
Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Dr Geert Hofstede, after a decade of research, studying people who worked in IBM in more than 50 countries, initially identified the four dimensions model that could distinguish one culture from another on 1970s.

The first one is Power Distance. It refers to the social distance among people with or without power and how do they respond to their power.

The second one is Uncertainty avoidance. This refers to how people of this country react to the unknown future, to things that are unspecified and to the fact that they cannot always control the future.

The third one is Individualism. This one relates to how much individualistic or collectivist the members of a society are, if they think about themselves and their family only, or if they think about the whole group.

The fourth one is Masculinity. This refers to the characteristics a society have: Masculine, which mean that the society is driven by achievement, success and competition; or Feminine is when work and personal life are kept in a balance.

And the fifth dimension is long-term/short-term orientation. When a society is short-term oriented, it means that they want to respect the traditions, they are religious and they have their eyes in the past and they are suspicious about every change that is coming. On the other hand, if a society is long-term oriented it means that they are looking forward changes, they are pragmatic and modest. (Laurie J. Mullins, 2016, p.24)

Starting with the first, Power distance, Netherlands score is low (38) which means that there is a good understanding in the hierarchical structure. As for Individualism, it scores 80 which shows that the society is very individualistic and always think about themselves, before anyone else. When it comes to Masculinity, Netherlands scores only 14 which shows that the Netherlands citizens are more interested in the quality of life than in achieving success and being the first ones. But when it comes to Uncertainty avoidance, Netherlands scores 53 which means that they are afraid of the future, of what they can't control and they always need to have rules, to work hard and security is an important element for them. And the last one, in the "Long-term/short-term oriented" dimension, Netherlands scores 87 which means that they are pragmatic nature, trying to make things practice more than in the traditional way and they are not afraid of change. (Mindtools.com, 2017)

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