Asia Pacific
Academy of Science Pte. Ltd.

Research Article

A comparative analysis of six national cultures under the umbrella of the Hofstede's model

Amina Omrane[1,*], Mohammad Ayub Khan[2]

[1] *University of Sfax, ECSTRA Research Center, 2016, Carthage, Tunisia*

[2] *University of Monterrey, 66238, Pedro Garza Garcia, Mexico*

* Corresponding author: Amina Omrane, amina.omrane@yahoo.fr

ABSTRACT

The present study represents a comparative analysis between the national cultures of six countries: Tunisia, Germany, China, Mexico, Pakistan and the USA. The overall results of this analytical research indicated that in the light of the Hofstede's model foundations, Tunisia, Pakistan and Mexico resemble each other to a great extent. Indeed, even if they are geographically far from each other and residing in three different continents, their corresponding national cultures based on religious values, social organization, and language seem similar. Conversely, Germany, China and the US share similar cultural features, even if China is known by its collectivism. Such findings offer cross cultural opportunities and challenges for business leaders and entrepreneurs who are willing to do business in these countries.

Keywords: cross cultural management; Hofstede model; international business; national culture; qualitative method

1. Introduction

According to Hofstede (1980, 1997), culture represents the interactive aggregate of common features and characteristics that distinguish the members of one group or category of people from another, and affects their response to the surrounding environment. Indeed, culture which refers to a collective programming of the mind gathers values into mental programs, and guides individuals' behaviors towards the execution of these programs that are of utmost importance for interpersonal relationships (e.g. Hofstede, 1980). Numerous prior studies have underlined that both individual cultures and national cultural systems have a significant impact on the corporate cultural system (e.g. Tayeb, 1995; Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1985). In the realm of business, many scholars, e.g. Alvesson (2002), have mentioned that culture has a considerable effect on how international organizations' management strategies and approaches are adopted and implemented. For instance, Li, Lam and Qian, 2001; Willmott, 2000) pointed out that the national culture of any country has an important impact on its managers' and entrepreneurs' leadership practices, decisions, and human resource management. Meanwhile, e.g. Nicholls, Lane and Brechu, (1999) asserted that national cultures have a positive influence on managerial concerns and organizational activities, like incentive systems and rewards, motivation, communication, and negociation.

Cultural values, assimilated to the ideals that a society holds, are important for interpersonal trust, team work and women engagement at the workplace, etc. (e.g. Greer and Stephens, 1996; Stephens and Greer, 1995).

As for cultural differences, they refer to the variations in the beliefs, values, behaviors, and customs of different cultures, which arise from differences in history, geography, religion, and social structures. It has been demonstrated that those differences play a significant role in the way people conduct their lives and behave at the workplace (Hofstede, 1997).

Several studies (e.g. Khilji, 2003) have been conducted on the importance of learning about national cultures and their impact on the operations of organizations. However, to our best of knowledge, there are no researches on the issue of organizational cultural differences and similarities between countries like Tunisia, Germany, Mexico, China, Pakistan and the USA. Besides, as asserted by Ghemawat and Reiche (2011), cultural differences that are not understood and appreciated can lead to failure in business and social life. That being the case, there is a dearth of literature on this topic and the present paper attempts to address such related issue.

Numerous researches have been carried out to examine the effectiveness of national cultures and their role in developing and improving the operations of organizations. Such studies stressed that the productivity of companies and their performance could be affected when cultures are not well-understood and managed within companies. For instance, ignoring the cultural heritage, practices, and traditions can lead to interpersonal conflicts, miscommunication, or disrespectful behaviors. Moreover, failing to perceive and apprehend cultural nuances can result in nonchalance or unintentional biases. Employee creativity, engagement, and morale could thus be decreased; and the work environment could be also affected.

However, even if several investigations have highlighted the cultural differences and similarities between some countries (like German, …), there is still no holistic studies that have undertaken an analytical comparison between the organizational cultures of Tunisia, Germany, Mexico, China, Pakistan, and the USA.

2. Conceptual framework: From culture to cultural variables through the lens of the Hofstede model

2.1. Culture: Meanings, characteristics, and scope

The role of national cultures in shaping the work environment and other social organizations has been highlighted by several researchers in social sciences and other related disciplines (Tayeb, 1994; Zawawi, 2008). For those scholars, culture is the programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one human group to another. For instance, according to Hofstede (1983) who is considered as a pioneer in the culture-related studies, culture could be assimilated to all that what we share with other members of our nation, region, or group, but not with members of other nations, regions, or groups. For Nicolaidis (1991), it could rather be perceived as an independent environmental variable that concerns one specific country. It encompasses values, beliefs, and principles that are shared between the individuals who belong to a particular social group/community in a specific country of origin/nationality (Anwar and Chaker, 2003). Accordingly, "culture is created, acquired, and/or learned, developed and passed on by a group of people, consciously or unconsciously, to subsequent generations. It includes everything that a group thinks, says, does, and makes – its customs, ideas, mores, habits, traditions, language, and shared systems of attitudes and feelings– that help to create standards for people to co-exist" (Rijamampianina, 1996). In other words, culture refers more particularly to the system of fundamental beliefs and the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that a particular social group creates, learns, or discovers in connection with its members' internal and external integration (Hofstede, 1980). Indeed, everything we own, do, and think is influenced by our culture which encompasses art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO, 2002). In each social group/community, every individual acquires and develops his culture through

his membership, which is made up of a set of values, beliefs, and assumptions, that shape their attitudes, behaviors and customs (Ghemawat and Reiche, 2011).

2.2. The national cultural system

The national cultural system is constituted of rooted values, beliefs, norms, customs, patterns of behaviors, that reflect the identity and main characteristics of the population of a nation (Agar; Hofstede). It is shaped by factors such as history, geography, language, religion, as well as social and political structures.

For Nicholls, Lane and Brechu (1999), the national cultural system represents the collective programming of mind (Nicholls, Lane and Brechu, 1999; Agar; Hofstede). It is also assimilated to "a set of historically evolved, learned and shared values, attitudes and means. The term nation refers to culture, social, economic and political institutions influence how organizations are managed in different environments" (Tayeb, 1994).

A national cultural system refers to the broader system of cultural elements that are interconnected and operate within a nation. It includes various components such as language, religion, education, arts, media, social organizations/institutions, and governance. These components interact and influence each other, shaping the overall cultural fabric of a nation.

In essence, culture is a multi-dimensional concept that can involve various cultural systems within a society. Culture is also formed by inner elements (e.z. historic heritage, beliefs, values, cultural codes), cultural activities (i.e., roles, communication patterns, rules, technology, arts), and cultural systems (i.e., religion, economic, law, education, social organization, health and politics) (Dodd, 1998; Gannon et al, 1994).National culture refers specifically to the culture associated with a nation, while a national cultural system includes the interconnected elements and institutions that contribute to the formation and expression of that culture.

In order to analyze and understand the multifaceted and intricate nature of national cultural systems, cultures are to be classified into different levels, corresponding to individuals, groups, organizations, or industrial/national and geographic regions (Ghemawat and Reiche, 2011). A national cultural system represents a large system of cultural components that are interconnected and operate within a country. It comprises various elements, like language, religious principles, education, arts, social organizations, and governance. Those components interact and affect each other, shaping the overall cultural system.

Language: In the world of international commerce and management, the significance of language as a national cultural element is unquestionable. It serves as a medium of communication through which international business/trade could be promoted, as far as tourists, foreigners and international businessmen are concerned and involved. In this line of thoughts, many scholars emphasized that learning the language of the host country helps understanding its cultural specificities, the cultural sensitivity of the management and staff there, as well as the main features and character of its local citizens, including employees and managers (Hall, 1976; Hooker, 2008).

Language has both verbal (spoken words), paraverbal (voice, intonation, rhythm, etc), and nonverbal (facial expressions, gestures, mimics) characteristics.

According to Hooker (2008), context levels are also assigned to languages. Languages can then be classified into high and low context (Hooker, 2008). Indeed, persons who act in low-context cultures concentrate on their spoken words, messages, and the content of their speech while communicating.

When conversing, speakers of low context languages concentrate on the words, by providing clear direct messages, and their substance, as well as other guarantees like written precise documents and materials and information-rich advertisement (Hooker, 2008). Conversely, speakers of high context languages place more

emphasis on context, surrounds, and verbal communication. They use an indirect language, an implicit communication, metaphors, and gestures to convey the meaning of their messages. They put the emphasis on the contextual factors to build up long-lasting relationships/partnerships that are based on a mutual trust and a collective harmony, relying on nonverbal cues and shared experiences (Hall, 1976).

In low-context cultures, information is explicitly spelled out independently of the context itself (Hall, 1976).

Therefore, language has a crucial role in communicating, developing and managing interpersonal relationships, establishing interpersonal affairs via negotiation, concluding transnational agreements and multinational partnerships, and managing organizations across national borders (Steers, Sanchez-Runde, and Nardon, 2010).

Language is also used to transmit and preserve our history, customs, and knowledge. Language and linguistic structures are culture centered which means while the culture supplies the meaning and meaning-making mechanisms, language in itself provides the symbols to support the delivery of such meanings to the intended audience or target (Steers, Sanchez-Runde and Nardon, 2010). In nutshell, language reflects the culture by presenting ideas, thoughts and artifacts. It is a channel of sharing information, knowledge, values, experiences and thoughts (Khan and Panarina, 2017).

Religion: Religion plays the role of a foundation stone in every aspect of human life (Balan and Vreja, 2013). In compliance with the protestant work ethical principles that have been highlighted by Max Weber (2004), diligence and hard work result in a productive labor, enabling the individual to serve God and receive his blessing and mercy. It might contribute, not only to the overall well-being of the individual, but also to the common good and the prosperity of the whole society around by serving others (Banks, 1998). Stewardship is also of utmost importance for protestants who commonly believe that one's should be accountable to God by saving his time and managing wisely his talents and internal/external resources, including money (Weber, 2004). His ethical behavior and integrity might enable him to fulfill his duties and succeed in his professional life. Conversely, leisure activities (e.g. gambling, going frequently to bars and nightclubs) are not well perceived (Furnham, 1990).

Similarly, the Islamic religion puts a great emphasis on the crucial role of work and its benefits in the individual's life. By doing so, islamic messages and guidance vehemently support the idea that each human being is expected to prove his contribution to the development of the world. For Hassan (1998), as well as Ahmad and Owoyemi (2012), time should not be wasted. It should be perceived as an act of worship by planning its corresponding activities/tasks that enable the person to achieve the expected results. Hence, Islam emphasizes the importance of work and the necessity for each human being to earn his livelihood in order to maintain his dignity, and independence, in the eyes of his peers, as well as among his community, and society as a whole. He is incited to perform his duties and religious obligations. and a motivational reward. Additionally, he is conveyed to uphold justice, efficiency, and diligence, while preserving the public interest. For instance, in the workplace, every worker's consciousness should be raised so that he fulfills his job and contributes to the societal development (Hassan, 1988; Ahmad and Owoyemi, 2012).

Thus, religion could be assimilated to the set of shared attitudes or common beliefs and perceptions about the way of thinking that people regard as the ultimate truth. It also involves the moral standards, ideals, customs, and rituals that ae connected to this system. Moreover, it has been commonly argued that religion has a variety of effects on society, which in turn affects business and consumer behavior (Hassan, 1988; Ahmad and Owoyemi, 2012; Weber, 2004; Banks, 1998).

Social organizations: with regard to social organizations, researchers contended that it is of utmost interest that each national culture reflects its diverse social systems, by organizing its society around family systems, neighborhood systems, ethnic group systems, and tribe systems, (Georgas, 2003). It pertains also to social organizations to define and compose its cultural systems, with reference to its groups. In other words, social organizations are the good ambassadors not only of family features, origins, and trees; but also of social structural hierarchy, distributed roles, and even ethnicity-related trends within organizations (Georgas, 2003). For instance, family represents a social group that is defined by a shared place of habitation, an economic cooperation, and reproductive behaviors within this common place. This implies that whether family is nuclear or extended depends on how it will be understood and defined by the members of its social group (Georgas, 2003).

From the above statements mentioned above, it appears that: most of the studies undertaken on differences among national cultures and the influence of such disparities on organizations emphasized that the national culture has meaningful impacts on leadership style and governance, communication and motivation, organizational design, personal expectations of work, and rewards in organizations (Nicholas et al., 1999). Moreover, understanding national cultures' features is important for upgrading cross-cultural awareness, managing cultural diversity, and adopting appropriate strategies for communication and collaboration in such a globalized world. Despite the fact that national and organizational cultures differ in the fact that national cultural differences are primarily based on values and less so on practices (Hofstede, 1997, 2007), they are nonetheless interdependent. Indeed, national cultures can have an indirect or direct influence on organizational cultures and vice versa. According to UNESCO (2002), national cultural identity is essential for determining human traits, encompassing self-worth, functional effectiveness, mental health, and quality of life, all of which have an impact on management approaches adopted in organizations.

2.3. The national cultural dimensions

In the light of the cultural dimensions' theory suggested by Hofstede (2010) and in compliance with the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) model, House et al (2004) highlighted that there are six diverse cultural dimensions that could interfere and affect behaviors within a cultural national system. Those variables include: 1) power distance index (PDI); 2) Individualism VS Collectivism; 3) Uncertainty avoidance index; 4) Masculinity VS Femininity; 5) Indulgence VS Restraint; 6) Long-term Orientation VS Short-term Orientation. Those dimensions harbor an essential role in in-depth understanding values, behaviors, and social norms within a society. and assist in turn entrepreneurs and managers in navigating intercultural differences, and cultural skills that are required for running a business in such a multinational and global environment.

In this present study, in order to compare and contrast the national cultural systems of the six countries under study, the six variables stated above would be taken into consideration. A few of these variables are being considered in order to compare and contrast the national cultural systems of the six countries under study.

Long term versus short term orientation: This element of the national cultural system depicts how individuals, pertaining to a specific society, organize, invest and manage their time.

The concepts of feeling, perception, and use of time are all included. Either nature or people influence the passage of time. Time can be wasted or invested because it is a valuable resource. People are more on schedule, agenda-driven, and monochromatic in cultures where time is seen as a controllable factor. The corporate management culture includes business activities including deadlines, planning, scheduling meetings, and accepting responsibility for late deliveries of goods and services. People are less punctual and polychromic in cultures where time is viewed as having to do with the environment or nature (Macan, 1994; Taylor and

5

Mackenzie, 1986). According to Khan and Panarina (2017), how people perceive time will influence the way they manage it. In monochromic time-oriented cultures, workers set goals and plan accordingly in order to increase job performance and satisfaction. Time management influences then every aspect of an individual's life including work, family, personal and social life (Khan and Panarina, 2017).

While in short-term oriented societies traditions and norms are preferred to be kept in a normative perspective, in long-term oriented ones, thrift and efforts towards a contemporary education are recommended as the best way to prepare for the future in a pragmatic approach (Hofstede et al, 2008; The Hofstede Center, n.d.).

High versus low power distance: This dimension appraises the degree of acceptance / rejection of the unequal distribution influence or power within a society or inside organizations (Hofstede et al, 2008; Hofstede, 2010). Power includes by here distribution of knowledge, wealth, resource, information, authority, and the relationship between the boss and subordinates. In a low power distance society, individuals feel equal to their peers (especially to superiors). On the contrary, in a high-power distance society, individuals expect and accept that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede, 1997; Hofstede et al, 2008).

Individualism versus collectivism: This cultural dimension stands for the extent to which individuals living in a specific society care about themselves versus care about others. Individualistic societies tend to be more self-oriented, where the ties between persons are loose (Hofstede et al, 2008). In such societies, individual independency and interests are protected and promoted in order to gain personal performance and outcomes. In contrast, collectivist cultures are group-oriented ones. Interdependency and group interests override individual interests and persons tend to be well integrated into cohesive in-groups. They are accountable to social norms and individual performance is rather assessed by social standards (Hofstede, 1997; Hofstede, 2016).

Masculinity versus femininity: This dimension measures the extent to which individuals in a particular culture are motivated by competition, personal achievement and social gender (Hofstede et al, 2008; The Hofstede Center, n.d.). In masculine societies, men are expected to be assertive, ambitious, and competitive whereas women are expected to be defendant and supportive. However, in feminine societies, individuals tend to care for others and want quality life for all (Dainton and Zelley, 2011). Social gender roles overlap and both men and women are supposed to be concerned modestly with the quality of life (Hofstede, 1997; Hofstede et al, 2008).

High versus low uncertainty avoidance: This dimension of national culture assesses the extent to which individuals in a particular society incur risks in their decision-making processes or take actions in uncertain situations (Hofstede Insights, 2019). Individuals from societies where uncertainty avoidance is high are considered as not adventurous and non-risk-takers in decision making. Such persons may need more time, information, planning and support before they make any decisions about the future. They rely on social norms, procedures, and rules to protect conformity and alleviate ambiguity and unpredictability of future events.

Contrastingly, individuals from societies where uncertainty avoidance is low tend to be high-risk takers and don't feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations (e.g. Hofstede, 1993, 1997; Hofstede et al, 2008; Hofstede, 2010).

Indulgence VS Restraint: As an extension to the Hofstede (2001), theory on national cultural system with its five dimensions, Michael Minkov (2010; Cited in Hofstede et al, 2010) suggested to add the variable "Indulgence VS Restraint". According to this researcher, to expand our understanding of cultural differences among nations, societal values related to enjoyment, happiness, pleasure, and control of desires, etc. should also be considered. In other words, this sixth dimension explores the extent to which a society enables

individuals to express their immediate gratification of desires and enjoy pleasures of life; versus promoting restraint, self-discipline, and strict social norms. Indulgence, as highlighted via this dimension goes against what Weber (2004) argued in respect to protestant work ethic. Indeed, as claimed by this scholar, hard work, saving money, and time management are well encouraged; whereas leisure activities (e.g. going to nightclubs, gambling, etc.) are seen as religiously unethical (Furnham, 1990). Weber (2004) stressed also that work is regarded as the most significant task in one's life because it is thought to be a means of receiving the divine favor and kindness. In the same perspective, Banks (1998) revealed that individuals 'wellbeing society is highly influenced by their work. The Islamic religion goes also in the same direction and puts the emphasis on the value of work in the everyday one's life. As contended by Ahmad and Owoyemi (2012), time should not be wasted with the purpose to seek the divine pleasure. It is to be valued in compliance with Islamic principles and guidance which fervently encourage planning to attain successful outcomes and take part in global development (Hassan, 1988).

Therefore, as corroborated by Hassan (1988), Ahmad and Owoyemi (2012), Banks (1998), and Weber (2004), religion influences the cultural heritage and perceptions of individuals wherever they are. Because it encompasses the moral codes, values, traditions, and rituals within systems of institutions, it could then affect their attitudes, behaviors, and even decisions It appears then that religion is a system of common beliefs or attitudes concerning a being or a system of thought that persons consider to be sacred, divine, or of high veracity.

3. Presentation of the six different cultural specificities: (Tunisian, German, Pakistani, Mexican, Chinese and US national cultures)

3.1. The Tunisian culture

The national culture of Tunisia is mainly characterized by collectivism, a mid-high-power distance and masculinity, a low uncertainty avoidance, as well as a short-term orientation. Indeed, Tunisians are known by key personal features like sociability, friendliness, and high integration qualities. Group-oriented and turned to others, they tend to spend a lot of time-sharing conversations and moments together in common spaces, especially in cafés (Yahiaoui, 2004; Yahiaoui and Zoubir, 2006).

Tunisian religion, high-context language, as well as common shared habits can explain the collectivist spirit. Indeed, individuals tend to share common principles and values turning around modesty, indulgence, sociability, and generosity. Their interpersonal relationships based on trust seem to be marked by a certain religious sensibility (Hernandez, 2001; El Akremi et al, 2007). Besides, family status, values, and habits are respected and mostly maintained; and even if the Tunisian culture is quite masculine, women are well educated and participate a lot in the professional life. However, they have to fight more in order to get salaries, responsibilities, and consideration equal to those of men (Yahiaoui and Zoubir, 2006).

The Tunisian culture is also based on the development of uncertain situations, especially due to the frequent amends of formal rules and laws after the 2011 revolution. Persons tend then to accept the risk and to cope with different situations. Their religious beliefs and values can help them to embrace uncertainty instead of avoiding it. In fact, believing that their destiny is already decided by the divine power, in what is called a sense of fatalism, makes them flexible and short term- oriented (Yahiaoui and Zoubir, 2006; Balambo, 2014).

When it comes to business trends, in the majority of big companies created a long time ago, Tunisian managers take the most of their strategic decisions without involving their subordinates so that the most prevalent leadership style seems to be centralized and autocratic or paternalistic. In other words, employees cannot really destabilize their organizational system without the approval of their bosses. That is why in such

companies, a hierarchical power is maintained (Yahiaoui and Zoubir, 2006). Besides, given the fact that most Tunisian companies are family-owned, it seems hard to make a separation between family and professional relationships in such enterprises (Yousfi, 2011). Family cooperation behavior seems then to be embarrassing for non-family members.

However, in this 21st century, new start-ups and high-tech ventures are adopting a cooperative business model based on a medium power distance. Their mangers seem to be open to the participation of their stakeholders, who can undertake several changes in their organizations thanks to their support (Omrane, 2020).

3.2. The Pakistani culture

The national culture of Pakistan is regarded as collectivist, status-conscious, and based on a large power distance, a short-term orientation and a high uncertainty avoidance (Khilji, 2001). The social set up is family centered and life is built within groups (Lyon, 1993). The British influence on Pakistani culture is believed to have created a social class system, where the elite symbolize money, power and status (Khan and Panarina, 2017). The education system in Pakistan also requires surrendering to authority-personal initiatives, and to independence in decision making (Khilji, 2003). The Pakistani society is based on a joint family system, and it is viewed as a collectivistic one, where long-term commitment and loyalty are widely important for both individuals and organizations (Baloch, Ali, Ahsan and Mufty, 2010). On the other hand, the Pakistani society tends to be masculine, where men are expected to be assertive and competitive whereas women are expected to be supportive.

When it comes to business trends, Pakistani have a tendency to keep strong needs for security via social norms and authority guidance. Besides, they tend to disapprove independence in decision taking processes (Khiliji, 2004). In fact, in Pakistan, the business culture relies on personal relationships and trade is well spread and developed among close acquaintances and friends. As stated by Khan and Panarina (2017), whenever interactive negotiations and informal fruitful exchanges have been successfully undertaken inside the family sphere, or the social realm of two Pakistani companies, the joint business could be then run between the assigned parties, and serious formal conversations could be engaged accordingly. More precisely, if the targeted business is to be launched with a foreign international firm, a lot of committed lobbying and open dialogue has to be initiated before tackling the new partnership. Indeed, friendly and constructive relationships should be developed and highly built up on trust and positive interactions, before holding formal meetings the deal (Khiliji, 2004; Anjum, Zia, Shamsi and Aziz, 2013).

To sum up, the Pakistani culture appears as a collectivist one, which promotes uncertainty avoidance, short-term orientation, and high-power distance, and where managers in corporations follow rigid rules and regulations, planning, punctuality and security (Khilji, 2001; Rehman, 2010; Khan and Panarina, 2017).

3.3. The Chinese culture

The national culture of China is described as collectivist, masculine, success-oriented and driven, and having a high-power distance (The Hofstede Center, n.d.). The social set up is family centered and people act within the group and in the interests of its different parties. People keep a strong need for security, formal authority, and guidance in decision making, with the ideal of simply following the rules regulations, and directions set forth by their government (Hofstede, 2016).

In general, the Chinese culture is well known by its values that revolve around hard work, perseverance and strategic planning. Chinese have future-oriented behaviors and an extended view of time with regard to adaptation and long-term orientation (PSU, 2016). They are quite used to refuse the temptations of immediate satisfaction and tend to regulate their behaviors until their projects become successfully performed (PSU, 2016).

Concerning the issue of whether the Chinese society is masculine or feminine, Hofstede (2016) argued that China is a masculine society, even if the general understanding supports the notion that many gender stereotypes and biases are absent in China. Indeed, the emphasis is widely put on the balancing aspects of the masculine and the feminine, so that several women are present in business and commerce.

When it comes to the business sphere, Chinese tends to favor the group above the individual and the group-think or the cooperative behavior based on harmony and loyalty above personal interests and conflicts. Chinese commitment to their work, their seriousness, as well as their success orientation may motivate them to sacrifice family and leisure time to work. Having fun and enjoying life is not so important to them in comparison with work. That is why inequalities amongst subordinates and superiors' relationships are accepted. In other words, even if bosses manifest sometimes a formal authority, sanctions, or power abuse at the workplace, employees do not complain and stay optimistic about leadership (The Hofstede Center, n.d.). Moreover, they are generally controlled to a large extent in order to obey the rules and laws. This can explain how much Chinese accept conformity to norms, and need a strong guidance whenever taking professional decisions.

Generally speaking, the Chinese culture promotes long term orientation and uncertainty avoidance where managers in corporations follow rules and regulations, planning, loyalty and perseverance. This culture is infused with a historical sense of honesty, ethics, and as a superpower in the world.

3.4. The Mexican culture

The Mexican national culture is pursued as a collectivist, uncertainty avoidant, and short-term focused one, where high power distance and group orientation are well practiced. More precisely, previous researches (e.g., Kras 1989; Kras, 1994) stated that Mexicans have a tendency to be fatalistic minded and collectivist at the same time. Mexicans consider both religious values (majority are Roman Catholics) and spending good life essential in each person´s life. They work to live and enjoy good time with family members and friends, by exercising sports or any other hobbies (Khan and Panarina, 2017). As collectivist citizens, Mexicans show a propensity for socializing and maintaining their cohesive connections and networks while working to support their lifestyle. They peacefully and willingly follow the social rules and norms of the community. Apart from sociability and cohesiveness, family status and education are respected in Mexico (Kras, 1989, 1994). According to Katz (2006), Mexicans are known by their behaviors that are highly marked by polite communication, sincerity, diplomacy, as well as integrity, so that they are easily able to interact effectively with their friends, close relatives, and even their peers and colleagues. Such positive features enabled them to easily develop and nurture successful and strong social and professional relationships.

As outlined by Davis and Nayebpour (2004), the process of establishing business or work partnerships may take time, information, and consultation in Mexico. For Mexicans, a successful organization reflects the friendliness, confidence, and goodwill of its leaders and different members, so that they tend to deal with individuals, rather than with organizations.

While doing business in Mexico, decision-making is centralized and authority is concentrated in the top management (Teegen and Doh, 2002). However, directors and managers are not only focused on setting the organizational objectives that are required for their decision- making processes; but they are also so involved in managing the everyday operations. For instance, they might rather resolve the interpersonal conflicts, or evaluate the attained results of workers via the recourse to established performance criteria and KPI standards; and without involving the staff from the lower hierarchy in such tasks (Nicholls et al., 1999; Cited by Khan and Panarina, 2017).

As for their leadership style, it appears that Mexican managers have the tendency to adopt the paternalistic style by acting like fathers for their workers, even if they don't involve them neither in making decisions, nor controlling the results (Nicholls et al., 1999; Shimoni and Bergmann, 2006). In fact, all Mexican firms are managed like family companies, where the commitment of workers is highly practiced, in the presence of their decisive and assertive superiors. Those letters are more likely to be averse to risks and rash or intuitive decisions, in compliance with their uncertainty avoidant culture. As a family-centered and a hierarchical society, the Mexican one accepts socioeconomic classes and unequal power distribution. As a result, in Mexico, intrinsic motives for working are more common, and respect for others is valued more highly than financial gains. This society is regarded as one that values intimate, hierarchical ties. This is true in the sense that a father's authority and experience far outweigh those of his children's. The chief/director is seen as a loving parent who knows better than his employees what should be done and what is best for them in this power-oriented culture.

3.5. The American culture

The American national culture is regarded as a long-term oriented and competitive one, which is characterized by richness, diversity, and vibrancy. It varies across regions, cities, and communities within the country, and promotes freedom, equality, independence, and individual privacy among citizens, even if non-Americans consider it as a sign of selfishness and individualism. According to Althen, Doran and Szmania (2003), Americans are hardworking, disciplined, action-oriented and Result-driven persons. Indeed, they usually do their best to control their personal and professional lives. They are also known to be materialistic, but direct and assertive, as they evolve to communicate in a peaceful and egalitarian manner (Cook, 2012). In business settings, they are so determined to be independent, decisive and successful, not only in the short-term, but also in the long run (Brown, 1973; Nord et al., 1976; Gallant, 2013). Moreover, they sustain their efforts to plan and manage well their resources, so that the environment could be controlled by them, and assists them in serving the humankind (Bjorn, 1999). They tend to invest effectively their time to gain in performance and success. Even if American business managers are mainly focused on short term profits and gains rather than sustainability; their renewed competencies, wise reasoning and efficient creative methods of solving problems enable them to evolve (Bjorn, 1999). Furthermore, as Americans live for their jobs, financial incentives, prizes and social standing form the effective motivational tools for them.

That is why, the American society is known to be a self-achievement and interpersonal-competitiveness driven one. Moreover, for Hofstede (2011), the US society is inclined towards indulgence as it encourages free gratification of human desires related to enjoying life and seeking happiness (The Hofstede Center, n.d.).

In fact, as a result of American society's emphasis on independence, self-sufficiency, and individualism, American businesses tend to be less authoritarian and more flexible, with workers having responsibility over operational-level decision-making and oversight (Jiméneza, Faschib and Valdezc, 2009). That is why Americans welcome change without any difficulty. Their capabilities of taking risks and managing changes are successfully leveraged for the betterment of them and their society.

To conclude, in compliance with the Hofstede's model related to cultural dimensions, it appears that American citizens are mostly individualistic and high in masculinity, but low in uncertainty avoidance and power distance.

It's important to note that American culture is not homogenous and varies across different regions, cities, and communities within the country. This diversity contributes to the vibrancy and richness of American cultural expression.

3.6. The German culture

According to Hofstede who explores the German culture through the lens of the 6-D model, the culture is supported by a strong middle class, a direct and a participative communication, and a common meeting style. Social status is well shown by cars, technical devices, …with a main focus on the parent-children relationship. However, the role of religion is so small, and even no significant in many cities such as Berlin or Hamburg where people are non-religious (Majidi et al, 2015).

The German society is considered as a stereotypically masculine one, where roles between women and men are well separated; and such a system starts from school and continues throughout the organizational life. However, Germans have a tendency to be restrained (by social norms) with a pragmatic orientation as they do not put a great emphasis on leisure time, and do not control the gratification of their desires. By doing so, they can use their savings to buy what they need without indebting themselves by credits. Indeed, German citizens feel threatened by uncertainty and unknown situations. They prefer to avoid them by planning, respecting rules as well as tax legislation and laws (Majidi et al, 2015). In this perspective, they are considered as risk averse and inclined towards stability (The Hofstede center, n.d.)

According to Chhokar et al (2007) and Majidi et al (2015), Germans support widely their economy by working hard, diligently and on an orderly fashion. They are so focused at the country level, and so proud of their identity. They sustain efforts to grow up the welfare of their society and accord a great importance to their jobs so that they place emphasis on internationalization, future and hard work (The Hofstede Center, n.d.; Hofstede, 2011).

When it comes to the business sphere, even if the German culture is considered as a not highly collectivist one, it is so marked by the high expertise, professionalism, punctuality, and seriousness of its inhabitants who show a high institutional and in-group collectivism practices in their work (Majidi et al, 2015). Managers and supervisors are so respectful for their subordinates and take into consideration their proposals, with a sense of loyalty, duty and responsibility. That is why the power distance seems to be low in Germany, where subordinates do not break rules and respect social norms and job procedures and rules (Chhokar et al, 2007).

4. Empirical Comparative analysis of the different cultures (based on a qualitative and documentary research)

As mentioned in the observations above, our investigation on the comparison between the six cultures studied by here is based on three research instruments: 1) a profound literature review of the different papers and writings related to the topic; 2) a documentary study relying on the other different reports and documents linked to our subject; and 3) a qualitative study undertaken on the basis of semi-structured enquires that were conducted with different persons belonging to different nationalities. Indeed, our participation to an international fair hold in Tunisia, then to another international conference organized in Turkey during the academic year 2021-2022, enabled us to collect qualitative data on cultural features of each culture, as well as the differences between those cultures. Here after, will be outlined: 1) the perceptions of the 18 participants regarding their own cultures; and 2) the differences between cultures, after taking into account revelations of the interviewed persons as well as the documentary research statements. To do so, the focus was mainly put on the six cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede (2001), and detailed above.

4.1. Perceptions of participants on the importance of culture, cultural components and systems

In the present research work, the emphasis was put on six diverse nations that pertain to different continents, so that their comparative analysis could bring up meaningful insights and puts the light on inherited rich and diverse cultural and historical backgrounds.

For American citizens, America's culture is a mosaic one as it is enacted from an immigrant society characterized by a reach cultural diversity, dynamism, and global influence. As averred by one of the interviewed American tourists,

"America is a huge multicultural country. It remains monolithic, even if it involves many subcultural, ethnic, and religious variations and disparities among its regions. Multilingualism, multireligious beliefs, freedom, and justice are our credo". Such declaration goes in the same orientation of Moran et al (2010)'assumptions. Indeed, for those scholars.

America (USA) is considered as a culturally blended-system because of its cultural diversity/mosaics and the invasion of immigrants who have succeeded each other in its society. Indeed, the mass mobilization of immigrants from Latin America, Asia, and Africa, as well as the historical influence of British, Spanish and French have led to the American cultural, ethnic, and its religious, intermingling (Morrison, 2006; Moran, Harris and Moran, 2010).

Likewise, Mexico which is geographically its neighbor, has passed through various de-culturation and acculturation periods, starting with Aztecs and Mayan kings to the era of Spanish empire and French invasion.

The Mexican culture has experienced many changes and various de-culturation and acculturation cycles, triggered by the era of Aztecs and Mayan kings, and passing through the French invasion and the Spanish empire. Nevertheless, one of the Mexican participants stated that "our country has also witnessed many historical evasions. Nevertheless, our culture has not been altered… More than 90% of us are Catholics and all of us are practicing religious principles and customs with a lot of respect, seriousness and punctuality". In other words, and as already claimed by Gomez (1993); Kras (1994); and Noll (1992), Mexico has been able to keep its identity intact as a Latin American culture, in spite of the historical occurrences it faced.

On the other hand, the Pakistani culture perceived as a complex one, whose history is marked by multiple intrusions which date back to the invasion of Alexander; the Mongols, the Moghuls; the Persian; and the British. In addition, since its arrival in early 8th century, Islam has been the dominant religion in Pakistan, even if the influence of few other religions involving the Buddhism and the Hinduism can be observed in some Pakistani regions (Khilji, 2003; Khilji, 2001, 2004; Cited by Khan and Panarina, 2017). However, the Pakistani culture remains unified and basically found on the same values and customs revolving around religiosity. In this perspective, one of the interviewed tourists indicated that "Almost 97% of us are Muslim and we keep practicing our religion, praying, invocating, wherever we are. Our professional success is in a way emanating from our work, and self-discipline in exercising our religious duties." As asserted by Khilji (2003; 2004; Cited by Khan and Panarina, 2017), the influence of few other religions including Buddhism and Hinduism can be noticed and observed in some few regions of Pakistan. Nevertheless, religiosity represents an essential cultural driver that influences the everyday and professional life of citizens, as well as some Asian Muslim countries (e.g. Malaysia) (Omrane and Aziz, 2023).

As for the Chinese culture, it is recognized by its richness and diversity, shaped by thousands of years of history, philosophy, customs, and social structures. Besides, in China, religion has a weak influence on relationships between citizens, especially at the workplace. This could be explained by the fact that more than 70% of the population is non-religious. As revealed by one of Chinese participants

"Our culture is very rich…Our high sense of patriotism is affecting our social harmony and inclusiveness. Loyalty, ethics, dignity, respect, and proud are so important for us … Our ancestors are to be honored for usual. That is why, family gatherings and rituals harbor an important role in our culture. Our Guanxis help us a lot in our work and everyday life, as we keep developing strong connections and relationships between us, despite our huge number as citizens". Such revelation is in consonance with Confucian lessons and values, and historical roots, e.g. the Ming Dynasty, the Opium War, and the cultural impact of the West on China, which were detailed by Spence (1999).

When it comes to Germany, the participants highlighted that the Protestant Reformation of Martin Luther, the thirty Years' War, the rise of Nazism, etc, have a profound impact on politics and society in Germany. Above all, the strong education system has made German people disciplined, punctual, and very respectful for order, law, and professional and ethical duties at workplace. Their sophisticated technologies and ecological consciousness have made them proud of their advanced achievements in engineering sciences, High Technology, and sustainability. In this line of thoughts, one of the German interviewees stressed that "Innovation, precision, and efficiency are so important for our work …Quality is what seeks the German citizen. It should then be afforded to him. Rationalization is the lever of our credibility and performance".

Finally, as confirmed by Tunisian participants, the Tunisian culture is a rich tolerant and open to diversity, exchange, and communication. influenced by its history and interactions with successive civilizations and cultures throughout centuries. In fact, Tunisia has been shaped by its indigenous Berber heritage, Arab influences, and the legacies of Phoenician, Roman, Ottoman, and French colonization. One of the Tunisian interviewees mentioned that "Tunisia is a beautiful country with a sunny weather, and attractive beaches. It was one of the worldwide maritime trade empires, and home of Hannibal, the ancient Carthaginian general and rival of Rome. Many civilizations and historical events have affected our culture. The last revolution we got and called "the Arab Spring of 2011" has affected negatively our economy and our culture". Such declaration is consistent with Ben Mohamed, Makhlouf, Ben Fatma and Omrane (2023)'assumptions which stressed that Tunisia, above all, remains with one of the fully democratic states with the highest per capita incomes in the African continent.

4.2. Comparative analysis of the different studied cultures

According to Adamczyk (2017) and other researchers, cultures like Arab, Asian and Latin American are formal cultures which underscore the importance of social-occupational status and where rules, clear hierarchies, power distance, respect for experience and age make up the basis for social behavior and professional attitude. Conversely, informal cultures like North American and Northern European ones promote fewer social hierarchies, low power distance, small social differences and factors like one's age as a natural factor (Adamczyk, 2017). In the same perspective, Lewis (1996) detailed that groups belonging to countries like India, Pakistan, Arab and Latin American countries, are multi-active which means that they are impatient, emotional, unpunctual, people oriented, talkative, seeks favors and delegates to relations.

Though Christianity has strong roots in America and Germany and so does the Protestant work ethics, Americans and Germans have the tendency to separate religious principles from their business and professional life. For them, religious beliefs belong and shape personal choices and convictions. In China, religion has also no effect on business relationships and professional commitments being the fact that more than 70% of the population is non-religious. As for Both Mexico and Pakistan, whose corresponding religions are mainly Catholicism and Islam, they offer assurance to their adherents (with a strong expectation to avoid uncertainty). For Khilji (2001), the Pakistani culture is a combination of Islamic principles, Indian origins, British

inheritance and American influence. Besides, both religions tend to be dominated by men values (Hofstede, 1997).

Tunisians, are Muslims and speak Arabic, which is a high-context language for an Islamic Arab country that is located in Northern Africa. Family, spirituality and external high influence are relatively important for both Tunisia and Mexico. Similarly, the Mexican national culture is a combination of the Catholic religion, the Spanish heritage, the American influence and the indigenous origins. However, the American, Chinese and German cultures are clearly different from the Tunisian and Mexican ones.

From another perspective, while comparing American, German, Tunisian, Mexican, Pakistani and Chinese national cultures, it appears that the American culture is the most centered-one on individual success and interpersonal rivalry. In other words, Americans are driven by their work, as well as the financial incentives and rewards that might elevate their social standing and inspire them in their workplace. On the other hand, according to Jiméneza, Faschib, and Valdezc (2009), the American culture encourages self-sufficiency, independence, and individualism. That is why Americans are mostly reluctant to tolerate changes, generate new ideas, and readily adopt new habits. As a result, American businesses are less authoritarian and more flexible, giving employees authority over operational level decision-making and oversight. As for the Tunisian culture which remains mainly influenced by French traditions. On the other hand, living within an Islamic Arab country that is located in Northern Africa, Tunisians are Muslims, sociable, generous. They speak Arabic which is a high-context language; and they are more inclined to be more collectivist, rather than individualist. Therefore, interpersonal relationships between Tunisian are built on emotions and trust.

The Mexican society is family-oriented, hierarchical and therefore, social classes and unequal power distribution are tolerated. Consequently, in Mexico, authority is concentrated in the top management, authority could not be delegated, and decisions are centralized (Teegen and Doh, 2002). Motivations to work are generally intrinsic, and personal respect is more important than monetary benefits. When it comes to the Mexican culture, it is considered as a family-focused one that is basically found on close bonds, but hierarchical relationships. In other words, the father of the family has mostly experience and authority that greatly exceed those of his children. Besides, the Mexican culture is regarded as a power-oriented one in which the chief/director might play the role of a caring father who knows better than his subordinates what should be done and what is good for them. Within such a power-driven culture, and more specifically in business settings, the pressure is more social and moral than financial or legal. is. In a situation like this, it would be important to notice that similar traits and trends are reflected in the Tunisian culture as well, where the leadership style tend to be paternalistic in many organizations. Moreover, in contrast to Tunisian, Pakistani, Chinese and Mexican cultures, the American and German ones, which correspond to transaction (job, task)-oriented societies, tend to be more focused on productivity, self-control, productivity, responsibility and independency among workers.

In America, China and Germany, families are mostly nuclear-centered, represented by parents and children as the primary members of the family. For China, due to its overpopulation, citizens are called upon to practice a self-limiting behavior and since 2016, each couple has the right to make two children. Conversely, in Pakistan and Mexico, parents perform significant roles in the family, on which social organization is focused.

The American and German languages are low context-languages while comparing them with Urdu, Arabic and Spanish (Bjorn, 1999; Cook, 2012; Althen, Doran and Szmania, 2003; Doran and Littrell, 2012). Germans are orderly, precise and responsible. They are highly prepared and do not like to pay too much compliments. Germans like meeting business deadlines and follow the chain of command (Adamczyk, 2017). On the other hand, Spanish is the national language of Mexico, and Urdu is the national language of Pakistan.

Both of them are both high-context languages. In the Pakistani and Mexican cases, indirectness, implicitness, and non-verbal language are highly developed. Mexican and Pakistani citizens tend to trust people above companies when it comes to commercial contracts because they perceive each business partnership as a long-term commitment. Meanwhile, the Tunisian people tend to be more collectivist than individualist. Tunisians are also found to be sociable, modest, generous and flexible. Relationships between them are built up on emotions and trust.

Pakistan, Mexico, and Tunisia all fall into the same category of nations with a high-power distance, masculinity, and collectivist aspects, according to Hofstede's six national dimensions. While considering the same dimensions, the cultures of Germany and the US are similarly comparable.

German and US cultures are also similar to each other while considering the same dimensions. Surprisingly, with regard to the six cultural dimensions considered in this study, it appears that the national cultures of Mexico and Tunisia are closely related. With the exception of the distinction between masculinity and femininity. The cultures of the United States, Germany, and China are conversely distinct from those of these nations. The societies of all the countries have masculine characteristics, demonstrating the effects of globalization and business cultures on them. American and German societies frequently encourage and value individualism, independence, freedom, justice, and high-time orientation.

Furthermore, both Mexican and Pakistani cultures have a slack sense of time when it comes to things like schedules, planning, or deadlines in relationship with time management. Not because time is unimportant; rather, in these two cultures, controlling time is outside the purview and authority of the man. According to Greer and Stephens (1996) and Khilji (2004), both Mexican and Pakistani societies are collectivist ones, in which people are members of their families, neighborhoods, and the larger community. The culture of Pakistan is seen as a traditionalist one, with values that are influenced by family, class, the past, and revealed truth. The male head of the family is the model for authoritarian leadership. According to McFarlin & Sweeny (1998), women's standing is typically low and time urgency is unimportant. Not because time is unimportant; rather, in these two cultures, controlling time is outside the purview and authority of the man. According to Greer and Stephens (1996) and Khilji (2004), both Mexican and Pakistani societies are collectivist societies as people living there are members of their families, neighborhoods, and the larger community (Khilji, 2004; Khan and Panarina, 2017). The culture of Pakistan is seen as a traditionalist one, with values that are influenced by family, class, ancestors, and revealed truth. The leading man of the family is the model for an authoritarian leadership. In other words, and as Dodd (1998) stated, in such cultures, persons tend to respect hierarchy, authority, as well as formalized rituals based on a vertical communication. According to McFarlin & Sweeny (1998), women participation in the political and professional life is typically low and time urgency is unimportant for both Mexican and Pakistani citizens for whom interpersonal relationships are so important and institutionalized obligations are to be in favor of family and friends. Moreover, in such cultures, uncertainty avoidance and power distance are so high.

In the professional sphere, rules, regulations, and procedures should be usually adapted and updated depending on the context, the organizational situation, or the working conditions (McFarlin and Sweeny, 1998). To boost the workers' productivity and performance, a rewarding system is often implemented and a pay raise is to be offered to those who work hard and effectively.

5. Discussion and conclusions

In the present research work, the emphasis was put on six diverse nations that pertain to different continents, so that their comparative analysis could bring up meaningful insights and puts the light on inherited rich and diverse cultural and historical backgrounds.

To conclude, the fact that the studied countries are geographically distanced but socio-culturally close nations seem to have a significant effect on the value systems of organizations in these countries with high-power index cultures.

Such an element offers multiple opportunities for organizations that are located in these countries. Organizations in different sectors such as textile, higher education, consulting, industry can develop strategic alliances to pursue international business partnerships.

Companies from Mexico can invest directly in the marketplaces of Pakistan and Tunisia. Similarly, enterprises from Pakistan can conduct business freely in both countries without worrying about cross-cultural barriers. The United States has long-standing deep strategic and commercial ties with the three nations of Pakistan, Mexico, and Tunisia. Mexico, a USMCA member, is particularly dependent on the US for approximately 80% of its foreign trade and investment. Additionally, Mexico and Germany have productive business ties.

6. Main implications and recommendations

The findings of this research provide valuable insights and implications for the business leaders and decision makers through various ways. First of all, it has been discovered that, even though the studied countries are geographically separated from one another, their cultural trends could be so comparable. 1) For instance, the civilizations of Tunisia, Mexico, and Pakistan remain very similar, comparatively to those of China and Germany. Mexico is geographically bordered with the USA, but very distanced from North Africa. Pakistan and Tunisia are geographically distant from the United States of America and Germany; but they are socially and culturally similar; 2) Arabic, Spanish, and Urdu are among the high context languages used in communication, but they are nonetheless distinct and challenging to learn and speak; 3) Despite sharing the same religious roots as Protestantism, Catholicism, and Islam, there are significant differences between Mexican Catholics; Pakistani and Tunisian Muslims in terms of religious practice and the weight given to religion in daily life; German and English are low context languages, but English has evolved into a generic and widely used language of business and technology; Although Catholicism, Protestantism, and Islam have similar religious roots, there are significant distinctions between Mexican Catholics and Pakistani and Tunisian Muslims in terms of religious practice and the weight placed on religion in daily life; 4) In Tunisia and Pakistan, as in Mexico, social organizations are built around extended family infrastructure, whereas in the US and Germany, social organizations are much more decentralized to nuclear family establishment. Working with staff from either Mexico, Pakistan, or Tunisia will be tough for business leaders from the USA and Germany; 5) The cultural dimensions associated to power distance, uncertainty avoidance, collectivism/individualism, masculinity/femininity and time concept are effectively used in this research. Findings support that Tunisians, Mexicans and Pakistanis tend to be more similar than different. The fact that Latin American culture differs from the South Asian, North African, and European cultures can cause several challenges for business leaders.

Given all those implications proposed above, leaders, managers, and investors from these six countries, pertaining to different continents, are called upon to consider the national culture characteristics and drivers; while developing their strategic business policies and their organizational operations. Indeed, thanks to smart technologies and digital tools (e.g. artificial intelligence, IOT, Cloud computing, virtual augmented reality), the world is becoming a global village at this digital era (Omrane, Patra, and Datta, 2023). The need for multicultural skills and cross-cultural trainings and exchange is thus increasing in parallel with the growth of new ventures, and big multinational corporations and organizations (Omrane, 2020; Qamar, Muneer, Jusoh and Idris, 2013). Indeed, each person or businessman who is intended to work abroad, or to work within international multicultural contexts, is conveyed to adapt to the host/other cultures while keeping his own

national culture that reflects the specific historical heritage and customs of his home country (Gibson and Zellmer-Bruhn, 2001). By doing so, cultural systems could shape individual choices, behaviors, and routines.

7. Research Limitations and future prospective directions

This study is based on a theoretical comparative analysis of the national cultures of six countries, from five different continents. Such similar researches, even if considered theoretically analytical, they are considered as theory ground-breakers and so insightful for further investigations in the field. It also encourages researchers to carry out further exploratory and quantitative researches, for knowledge dissemination, and existing theories' enlightening and development in the same research orientation (i.e., Aitchison, 1997; Leedy, 1989; Bless and Higson-Smith, 2000). Furthermore, as the current study is mainly based on document analysis and secondary data, the validity and reliability of its obtained outcomes remain questionable and criticized by several academics who might seek for empirical evidence. Indeed, such researchers argue that statistical analysis and other quantitative procedures are more than required for achieving rigorous, and reliable research works. They also pursue that qualitative inquiries lack rigor, and are also influenced by the personal experience of researcher and his subjective perceptions, cultural beliefs, and mindset (American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, 2010).

In terms of the research methodology adopted in the present study, future investigations could apply quantitative or mixed research methods in order to generate findings that are empirically acceptable and significantly valid by the scientific community. On the other hand, qualitative studies as this one, are rather valued and appreciated for being explanatory, and in-depth analyzed and detailed (Hlady-Rispal and Jouison-Laffitte, 2014). Moreover, as contended by Anderson (2010), qualitative information/data are usually collected on the basis of human observations so that they reflect appropriately the realm of enterprises. As new information could emerge from the studied context, some amends could be made to the first assumptions suggested by the researcher so that the reality becomes flexible and subject to change (Anderson, 2010). On the other side, qualitative studies being dependent on the researcher skills and thus easily affected by his personal biases, they remain dependent on his mode of communication and difficult to assess without his consent (Anderson, 2010; Bardin, 1998). In this line of thoughts, more formal and field-based investigations undertaken on business firms located in different countries would be more insightful, not only for academia, but also for practitioners who seek to explore the reality on the ground. The current study is then an initial stage that puts formward the interest of opting of such prospective research directions.

Author contributions

Conceptualization, MAK and AO; Methodology, MAK; Software, AO; Validation, AO and MAK; Formal Analysis, AO and MAK; Investigation, MAK; Resources, MAK; Data Curation, AO and MAK; Writing—Original Draft Preparation, MAK and AO; Writing—Review & Editing, AO; Visualization, AO; Supervision, AO; Project Administration, MAK. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

Adamczyk M. The importance of cultural differences in international business. Central European Review of Economics and Management, 2017, 1(2): 151-170. doi: 10.29015/cerem.336

Ahmad S, Owoyemi MY. The Concept of Islamic Work Ethic: An Analysis of Some Salient Points in the Prophetic Tradition. International Journal of Business and Social Science, 2012, 3(20).

Aitchison, J. (1997) The Language Web: The Power and Problem of Words, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ali A, Al-Shakis M. Managerial value systems for working in Saudi Arabia: An empirical investigation. Group and Organization Studies, 1985, 10(2): 135-152.

Althen G, Doran AR, Szmania SJ. American Ways: A Guide for Foreigners in the United States, 2nd ed. Intercultural Press; 2003.

Alvesson M. Understanding Organizational Culture. Sage Publications; 2002.

Anderson C. Presenting and Evaluating Qualitative Research. American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education. 2010, 74(8): 141. doi: 10.5688/aj7408141

Anjum M, Zia SM, Shamsi AF, Aziz A. The Impact of Culture on the Perception of Employees and Organizational Productivity in Pharmaceutical Industries in Karachi. Global Management Journal for Academic & Corporate Studies, 2013, 03(01).

Anwar SA, Chaker MN. Globalization of corporate America and its implications for management styles in an Arabian cultural context. International Journal of Management, 2003, 20 (1): 43-56.

Au KY. Intra-cultural Variation: Evidence and Implications for International Business. Journal of International Business Studies. 1999, 30(4): 799-812. doi: 10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8490840

Balambo MA. Hofstede's model revisited: an application for measuring the Moroccan national culture, International Journal of Business Quantitative Economics and Applied Management Research, 2014, 1(3): 7-20.

Balan S, Vreja LO. The Trompenaars' seven-dimension cultural model and cultural orientations of Romanian students in management. In: Proceedings of the 7th International Management Conference New Management for the New Economy. 7–8 November 2013; Bucharest, Romania.

Baloch QB, Ali N, Ahsan A, Mufty A. Relationship between HR practices and perceived employees performance of bankers in NWFP, Pakistan: empirical evidence. European Journal of Social Sciences, 2010, 10(2): 210-214.

Banks R. The Protestant Work Ethic. Faith in Business Quarterly, 1998, 2(2): 5-7.

Bardin L. The content analysis (French). Paris, Presses Universitaires de France; 1998.

Ben Mohamed E, Makhlouf L, Ben Fatma E, Omrane A. Women entrepreneurs in Tunisia. In: Women entrepreneurs in North Africa. Historical frameworks, ecosystems, and new perspectives in the region; 2023.

Bjorn B. Business leadership and culture: National management styles in the global economy. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar; 1999.

Bless C, Higson-Smith C. Fundamentals of social research: An African perspective, 3rd ed. Cape Town: Juta; 2000.

Brache AP. How organizations work. John Wiley & Sons; 2002.

Brown JD. The Human Nature of Organizations. New York: USA. Amacom; 1973.

Brozik D. The second dimensions for successful management. Manage, 1994, 45(4): 4-8.

Budhwar P. HRM in India. In: Budhwar P, Ya D (editors). HRM in Developing Countries; 2001. pp. 75-90.

Chhokar JS, Brodbeck FC, House RJ. Culture and Leadership across the World: The GLOBE Book of In-depth Studies of 25 Societies. Lawrence Erlbaum Association; 2007.

Cook G. The Influence of National Culture on American Business people—managerial Implications for Central Europe. Central European Business Review Research Papers, 2012, 1(2).

Culpan R, Kucukemiroglu O. A Comparison of U.S. and Japanese Management Styles and Unit Effectiveness. Management International Review, 1993, 33(1): 27-42.

Dainton M, Zelley ED. Applying Communication Theory for Professional Life: A Practical Introduction. Los Angeles: SAGE Publishing; 2011.

Davis AS, Nayebpour MR. Obreros (Workers) Against Gerentes (Managers): Changing Values in the Mexican Workplace. Latin American Business Review, 2004, 5(1): 71-93.

DeForest M. Thinking of a Plant in Mexico. Academy of Management Executive, 1994, 8 (1): 33-40.

Deresky H. International Management: Managing Across Borders and Cultures. Addison-Wesley, 2nd ed. 1998.

Dodd HC. Dynamics of Intercultural Communication. Fifth Edition. McGraw-Hill; 1998.

Doran CJ, Littrell RF. Measuring Mainstream US Cultural Values. Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht; 2012.

El Akremi A, Ikram Nasr M, Sassi N. Impact of national culture on interpersonal confidence at work place: A comparative analysis between France and Tunisia. Publisher; 2007.

Erez M, Earley PC. Culture, Self-identity, and Work. Oxford University Press; 1993.

Erez M. Make Management Practice fit the National Culture. In: Locke, E.A. (Ed.), pp. 418-434, Basic Principles of Organizational Behavior: A Handbook. Blackwell; 2000.

Farmer RT. Corporate Culture Defines a Company and its Future. American Journal of Business, 2005, 20(2): 7-3.

Franke RH, Hofstede G, Bond MH. Cultural roots of economic performance: A research note. Strategic Management Journal, 1991, 12: 165-173.

Furnham A. Language and personality. In: Giles H, Robinson W (editors). Handbook of Language and Social Psychology. Wi-ley, Chichester; 1990. pp. 73-95.

Gallan M. The Business of Culture: How Culture Affects Management Around the World. Available online: http://www.halogensoftware.com/blog/the-business-of-culture-how-culture-affects-management-around-the-world (accessed on 2 June 2023).

Gannon MJ, Associates. Understanding global cultures: Metaphorical journeys through 17 countries. Sage Publication; 1994.

Georgas J. Family: Variations and changes across cultures. In: Lonner WJ, Dinnel DL, Hayes SA, et al. (editors). Online Readings in Psychology and Culture (Unit 13, Chapter 3). Center for Cross-Cultural Research, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington USA; 2003.

Ghaemawat P, Reiche S. Globalization Note Series, National Cultural Differences and Multinational Business, Globalization Note Series; 2011.

Ghosn C, Ries P. Shift: Inside Nissan's Historic Revival. Doubleday; 2005.

Gibson CB, Zellmer-Bruhn ME. Metaphors and meaning: An intercultural analysis of the concept of teamwork. Administrative Science Quarterly, 2001, 46(2): 274-303.

Gomez EJ. Mexican Corporate Culture: Modernization in Managerial Methods. Business Mexico; 1993.

Goodale J. Effects of Personal Background and Training on Work Values of the hard-core unemployed. Journal of Applied Psychology, 1973, 57: 1-9.

Greer SK, Stephens C. Employee issues for companies in Mexico. California Management Review, 1996, 38(3): 121-145.

Hall ET. Beyond Culture. Garden City. Anchor Books; 1976.

Hassan MK. Concerted education and development (Indonesian). Nurin Enterprise; 1988.

Heller FA, Yukl G. Participation, managerial decision-making and situational variables. Organizational Behavior and Human Performance; 1969. pp. 227-241.

Hernandez H. Multicultural Education: A teacher's guide content and process. Merrill Editions; 2001.

Hickson D, Pugh D. Management Worldwide. Penguin; 2002.

Hlady-Rispal M, Jouison-Laffitte E. Qualitative Research Methods and Epistemological Frameworks: A Review of Publication Trends in Entrepreneurship. Journal of Small Business Management, 2014, 52: 594-614.

Hofstede G, Bond MH. The Confucius connection: From cultural roots to economic Growth. Organizational Dynamics, 1988, 16(4): 4-21.

Hofstede G, Hofstede G, Minkov M. Value Survey Module 2008 (VSM 08). Available online: http://www.greethofstede.nl (accessed on 2 June 2023).

Hofstede G, Hofstede GJ, Minkov M. Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. Revised and Expanded, 3rd ed. McGraw-Hill USA; 2010.

Hofstede G. 6D model of cultural dimensions, China, 2016. Retrieved from: https:/geert-hofstede.com/china.html.

Hofstede G. Asian management in the 21st century. Asia Pacific J Manage, 2007, 24: 411–420.

Hofstede G. Cultural constraints in management theories. The Executive, 1993, 7(1): 81-95.

Hofstede G. Culture's Consequences. Sage Publication; 1980.

Hofstede G. Culture's Consequences: Comparing, Values, Behaviours, Institutions, and Organizations across Nations. Sage Publication; 2001.

Hofstede G. Cultures and Organizations. McGraw-Hill; 1991.

Hofstede G. Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind-Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival. McGraw-Hill; 1997.

Hofstede G. The Cultural Relativity of Organizational Practices and Theories. Journal of International Business Studies, 1983, 14(2):75-89.

Hofstede Insights. (2019). National Culture. Available online: https://www.hofstede-insights.com/models/national-culture (accessed on 2 June 2023).

Hooker J. Cultural Differences in Business Communication. Tepper School of Business. Carnegie Mellon University; 2008.

House RJ, Hanges P, Javidan M, Dorfmann P, Gupta V. Culture, Leadership and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Nations. Thousand Oaks, Sage; 2004.

Jamal A. Can We Learn Something from the Perceptions and Consumption Practices of Transnational South Asian Communities Living in the West? Paper presented at the Inaugural Conference of Asia Academic of Management; 1998.

Jimeneza MB, Fascib MA, Valdezc J. A Comparison of Management Style for Mexican Firms in Mexico and the United States. International Journal of Business, 2009, 14(3).

Johnson G, Scholes K. Exploring Corporate Strategy, 8th ed. Financial Times/Prentice Hall; 2007.

Kanungo R, Mendonca M. Culture and Performance Improvement. Productivity, 1994, 35(4): 447-453.

Katz L. Negotiating International Business - The Negotiator's Reference Guide to 50 Countries Around the World. Book Surge Publishing; 2006.

Khan MA, Panarina E. The role of national cultures in shaping the corporate management cultures: A four countries theoretical analysis. Journal of Eastern European and Central Asian Research, 2017, 4(1): pp. 1-25.

Khilji SE. Human Resource Management in Pakistan. In: Budhwar P, Yaw D (editors). Human Resource Management in Developing Countries; 2001.

Khilji SE. To Adapt or Not to Adapt: Exploring the Role of National Culture in HRM—A Study of Pakistan. International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, 2003, 3(1): 109.

Khilji SE. Wither Tradition? Evidence of Generational Differences in HR Satisfaction from Pakistan. International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, 2004, 4(2):141.

Kluckhohn FR, Strodtbeck FL. Variations in Value Orientations. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson; 1961.

Kras E. Management in Two Cultures: Bridging the Gap Between U.S. and Mexican Managers. Intercultural Press; 1989.

Kras E. Management in Two Cultures: Bridging the Gap between U.S. and Mexican Managers. Intercultural Press: Maine; 1989.

Kras E. Modernizing Mexican Management Styles: With Insights for US companies working in Mexico. Editts Publishing; 1994.

Kroeber A, Kluckhohn C. Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions. Random House; 1985.

Laurent A. The cultural diversity of Western conceptions of management. International studies of management and organization, 1983, 13: 75-96.

Leedy P. Practical research: Planning and design. 4th ed. Macmillan; 1989.

Lewis RD. When Cultures Collide: Managing Successfully Across Cultures. Nicholas Brealey Publishing Limited; 1996.

Li J, Lam J, Qian G. Does Culture Affect Behavior and Performance of Firm? The case of Joint Venture in China. Journal of International Business Studies, 2001, 32(1): 115-31.

Lyon P. Epilogue. In: James P (editor). Pakistan Chronicle.

Macan TH. Time Management Test of a Process Model. Journal of Applied Psychology, 1994, 79(3): 381-391.

Majidi M, Ashurbekov RK, Altaliyeva A, Kowalski S. Western and Central Eurasian Cultural Differences: Germany, Kazakhstan, United States of Amercia, and Uzbekistan. Organizational Cultures: An international Journal, 2015, 14(3–4): 1-20.

Marchese M. Matching Management Practices to National Culture in India, Mexico, Poland, and the U.S. The Academy of Management Executive, 2001, 15(2):130-132.

McFarlin DB, Sweeny PD. International Management: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities. South-Western College Publishing Company; 1998.

McGregor D. The human side of enterprise. McGraw-Hill; 1960.

McKenna S. Organizational Commitment in the Small Entrepreneurial Business in Singapore. Cross Cultural Management, 2005, 12(2): 16.

Mead R. International management, 2nd ed. Blackwell Publishers; 1998.

Moran RT, Harris PR, Moran SV. Managing Cultural Differences, Eighth Edition: Global Leadership Strategies for Cross-Cultural Business Success. Butterworth-Heineman; 2010.

Morris T, Pavett CM. Management Style and Productivity in Two Cultures. Journal of International Business Studies, 1992, 1: 169-179.

Morrison T. Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands: The Bestselling Guide to Doing Business in More Than 60 Countries. Adams Media; 2006.

Newman KL, Nollen SD. Culture and Congruence: The Fit Between Management Practices and National Culture. Journal of International Business Studies, 1996, 27: 753-779.

Nicholas CE, Lane HW, Brecha MB. Taking Self-managed Teams to Mexico. The Academy of Management Executive, 1999, 13(3): 15.

Nicolaidis CS. Cultural Determinants of Corporate Excellence in an Integrated World Economy: The Impact of National Cultures on Organisational Performance, Reading; 1991.

Noll CL. Mexican Macquiladom Workers: An Attitude Toward Working. Journal of Business and Economics, 1992, 9(1): 1–7.

Nord WE. Concepts and Controversy in Organizational Behaviour. California Pacific Palisades; 1976.

Omrane A, Aziz S. The main drivers of investment decision in the Malaysian stock exchange market: A PLS-SEM Based Approach, International Journal of Business Information Systems, 2023. doi: 10.1504/IJBIS.2022.1005256

Omrane A. Which are the appropriate skills needed for the entrepreneurial success of startups in the era of digitalization? Developing entrepreneurial competencies for start-ups and small business. IGI Global Publishers; 2020.

Ouchi WG, Jaeger AM. Social Structure and Organization. In: Environments and Organizations. In: Marshall WM (editor). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; 1978.

Ouchi WG. Theory Z: How can American business meet the Japanese challenge. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley; 1981.

Parsons T, Schwartz SH. Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In: Zanna M (editor). Advances in experimental social psychology. Academic Press; 1992. pp. 1-65.

Parsons T, Shils EA. Toward A General Theory of Action. New York: Harper and Row; 1962.

Pheng LS, Yuquan S. An exploratory study of Hofstede's cross-cultural dimensions in construction projects. Management Decision, 2002, 40(1): 7-16.

Pothukuchi V, Damanpour F, Choi J, et al. National and organizational culture differences and international joint venture performance. Journal of International Business Studies, 2002, 33(2): 243-265.

Prodip KN. Management Styles, Tata Mc Graw - Hill Publishing Co. Ltd, New Delhi; 1995.

PSU. Olead course, lesson 10, Asia focus on China, India. Available online: https://psu.instructure.com/courses/1802572/modules/items/21179122 (accessed on 2 June 2023).

Qamar A, Muneer S, Jusoh A, Idris H. The relationship between organizational conduct and national culture. Journal of Economics and Behavior Studies, 2013, 5(2): 82-88.

Qureshi ZI. Management in South Asia. In: Saunders DMI, RN (editors). New Approaches to Employee Management. JAI Press, Greenwich; 1995.

Rajagopal RA. Trust and Cross-Cultural Dissimilarities in Corporate Environment. Team Performance Management, 2006, 12(7): 237-252.

Rehman J. Analysing the Issue of Cultural and Religious Relativism: With Particular Reference to Muslim Women Rights in South Asia. Study Visit Report to European Commission EURASIA-NET Project; 2010.

Rijamampianina R. Effective Management in Multicultural Organisations: Creating a Learning-based Order With a Sharing Principle. Economic Journal of Hokkaido University, 1996, 25: 119-167.

Schein EH. Organizational Culture and Leadership, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA; 1985.

Schleh EC. A matter of management style. Management Review, 1977, 66(8): 8-14.

Schwartz SH. A theory of cultural values and some implications for work. Applied Psychology: An International Review, 1999, 48(1): 23-47.

Shaw J. Cultural Variations in Management Practice: An Exploration of the Management. Public Administration & Development, ABI-INFORM Global; 1998.

Shimoni B, Bergmann H. Managing in a Changing World: From Multiculturalism to Hybridization—The Production of Hybrid Management Cultures in Israel, Thailand, and Mexico. The Academy of Management Perspectives, 2006, 20(3): 76-89.

Slocum GK, Williges BH, Roscoe SN. Meaningful shape coding for aircraft switch knobs. Aviation Research Monographs, 1971, 1(3): 27-40.

Spence J. The Search for Modern China, 2nd ed. W.W.Norton & Company Publishers; 1999.

Steers RM, Sanchez-Runde CJ, Nardon L. Management Across Cultures: Challenges and Strategies. Cambridge University Press; 2010.

Stephens GK, Greer CR. Doing Business in Mexico: Understanding Cultural Differences. Organizational Dynamics, 1995, 24(1): 39–55.

Syed MA. Islam and Democracy in Pakistan, Islamabad. National Institute of historical and Cultural Research; 1995.

Tayeb M. Organizations and National Culture: Methodology Reconsidered. Organization Studies, 1994, 15(3): 429-46.

Tayeb M. The Competitive Advantage of Nations: The Role of HRM and its Socio-cultural Context. International Journal of Human Resource Management, 1995, 6: 588-666.

Taylor J, Mackenzie RA. Time is money, so use it productively. ABSA Banking Journal, 1986, 78: 130-133.

Teegen HJ, Doh JP. US-Mexican Alliance Negotiations: Impact of Culture on Authority, Trust, Performance. Thunderbird International Business Review, 2002, 44(6): 749.

Titiev M. Introduction to Cultural Anthropology. Henry Holt and Co; 1958.

Trompenaars F, Hampden-Turner C. Riding the Waves of Culture: Understan Cultural Diversity in Business, Second Edition, London & Santa Rosa, Nicholas Brealey Publishing Limit; 1997.

Trompenaars F, Turner CH. Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business. Second Edition. McGraw-Hill; 1998.

Tylor E. Origins of Culture. Harper and Row; 1871.

UNESCO. UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. Available online: http://www.unesco.org/education/imld_2002/unversal_decla.shtml (accessed on 2 June 2023).

Venter PF. A Multicultural Approach of consumer time perception. Journal of Consumer Affairs, 2004, 12(2): 24-33.

Waseem M. Politics and State in Pakistan. National Institute of historical and Cultural Research; 1994.

Weber M. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. Rutledge; 2004.

Weber Y, Shenkar O, Raveh A. National and Corporate Culture Fit in Mergers/Acquisitions: An Exploratory Study. Management Science, 1996, 42: 1215-1227.

Willmott R. The Place of Culture in Organization Theory: Introducing the Morphogenetic Approach. Organization, 2000, 7 (1): 95-128.

Yahaiaoui D, Zoubir YH. Human Resource Management in Tunisia. In: Pawan S, Budhwar S, Mellahi K (editor). Managing human resources in the Middle East. Routledge Taylor & Francis Editions; 2006. pp. 233-249.

Yahiaoui D. Cultural analysis of hybrid mechanisms of HRM practices from occidental parent company to Tunisian subsidiaries. IAE Collective Tutorials, Paris, France; 2004.

Yousfi H. When American Management System meets Tunisian culture: The Poulina case. In: Henriett Primecz H, Romani L, Sackmann S (editors). Cross-Cultural Management in Practice: Culture and Negotiating meanings. Edward Elgar Editions; 2011. pp. 64-77.