adding national culture dimensions.

The cognitive category includes high-level abstractions of individual cognitions concerning the cultural components of organizations and emphasizes collective values shared by the members of organizations. As stated by Hutchins (1995), culture implies a human cognitive process of systems which outstrips the differences in individuals' thinking styles and perceptions. This also explains why the focal point of research in cross-cultural psychology depends on cognitive systems and examines values (Vauclair, 2009, p. 62). As a result, most culture models fall in the second category and are more complex and evaluative than those that fall in the qualitative/descriptive category. As mentioned above, the dimensions of organizational culture models included in the cognitive category are more abstract and naturally indicate intangible, complex characteristics of culture, such as those explained by the models developed by Denison and Mishra (1995) or Cameron and Quinn (1983).

Denison and Mishra's (1995) culture typology was based on cognitive and value-related high-level abstractions, with 4 main traits and a 12 dimension (indices), emphasizing internal integration versus external adaptation and stability versus flexibility. Beliefs and values are at the core of Denison's behavioral model of organizational culture and is consistent with those of Cameron and Quinn (1983) and Schein (1992), both of which address the association between organizational culture and

organizational effectiveness while considering the dichotomies of stability versus flexibility and internal integration versus external adaptation.

O'Reilly *et al.* (1991) or Wallach's (1983) organizational culture profiles are based on value statements which have been widely accepted and shared by the members of the international academic community. O'Reilly *et al.* (1991, p. 491) define culture as "a set of cognitions shared by members of a social unit" and present a model with seven dimensions as innovation, outcome orientation, respect for people, team orientation, stability, aggressiveness and attention to detail. Wallach's (1983) model is composed of three main dimensions as bureaucratic, supportive and innovative, including 24 items. Both organizational culture profiles aim to measure cultural (organizational) values at the organizational level.

One confusing definition of organizational culture comes from the use of socio-cultural dimensions (Jung *et al.*, 2008, p. 624), as they show characteristic patterns of behaviors in work settings but not the organizational culture profile. Similarly, the study conducted by Fischer *et al.* (2005) aims to provide an explanation of multi-level cultural framework, but their summary of taxonomies of organizational culture dimensions include those of national and organizational culture as well as of cultural orientations.

### Socio-cultural dimensions framework

National and cross-cultural studies aim to explore, understand and explain variations in human behavior, both in terms of differences and similarities. The use of socio-cultural dimensions which have been developed by a cognitive approach to the subject cannot and should not be considered as organizational profile of a given organization. The characteristics of socio-cultural dimensions as perceived by the members of an organization do not reflect predominance of organizational culture, but only provide insights to understanding its characteristics.

Because the basic goal of intercultural studies is to describe and explain the nature and magnitude of the impact of culture on human behavior, examination of values becomes a must for analyzing culture, either at individual or at societal level (Schwartz, 1992, 1994). Values are the core of culture, and the key variables for exploring cultural similarities or differences within or between social systems.

While Rokeach (1973) defines values as the representations of basic social cognitions, Schwartz (1992) defines values as desirable and guiding principles in people's lives; they are merely based on the universal needs of people and are consistent with well-known motivation theories (Jaw *et al.*, 2007). Thus, cultural values which are the cognitive schemata and mental programs (Hofstede, 1991) are shared, and they dictate the 'rights' and 'wrongs' of social systems. It is 'our' cultural values, beliefs and assumptions that form the base for 'our' perceptions, 'our' mental functions for reasoning and responding to the outer world. This actually gives the concept of interculturalism the highest ranking in understanding human behavior or, simply, culture. The classification or categorization of societies (nations) has become a central issue in the field of organizational behavior as well as cross-cultural management.

The basic facets or more correctly, the conceptual dimensions of national culture may be minimized by taking into consideration behavioral variations for satisfying human needs. Variations in behaviors are related to people's responses to their physical and social environments. Previous studies on understanding variations in human behavior

mainly focus on the assessment of people's cognitive representations to know the medium in which they live and make certain decisions for their survival through satisfying their needs. Hence, these universally applicable set of socio-cultural categorizations or, actually, dimensions have been accepted as the primary sources of variation in human behavior across nations. The crucial point in this context is related to the influential role of universally recognized values in human lives as the nucleus of these socio-cultural dimensions.

The four main national cultural dimension frameworks that provide understanding to both cross-national differences and cultural diversity are provided by Hofstede (1980), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998), Schwartz (1994), Fiske (1991) and GLOBE project (House *et al.*, 2004):

### Hofstede (1980)
*Six socio-cultural dimensions*: 1) Power distance, 2) Uncertainty avoidance, 3) Individualism–collectivism, 4) Masculinity–femininity, 5) Short versuss long time orient, and 6) Indulgence versus restraint

### Triandis (1994)
*Four cultural syndromes*: 1) Cultural complexity, 2) Tight/loose cultures, 3) Collectivism, and 4) Individualism

### Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998)
*Seven bipolar cultural dimensions*: The focal points of the first five dimensions are about relationships of humans with each other, the sixth one is related to perception of time and the last one is about relationship with nature: 1) Universalism versus particularism, 2) Individualism versus communitarianism, 3) Specific versus diffuse, 4) Achievement versus ascription, 5) Sequential versus synchronous, 6) Inner versus outer direction, and 7) Neutral versus emotional (affective)

### Schwartz (1992, 1994)
*Three bipolar dimensions of culture*: 1) Embeddedness versus Autonomy, 2) Hierarchy versus Egalitarianism, and 3) Mastery versus Harmony
*Seven cultural level values*: 1) Conservatism/embeddedness, 2) Hierarchy, 3) Mastery, 4) Affective autonomy, 5) Intellectual autonomy, 6) Egalitarianism, and 7) Harmony
*Two sets of higher-order value types on two bipolar dimensions*: conservation versus openness to change/self-transcendence versus self-enhancement.
*Ten individual-level values*: 1) Power, 2) Achievement, 3) Hedonism, 4) Stimulating, 5) Self-direction, 6) Universalism, 7) Benevolence, 8) Tradition, 9) Conformity, and 10) Security

### Fiske (1991, 2004)
**Confirmation (Relational Models) Theory**
*Four relational model (basic patterns of social interaction)*: 1) Communal sharing, 2) Authority ranking, 3) Equality matching, and 4) Market pricing

### GLOBE Project (2001)
Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program
*Nine core cultural dimensions*: 1) Power distance, 2) Uncertainty avoidance, 3) Collectivism, 4) Collectivism II, 5) Gender egalitarianism, 6) Assertiveness, 7) Future orientation, 8) Performance orientation, and 9) Humane orientation

The seminal study of Hofstede (1980), who classified societies by creating four (later a fifth one was added) dominant and measurable national culture dimensions and focusing on individual values. The crucial point is that Hofstede's study was the outcome of an applied research conducted over 70 national subsidiaries of IBM Corporation between 1967-1973 and is still "popular" in spite of the methodological criticisms on the sampling procedure, the number of conceptual dimensions and the statistical methods used for data analysis (Fontaine, 2007; Fang, 2003).

Trompenaars' (1993) work is highly consistent with that of Hofstede and, in extent, has stemmed from the seminal study of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) and the study of Glenn (See Triandis, 1982). Trompenaars' study (later with Hampden-Turner) attempted according to seven bipolar cultural dimensions by using the scenario method for data collection. The model of Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (2000) provided a practical approach to understanding the reasons of basic differences in national culture between societies, such as the approach of Hofstede *et al.* (1990) and Hofstede (1980) to the subject of cross-cultural management.

The seven cultural dimensions of Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (2000) model are universalism versus particularism, communitarism versus individualism, neutral versus affective, specific versus diffuse, achievement versus ascription, sequential versus synchronic time and inner–outer orientation. The focal point of the first five dimensions involves relationships of people with each other, the sixth one is related to perception of time and the last one is about the relationship of people with nature. Furthermore, studies of both Hofstede and Trompenaars provided the same methodological approaches to the cultures of societies and, more importantly, used similar epistemological criteria related to the socio-cultural dimensions of both models.

Schwartz's relatively recent cultural framework provided a structuralist – functionalist approach to the subject. Schwartz's framework differs from those of Trompenaars and Hofstede and is consistent with the studies of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) and Rokeach (1973). The cultural value theory of Schwartz (1992, 1999) is based on people's three basic requirements to satisfy three universally common human needs:

(1) biological needs as individuals;

(2) survival needs as being a group member; and

(3) the need for communication with others for enrichment of social interaction as a member of a given society.

Schwartz's consistent structure of cultural values framework has seven cultural-level and ten individual-level values. While the cultural-level values constitute three basic dimensions (embeddedness vs autonomy; hierarchy vs egalitarianism; mastery vs harmony), the ten individual-level values can be grouped into two categories (dimensions) as self-transcendence versus self-enhancement and conservation versus openness to change.

Fiske's (1991) relational model is interesting because first, it focuses on basic patterns of social interaction across societies, and second, Fiske's model "is independent of the unit of analysis" (Chanchani and Theivanathampillai, 2002, p. 12). Regardless of political and geographical boundaries, Fiske's four dimensional model of interaction is

related to every individual who is in need of communicating with others consistent with his/her cultural bound elements.

The GLOBE Project was a result of comprehensive international teamwork and its objective was to assess universal cultural values and practices and leadership characteristics. Data have been collected from nearly 20,000 managers in 62 countries. The major outcome of this project was the assessment of nine cultural and six leadership dimensions. The nine core cultural dimensions which are of great assistance in understanding societal-level similarities and, more importantly, differences were compared to the works of Hofstede, Schwartz, Triandis and many others, with major contributions to cultural studies.

Finally, a very recent contribution to the categorization of culture is the culture-active and MLR (multi-active, linear-active and reactive) framework of Richard D. Lewis (2008). Lewis' work focuses on more practical issues, and mostly "grounded in practice", the study for the validity and reliability measures of the relevant measurement instrument (a cross-cultural assessment tool) with regard to the Inter Cultural Edge (ICE) project, is ongoing (White, 2009).

### Cultural orientations framework
Universal cultural orientations (patternings) relate persons to particular beliefs, assumptions, actions and their ways of attitudes toward certain universal perceptions and conceptions. They are inevitably very broad predispositions, cultural hallmarks or sociotypes, which have been accepted as true and could only give a limited idea about thinking styles and social behaviors of people. The outstanding study of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) is the primary source for cultural orientations framework along with Hall and Hall's (1990) and Schein's studies (1992). Boyacigiller *et al.* (2003) provide a very detailed explanation on the content of each dimension. The seven dimensions of cultural orientations framework are displayed as follows:

(1) Human nature:
   • *Two groups and five levels*: Good–Neutral-Evil and human nature: Stable or Changeable in time.
(2) Communication styles:
   • *Two groups and four levels*: Low and High context societies/emotional (affective) vs neutral/formality vs informality.
(3) Relations/interactions with others:
   • *Three levels*: Individualistic-Collateral-Hierarchical.
(4) Primary mode of activity:
   • *Four levels*: Doing-Thinking-Being-Becoming.
(5) Primary mode of time:
   • *Three groups and five levels*: Past-Present-Future/monochromic vs polychronic or linear vs cyclical.
(6) Relations with natural environment:
   • *Three levels*: Subjugation (super natural forces)/Mastery/Harmony/(free will).
(7) The use of space (human relations):
   • *Two levels*: Private vs Public.

From a broad perspective and based on the relevant literature, the cultural orientations framework may be explained by 28 sub-dimensions (elements) within 7 categories (Aycan *et al.*, 2007; Boyacigiller *et al.*, 2003; Maznevski *et al.*, 2002). This framework focuses only on the very nature of the human being and his/her relationships with (responses to) the physical environment, supernatural forces, with self, with others, with space and with time and his/her communication styles in the life period.

In terms of the purpose of this study, a hybrid model is developed by the author for clarification of approved methodological link between research purpose, selection of different culture models and the use of correct research approach in any given culture study in the field of organizational behavior and cross-cultural management.

## The proposed model of culture in OB and cross-cultural studies

The author proposes a hybrid model which would facilitate the adoption of the research methodology most suited to the research objective in studies of culture. The genesis of this model grew out of the confusion which exists in culture studies in the field of management and organization. Mere applications of some well-known measurement instruments may result in inadequate outcomes, especially if the correct research approaches are not used or if the importance of value dimensions and value priorities are not taken into consideration.

The model would be of help to researchers and academicians in establishing the methodological link between their research purpose, selection of different culture models and the use of correct research approach. The proposed three-domain culture model consists of the following components as shown in Figure 1:

- The criteria to choose the appropriate research approach (i.e. qualitative vs quantitative), the value dimension such as individual level versus country level (in Hofstede's (1998) own terminology, ecological fallacy).

- The value priority as actual or ideal.

- The model also identifies the domains of culture as A) global orientation, B) socio-cultural dimension (national culture) and C) organizational culture dimension. The specific culture study may be described as C1) qualitative/
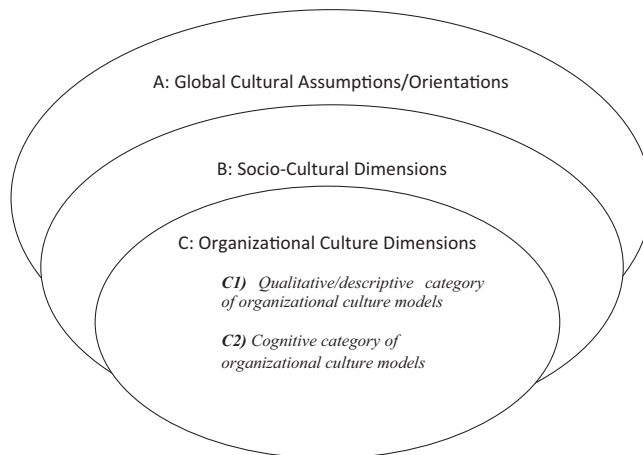


**Figure 1.**
The proposed three-domain culture model

A: Global Cultural Assumptions/Orientations

B: Socio-Cultural Dimensions

C: Organizational Culture Dimensions

*C1) Qualitative/descriptive category of organizational culture models*

*C2) Cognitive category of organizational culture models*

descriptive or C2) cognitive. Clearly, A encompasses B and C, while B encompasses C. The three domains of culture have 13 interrelated common determinants (variables) as follows:

- Common determinants (13 variables) of three basic cultural domains, in fact, are related closely with the terminology used by different scholars and researchers in the field of sociology, social psychology, anthropology and organizational behavior, as displayed in Table II.

Each common determinant (variable) is explained below:

- *Conception of self*: Terms of (self-orientation, collective orientation) used by Parsons (Hofstede, 2011), Hofstede (individualism-collectivism), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (individualism-communitarianism), Schwartz (autonomy-conservation), GLOBE (collectivism) and the same terms used by Triandis.
- *Relation with nature*: Schwartz's (harmony and universalism) and the terms of subjugation–mastery–harmony as one dimension of cultural orientations.
- *Relation with authority*: The term power distance used by Hofstede and (GLOBE); individualism-collectivism and hierarchy (Schwartz); Fiske's authority ranking
- *Relation with others*: One of the basic dimensions of cultural orientations, egalitarianism, hierarchy (Schwartz), humane orientation (GLOBE), communal sharing (Fiske) and communal culture (Goffee and Jones).
- *Life challenge*: The need for dependency related with mode of activity in terms of doing, thinking, being and becoming. Also directly related to self-concept as well as Schwartz's self-enhancement, autonomy and Hofstede's masculinity and feminity as well as collectivism (dependence on groups); parochial (Hofstede), clan culture (Trompenaars).
- *Mode of social behavior*: Continuum between individualistic and collectivist behavior as used almost all of the scholars and (GLOBE). Individualism related with family, freedom and autonomy in contrast collectivism related to group orientation and shared goals.

| Common variables | Accompanying analysis level | Cultural domain |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Conception of self | Individual | A |
| Relation with nature | Individual | A |
| Relation with authority | Individual/cultural/organizational | A/B/C |
| Relation with others | Individual/cultural/organizational | A/B/C |
| Life challenge (dependent vs independent) | Individual/cultural | A/B |
| Mode of social behavior (I vs We) | Cultural/organizational | B/C |
| Orientation toward change | Cultural/organizational | B/C |
| Particularism versus universalism | Cultural/organizational | B/C |
| Mode of communication | Individual/cultural/organizational | A/B/C |
| Living versus loving | Cultural/organizational | A/B/C |
| Procedural versus autonomous | Cultural/organizational | B/C |
| Family type versus professional | Cultural/organizational | A/B/C |
| Desolation versus gratification | Cultural/organizational | B/C |

Table II.
Common determinants (13 variables) of 3 basic cultural domains

- *Orientation toward change*: Being open minded, achievement, self-direction, intellectual autonomy (Schwartz); low level uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede), Achievement (Trompenaars), future-oriented (cultural orientation) and (GLOBE); Adhocracy culture (Cameron and Quinn): adaptability (Denison).

- *Particularism vs. universalism*: Continuum between established standards, societal codes and less attention to societal codes, rules and standards, in favor of inequality Trompenaars, (Schwartz); market-pricing (Fiske).

- *Mode of communication*: Low and high context societies (Hall); open-close systems (Hofstede); specific versus diffuse (Trompenaars), generative, flow of information (Westrum), coordination and integration and empowerment (Denison), clan type, communication (Cameron and Quinn).

- *Living vs. loving*: Related with the quality of making contact with others, being affective or neutral (Triandis), quality of life (Hofstede), intellectual autonomy, egalitarianism (Schwartz), gender egalitarianism, humane orientation (GLOBE); communal (Goffee and Jones), communal sharing (Fiske).

- *Procedural versus autonomous*: Related with the same dimension of the organizational culture models of Hofstede, Trompenaars, Deal and Kennedy as well as with the models developed by Denison and Cameron and Quinn Triandis, Schwartz, Trompenaars.

- *Family type versus professional*: Related with the same dimension of the organizational culture models of Hofstede, Trompenaars, Deal and Kennedy as well as with the models developed by Denison and Cameron and Quinn Triandis, Schwartz and Fiske as well as cultural orientation of "relation with others".

- *Desolation versus gratification*: According to Parsons, gratification, hedonism or affectivity is one of the most distinct human behavior, and Hofstede's sixth and the newest dimension is also titled as indulgence versus restraint (Hofstede, 2011).

Prior to the methodological suggestions for effective use of the proposed hybrid model, it would be useful to draw the attention to the study of Tersine and Riggs (1976, p. 30) on the classification of models in management which was developed for "predicting the outcome of decisions or conditions without actually carrying out the real situation". Tersine and Riggs's classification has eight characteristics that models should pose to effectively represent and examine any given subject. These eight characteristics and their relation to the proposed culture model is shown in Table III.

Although the selection of methodological approaches to be used in cultural studies is beyond the scope of this paper, the proposed hybrid model serves to facilitate the choice of the correct research method, value dimension, value priorities and the relevant culture circle (domain) for those with an interest in conducting cultural studies.

Common cultural (13) determinants are interrelated to each other, and consequently, these adjoining points indicate the association between three cultural circle (domain). While the determinant of 'relation with authority' is a common variable in all culture domains, 'procedural vs. autonomous' is a common variable in two culture domains only. Then, the crucial issue becomes not only the selection of culture domains, but also the selection of common determinants which fits the purpose of proposed research study and the use of methodological techniques.

| Model classification Eight characteristics of models | Sub-characteristics | Culture models Application of model classification to culture models |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Function | Descriptive | Organizational culture models |
| | | Socio-cultural dimensions |
| | Predictive | – |
| | Normative | Cultural orientations |
| 2. Structure | Iconic | Cultural orientations |
| | Analogue | Organizational culture models |
| | | Socio-cultural dimensions |
| | Symbolic | – |
| 3. Dimensionality | Two-dimensional | Organizational culture models |
| | Multi-dimensional | Socio-cultural dimensions |
| 4. Degree of certainty | Certainty | – |
| | Conflict | – |
| | Risk | – |
| | Uncertainty | All cultural models |
| 5. Temporal reference | Static | Cultural orientations |
| | Dynamic | Organizational culture models |
| | | Socio-cultural dimensions |
| 6. Degree of generality | Specialized | Organizational culture models |
| | General | Socio-cultural dimensions |
| | | Cultural orientations |
| 7. Degree of closure | Closed | All cultural models |
| | Open | – |
| 8. Degree of quantification | Qualitative | Qualitative research approaches are verbal |
| | Mental | models. More appropriate for cultural |
| | Verbal | orientations |
| | Quantitative | The use of statistical models possible for |
| | Statistical | all cultural models; however, due to its |
| | Optimization | simplifying nature, then, cultural models |
| | Heuristic | are heuristic |
| | Simulation | |

**Note:** The right hand column is added by the author of the present study
**Source:** [a] Based on Tersine and Riggs's (1976) study on models in management

**Table III.**
Model classification
and culture studies[a]

Any given study of culture simply indicates the critical function of values which are learned and shared as the cognitive structures can be described and understood at individual or collective (country) level. This is the main problematic methodological as well as conceptual issue involved in all types of cultural studies. This issue is known as "ecological fallacy" (Hofstede, 1998, p. 480), which means the misuse of cultural-level values because of applying those values to individual-level values. In terms of cross-national studies, analysis of cultural-level values is related to the number of aggregate cases but on the number of respondents. In other words, if there are two countries going to be compared in regard to cultural values, what is important would not be the number of cases but the total number of individuals participated in the study.

Table IV indicates the set of common variables and the corresponding level of analysis within the chosen level of cultural domain as a general guide for culture studies.

As it is explained, the author of this study has identified 3 distinct cultural domains which cannot be mixed up for social investigations, indicate content and coverage of each cultural domain and also describe 13 common variables related to the 3 cultural domains. While some of these 13 common determinants of culture can be used in all domains, some of them can be use only in one of the cultural domains due to the nature of the variable as well as the nature of the relevant cultural domain.

In terms of any given research purpose, first, researchers should decide which of the three cultural domains would be the most appropriate one for their study. Second, they should choose the most suitable cultural framework in line with their study purpose. The common 13 determinants of culture would be of help to reach a correct decision for deciding on the use of correct cultural framework by taking into consideration the accompanying analysis level in line with the selected cultural domain. Once this decision is reached, researchers might select more easily the research approach, the type of value dimensions, value priorities and the relevant cultural (circle) domain for their study. In spite of having established certain guidelines as displayed in above given tables, researchers must also pay attention to the methods of data collection used/developed by scholars and researchers for their own culture model.

## Concluding remarks

This paper describes and explains not only the contents and coverage of organizational culture models, socio-cultural dimensions and cultural orientations but also the key distinctions between themselves as a contribution to the existing body of knowledge. This contribution is actually about the development of a novel, content-based classification of culture models, and the author of this study proposed a hybrid model to increase overall utilization of culture studies in the field of organizational behavior and cross-cultural management by creating a threefold model as well as introducing a set of common determinants of culture studies.

The existing organizational culture models are categorized under two headings as 'qualitative/descriptive' and 'cognitive' to understand basic cultural traits of organizations. Then, socio-cultural models are explained for classifying the individuals according to given dimensions in a social system. Finally, cultural orientations are categorized in seven major groups as universal orientations (patternings). What is really novel in this study is the attempt of showing that well-known cultural frameworks are not the tools to be used for a variety of reasons to understand or to investigate events, traits and human behaviors in cultural context. The author made a reference to the study of Tersine and Riggs (1976) to explain the fact that the proposed hybrid model has the characteristics of any given model used in social sciences for describing, explaining and predicting the subject of interest. Because there is no model "as complex as the actual reality" but "to capture the essence" (p. 30), the hybrid model presented in this study

| Table IV. | Research approaches | Value dimensions | Value priorities | Relevant cultural circle |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The set of common variables and the corresponding level of analysis within the chosen level of cultural domain | Qualitative | Individual level | Actual | A/B/C |
| | Qualitative | Country level | Actual | B/C |
| | Qualitative | Individual level | Actual/ideal | C |
| | Quantitative | Country level | Actual | B |
| | Quantitative | Individual level | Actual/ideal | C |

offers a set of determinants (13 variables) derived from relevant theoretical sources and certain suggestions for using methodological techniques in the process of any given cultural study.

The outcomes of this conceptual study have implications for academics, researchers and managers addressing a newly introduced hybrid model for a novel classification of the concept of culture in both organizational behavior and cross-cultural management to conduct research studies by making more appropriate methodological approaches without neglecting the impact of basic assumptions and values in these fields. It is assumed that the introduction of the hybrid model together with 13 common (variables) determinants might be helpful for additional understanding of those new explanations that are relevant to management.

First, the use of hybrid model with three domains and the accompanying common variables can be tested by different research studies in different settings. The future studies would enable us to indicate whether the newly introduced model is of help to facilitate the choice of the research method, value dimension, value priorities and the relevant culture circle (domain) for those with an interest in conducting cultural studies.

Second, the overall evaluation of this paper might serve as a useful guide for managers to formulate various management strategies and programs in their organizations for different purposes, such as the analysis of organizational culture profile or the introduction of change strategies.

Third, as cultural typology which is no more than a method or a tool just like the one presented in this paper, it can lead academics and researchers to explore and evaluate different determinants like values and variables for understanding the deviations in human behavior in different social settings.

In summary, this study would be of help for researchers to define the purpose of their research studies on the subject of organizational culture and cross-cultural studies by means of selecting the correct culture model or correct theoretical framework to examine their subject and to analyze the data at individual, organizational or national level.

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