

Study of world cultures



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Study of World Cultures of Study of World Cultures The contemporary organizational culture is quite different from the old forms ones. As such, the modern-day manager faces various problems brought about by the existence of boundaries. Boundaries bring about diversity in cultures as they often separate communities and countries. However, with the growth of the corporate world, diversity has become necessary in the workplaces. As such, managers face various problems while communicating with suppliers, employees or even partners from across cultures. Clampitt (2010) shows many typical activities spanning across boundaries, which modern-day managers handle. They include the involvement with cross-functional groups, coordination of order specifications with suppliers, supervision of work across cultures or countries, negotiation of terms with offshore business partners, expanding operations to new countries and forming mergers with competitors. Boundaries come with challenges, which managers need to understand.

Boundaries can cause investment losses, customer service failure, and unmotivated employees who are unwilling to span boundaries. The factors contributing to the emergence of boundary problems in organizations relate to Cultural Communication Dimensions and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions. The most important cultural communication dimensions relate to language and cultural differences. As such, various people in the entrepreneurial world have different languages of communication. Moreover, they also have their cultural alignments, which may not permit cross-cultural communications. Cultural obstacles at the micro and macro scales can deter boundary spanning.

At the macro level, cultural issues occur when firms communicate across

their territorial boundaries. It may include instances when international corporations work with units from other nations. For instance, the United States may outsource Indian experts to offer IT services. Micro-cultural issues refer to the corporate culture created in the various departments of an organization. The communication pattern is one cultural dimension that affects the working relationship between Westerners and Asians. While the westerners often prefer communicating through verbal signs, the Asians opt to be non-verbal. Westerners and North American cultures value clarity and directness. By contrast, Asian cultures value ambiguity, politeness, and indirectness.

Asian and American business cultures also differ on the cultural dimension of action. For instance, Asians will not openly reject a proposal since they value indirectly. On the contrary, Americans will openly make their feelings and decisions known. Thus, Americans have a direct orientation while Asians have an indirect orientation towards decision-making. Russians are often unenthusiastic about long-term plans. By contrast, Westerners value planning since they are long-term oriented when it comes to the time dimension. Long-term orientation is a Hofstede's dimension that affects the organizational culture of different countries.

Uncertainty avoidance, power distance, individualism, and masculinity refer to other Hofstedes dimensions, which affect organizational culture.

Masculinity is common in Arab countries as they clearly stipulate the roles of males and females. Japan also has a high rate of masculinity. Individualism is common among Westerners who often disregard collective action. Arab countries value coordination and collectivism in their organizational settings. Power distance is accepted in Arab countries where inequality in the

distribution of power is paramount. Uncertainty avoidance is common among Westerners. As such, they often feel anxious when faced with uncertain situations in the organization.

References

Clampitt, P. G. (2010). *Communicating for managerial effectiveness: Problems, strategies, solutions*. Los Angeles: Sage.