

CAC 5

“Dimensions of culture”

OBJECTIVES

- See how cultures have been 'measured'
- Be aware of Geert Hofstede's and other 'dimensions'-style system
- Critique of Hofstede's 'national culture'
- Does “Country=Culture” ?

OUTLINE

- WVS & Ron Inglehart
- Methodological problems
- Hofstede's 'dimensions'
 - Example results & methodology
 - Critique
- National Cultures?

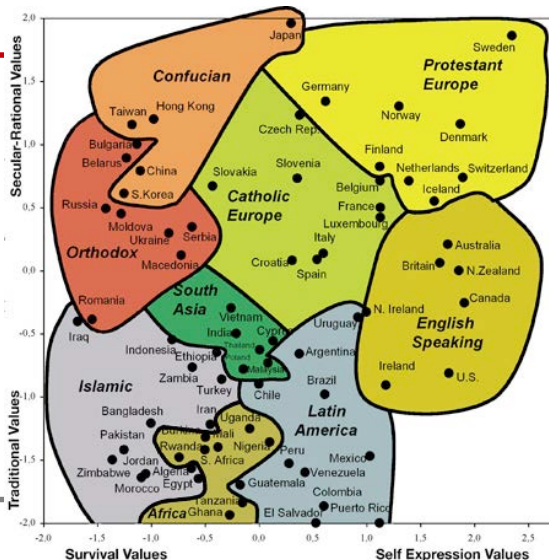
World Values Survey



World Values Survey

World Cultures Map

http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVS/articles/folder_published/article_base_54



Ron Inglehart's work

- Large number of countries surveyed
- 30 years continuous data
- BUT...*
- Dubious assumptions
- Problematic methodology (Haller 2002)

Haller, M. (2002). Theory and method in the comparative study of values: Critique and alternative to Inglehart. *European sociological review*, 18(2):139-158.

Values change over time

- Ingelhart's work is investigating **value change**
 - “[The WWSA] has been founded in order to help social scientists and policy-makers better understand worldviews and changes that are taking place in the beliefs, values and motivations of people throughout the world.”
 - www.worldvaluessurvey.org/

Basic assumption

“value change is primarily a **consequence** of changing technological and economic-material factors.”

“**industrialization** produces pervasive social and cultural consequences, from rising educational levels to changing gender roles... [it is] the central element of a modernization process that affects most other elements of society.”

European Sociological Review, Vol. 18 No. 2, 139-150 199
Theory and Method in the Comparative Study of Values: Critique and Alternative to Ingelhart
Max Haller

Sample Questions

1. Do you think most people try to take advantage of you?
(1=yes, 10=no)
2. Some people feel they have completely free choice and control over their lives, while other people feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them.
How do you feel about your own life?
(1 - no choice at all, 10 - a great deal of choice)

Sample Questions

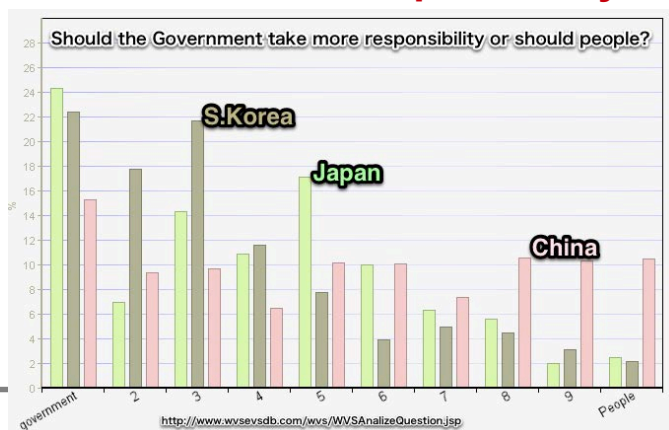
Question V98.

Government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for

People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Govt v Personal Responsibility?

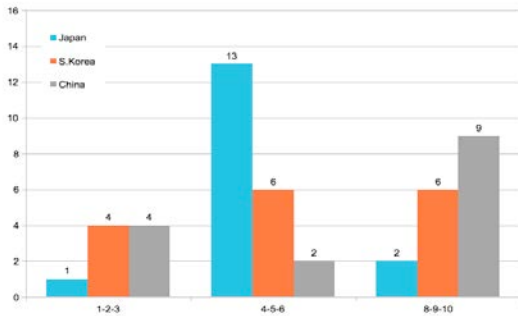


Research methods digression...

Surveys return numbers which make it look as though we're finding out about the world, but it's difficult to know **exactly** what we have found.

All methodologies have inbuilt problems.

Survey method bias...



Analytical problems...

- Underestimates complexity of 'values'
 - Universal, societal, situational levels
- Underestimates complexity of relationships of values to material circumstances
 - Religiosity - (post)industrialisation

Haller 2002

Hofstede's work

“Do nations have cultures? Within each of the ‘management disciplines’ there is a significant literature which assumes that each nation has a distinctive, influential and describable ‘culture’ ”

“Other than *a priori* belief, what is the basis of claims that influential national cultures exist?”

Hofstede's model of national cultural differences and their consequences: A triumph of faith - a failure of analysis
Brendan McSweeney
Human Relations 2002; 55; 89

McSweeney's key words

- **Distinctive:** It is possible to identify 'culture' and distinguish between 'cultures'
- **Influential:** The 'identified' culture has an influence, is significant / non-trivial.
- **Describable:** It is possible to describe the features of this 'culture'

Hofstede's 'national culture'

- **Implicit:** 'software of the mind'
- **Core:** National culture is the nucleus of broader culture
- **Systematically causal:** It affects everything
- **Territorially unique:** All members of a nation share *the* national culture
- **Shared:** Shared traits OR statistical norm

Hofstede's 'dimensions'

- **PDI:** power differential
- **IDV:** individuality (I/C)
- **MAS:** masculinity
- **UAI:** uncertainty avoidance
- **LTO:** long-term outlook (added later)
- **IND:** indulgence (added even later)

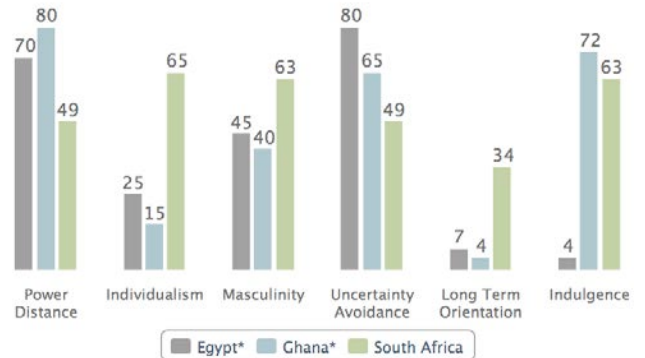


Geert Hofstede
Cultural Guru

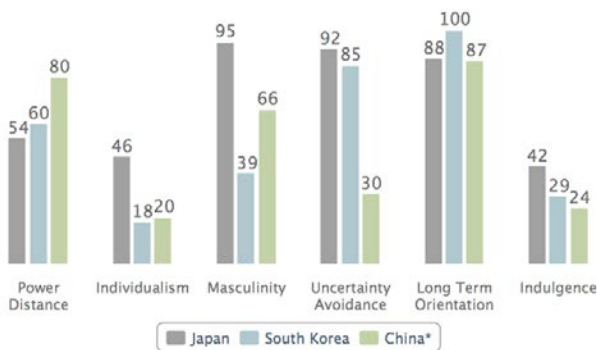
Hofstede's 'dimensions'

- **PDI**: the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally
 - **IDV**: the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members
 - **MAS**: what motivates people, wanting to be the best (Masculine) or liking what you do (Feminine)
 - **UAI**: the way that a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known
 - **LTO**: how every society has to maintain some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future
 - **IND**: the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses
-

Example results (1)...



Example results (2)...



Hofstede's original data

- IBM surveys 1968-9, 1971-3
 - 117,000 responses in total
 - 40 results used of 66 countries surveyed
 - Limited sample sizes (considering the subject matter!) ...
-

Impressive sample size (really?)

- **>1000** France, Belgium, UK, US, Japan, Germany, Sweden
 - **<200** Chile, Columbia, Greece, Hong Kong, Iran, Ireland, Israel, New Zealand, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey
-

Faulty assumptions (1)

- Organisations have **just one** culture
 - So, there is **just one** worldwide IBM culture
 - Occupational cultures are internally consistent and shared across national boundaries
-

This is good because...

- IBM employees share...
 - Organisational culture
 - Occupational culture
 - Therefore any differences between people must be down to *national* culture, as that's the only thing that distinguished them.
-

In other words...

$$(Org_1 + Occup_1 + Nat_1)$$



$$- (Org_1 + Occup_1 + Nat_2)$$



$$Nat_1 - Nat_2$$

Faulty Assumptions (2)

- 'National culture' can be identified from a **local sample**.
 - Assumes that what you are looking for actually exists before you find it!!
 - Assumes that all individuals have the same culture in them.
-

Faulty Assumptions (3)

- 'National culture' can be identified from a **national average**.
 - Within each national sample, people responded differently.
 - Why is the average of *these* responses, **the** national average?
 - (Are the people who work at IBM typical of 'the nation'?)
-

Faulty Assumptions (4)

- Any set of survey responses can be categorised in many ways.
 - Gender, religion, age, marital status etc
 - Why assume 'nationality' is important?
 - Where is the proof that variation is caused by nationality ('national culture')?
-

Faulty Assumptions (5)

- Are survey responses actually **reliable**?
 - If you were an employee at IBM, how would you answer, for example, this question:
 - "To which one of these types [described] would you say your own superior most closely corresponds?"
-

Faulty Assumptions (6)

- If we have identified 'national culture' how can we be sure that we've got it right?
 - Would a different set of questions have given us a different description of 'national culture'?
 - Is our understanding complete/accurate?
-

Faulty Assumptions (7)

- 'National culture' is the same **always** and **everywhere**, in any circumstance.
 - "I may be very individualistic, but when my university gives me the job to represent it at a meeting, I act collectivistically in that setting"

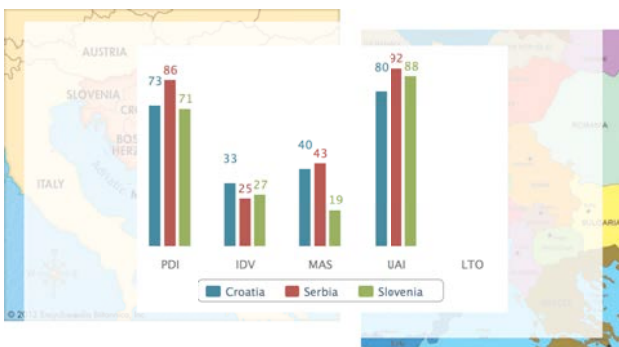
Triandis (1994)



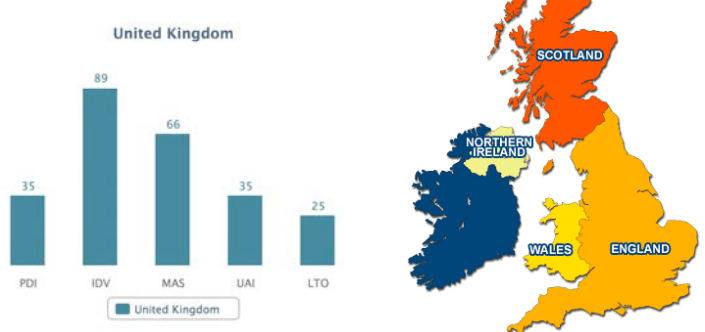
National Culture?



National Culture?



And what about me?



Scotland and England



McSweeney's conclusion

“If the aim is understanding then we need to know more about the *richness* and *diversity* of national practices and institutions – rather than merely **assuming their ‘uniformity’** and that **they have an already known national cultural cause.**”

Assessment (Details on website!)

1. Decide on a topic

Send me your idea for your essay by the deadline below, I will get back to you approving your topic or giving suggestions for improvements.

DEADLINE: 20 – 31 May 2019

2. Write annotated bibliography (1-2 sides of A4)

Choose 5 resources (books, papers, websites etc) that you will use when you write your essay. Explain *briefly* how you will use them.

DEADLINE: 17 – 18 June 2019

3. Final Essay

Mail to me as an attachment (Word, OpenOffice, Pages etc **NOT** PDF!!)

DEADLINE: 8 – 19 July 2019

Example essay themes...

- The concept of culture
 - Uses of 'national culture'
 - Nationalism
 - Language and identity
 - Variations in non-verbal communication
 - Variations in communicative style
 - Variations in 'cognitive style'
 - Uses of space (towns, homes etc)
 - Uses of time (schedules, work/free time etc)
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Next Week

- More on nations and culture
 - **To read:**
Piller *Nation and Culture*
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