

less subject to external goals and constraints. In low-context cultures, time is highly organized, in part because of the additional energy required to understand the messages of others. Low-context cultures are almost forced to pay more attention to time in order to complete the work of living with others.

5.2: Hofstede's Cultural Taxonomy

Geert Hofstede's impressive studies of cultural differences in value orientations offer another approach to understanding the range of cultural differences.² Hofstede's approach is based on the assertion that people carry mental programs, or "software of the mind," that are

developed during childhood and reinforced by their culture. These mental programs contain the ideas of a culture and are expressed through its dominant values. To identify the principal values of different cultures, Hofstede surveyed more than 100,000 IBM employees in 71 countries, and he has subsequently broadened his analysis to include many others.

Through theoretical reasoning and statistical analyses, Hofstede identified five dimensions along which dominant patterns of a culture can be ordered: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, and time orientation. Recently, an additional dimension has been added: indulgence versus restraint. Hofstede's work provides an excellent synthesis of the relationships between cultural values and social behaviors.³

Table 5.1 Review: Characteristics of Low- and High-Context Cultures
 As Table 5.1 indicates, Edward Hall's placement of cultures onto a continuum that is anchored by preferences for high-context messages and low-context messages offers a way to understand other variations in cultural patterns.

Interactive

Characteristics	High-Context Cultures	Low-Context Cultures
Messages		
Coding		
Reactions		
Ingroups and Outgroups		
Interpersonal Bonds		
Commitment		
Time		

Open and flexible

Start Over

✓ By the end of this module, you will be able to:

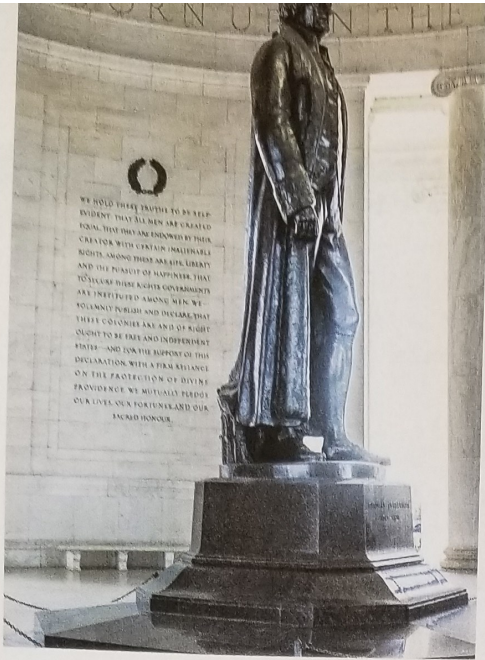
- 5.2.1: Describe the consequences of various cultures' preferences for either small or large power distances
- 5.2.2: Explain cultures' varying preferences for avoiding uncertainty
- 5.2.3: Contrast cultures' varying regard for individual autonomy versus loyalty to the group
- 5.2.4: Compare cultures' expectations for achievement and assertiveness versus nurturance and social support
- 5.2.5: Describe cultures' varying preferences toward the use of time
- 5.2.6: Contrast cultures' preferences for indulging in pleasure versus showing restraint

5.2.7: Describe the importance, to intercultural competence, of understanding cultures' differences related to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

5.2.1: Power Distance

OBJECTIVE: Describe the consequences of various cultures' preferences for either small or large power distances

One of the basic concerns of all cultures is the issue of human inequality. Contrary to the claim in the U.S. Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal," all people in a culture do not have equal levels of status or social power. Depending on the culture, some people might be regarded as superior to others because of



Notions of equality and freedom depend on the patterns of one's culture to define their importance.

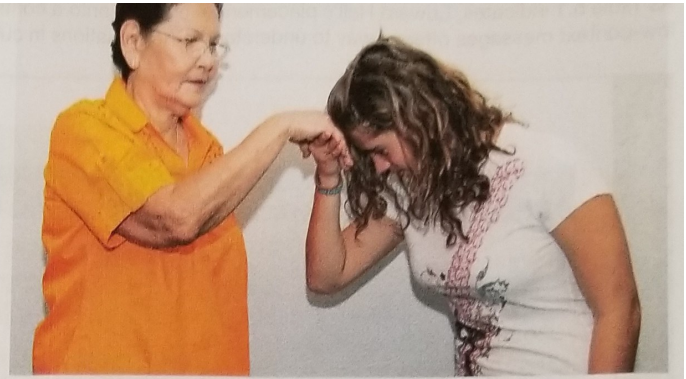
their wealth, age, gender, education, physical strength, birth order, personal achievements, family background, occupation, or a wide variety of other characteristics.

Culture Connections

Nothing means more to me than freedom and equality. But in Japan, hierarchy has been a fact of life for centuries. The Japanese have learned to trust their proper place in life, to depend on the security that comes with a structured social order. Right and wrong, fair and unfair, even personal happiness are largely irrelevant. Virtue depends on recognizing one's place in the vast web of mutual interdependence that makes up their society.

—Karin Muller

Cultures also differ in the extent to which they view such status inequalities as good or bad, right or wrong, just or unjust, and fair or unfair. That is, all cultures have particular value orientations about the appropriateness or importance of status differences and social hierarchies. Thus **power distance** refers to the degree to which the culture believes that institutional and organizational power should be distributed unequally and whether the decisions of the power holders should be challenged or accepted.



In the Philippines, large power distance is shown in this traditional gesture of greeting by a granddaughter to her grandmother.

Cultures that prefer small power distances—such as Austria, Denmark, Israel, and New Zealand—believe in the importance of minimizing social or class inequalities, questioning or challenging authority figures, reducing hierarchical organizational structures, and using power only for legitimate purposes. Conversely, cultures that prefer large power distances—such as those in Arab countries, Guatemala, Malaysia, and the Philippines—believe that each person has a rightful and protected place in the social order, that the actions of authorities should not be challenged or questioned, that hierarchy and inequality are appropriate and beneficial, and that those with social status have a right to use their power for whatever purposes and in whatever ways they deem desirable.

The consequences of the degree of power distance that a culture prefers are evident in family customs, the relationships between students and teachers, organizational practices, and in other areas of social life. Even the language systems in high power distance cultures emphasize distinctions based on a social hierarchy. The Chinese language, for instance, has separate terms for older brother, oldest brother, younger sister, youngest sister, and so on.

Table 5.2 shows social elements in high power distance and low power distance cultures and the likely characteristics of multiple settings.

European Americans tend to have a relatively low power distance, though it is by no means exceptionally low. However, when European Americans communicate with people from cultures that value a relatively large power distance, problems related to differences in expectations are likely. For example, European American exchange students in a South American or Asian culture sometimes have difficulty adapting to a world in which people are expected to do as they are told without questioning the reasons for the requests. Conversely, exchange students visiting the United States from high power distance cultures sometimes feel uneasy because they expect their

Table 5.2 Characteristics of High and Low Power Distance Cultures⁴

Setting	High Power Distance Cultures	Low Power Distance Cultures
Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are expected to obey their parents without challenging or questioning them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children put less value on obedience and are taught to seek reasons or justifications for their parents' actions.
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to comply with the wishes and requests of their teachers, and conformity is regarded very favorably. The curriculum is likely to involve a great deal of rote learning, and students are discouraged from asking questions because questions might pose a threat to the teacher's authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students regard their independence as very important, and they are less likely to conform to the expectations of teachers or other authorities. The education system teaches students to ask questions, to solve problems creatively and uniquely, and to challenge the evidence leading to conclusions.
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers are likely to prefer an autocratic or centralized decision-making style. Subordinates expect and want to be closely supervised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers prefer a consultative or participative decision-making style. Subordinates expect a great deal of autonomy and independence as they do their work.

teachers to direct and supervise their work closely, and they may also have been taught that it would be rude and impolite to ask for the kinds of information that might allow them to be more successful.

5.2.2: Uncertainty Avoidance

OBJECTIVE: Explain cultures' varying preferences for avoiding uncertainty

Another concern of all cultures is how they will adapt to changes and cope with uncertainties. The future will always be unknown in some respects. This unpredictability and the resultant anxiety that inevitably occurs are basic in human experience.

Cultures differ in the extent to which they prefer and can tolerate ambiguity and, therefore, in the means they select for coping with change. Thus, all cultures differ in their perceived need to be changeable and adaptable. Hofstede refers to these variations as the **uncertainty avoidance** dimension, the extent to which the culture feels threatened by ambiguous, uncertain situations and tries to avoid them by establishing more structure.

Table 5.3 shows the differences in the characteristics of high and low uncertainty avoidance cultures.

Differences in level of uncertainty avoidance can result in unexpected problems in intercultural communication. For instance, European Americans tend to have a moderately low level of uncertainty avoidance. When these U.S. Americans communicate with someone from a high uncertainty avoidance culture, such as those in Japan or France, they are likely to be seen as too nonconforming and unconventional, and they may view their Japanese or French counterparts as rigid and overly controlled. Conversely, when these U.S. Americans communicate with someone from an extremely low uncertainty avoidance culture, such as the Irish or Swedes, they are likely to be viewed as too structured and uncompromising, whereas they may perceive their Irish or Swedish counterparts as too willing to accept dissent.

Table 5.3 Characteristics of High and Low Uncertainty Avoidance Cultures

High Uncertainty Avoidance Cultures	Low Uncertainty Avoidance Cultures
Try to ensure certainty, predictability, and security through an extensive set of rules, regulations, and rituals	Minimize the number of rules and rituals that govern social conduct and human behavior
Desire or even demand consensus about societal goals	Accept and encourage dissent among cultural members
Do not like to tolerate dissent or allow deviation in the behaviors of cultural members	Tolerate people who behave in ways that are considered socially deviant and who take risks and try new things
Highly resistant to change	Willing to accept change and take risks
Many rules to control social behaviors	Few rules to control social behaviors
Adopt elaborate rituals and religious practices that have a precise form or sequence	Unlikely to adopt religious rituals that require precise patterns of enactment
Example: Greece, Guatemala, Portugal, and Uruguay	Example: Denmark, Jamaica, India, and Ireland

5.2.3: Individualism versus Collectivism

OBJECTIVE: Contrast cultures' varying regard for individual autonomy versus loyalty to the group

Another concern of all cultures, and a problem for which they must all find a solution, involves people's relationships to the larger social groups of which they are a part. People must live and interact together for the culture to survive. In doing so, they must develop a way of relating that strikes a balance between showing concern for themselves and concern for others.

Cultures differ in the extent to which individual autonomy is regarded favorably or unfavorably. Thus, cultures vary in their tendency to encourage people to be unique

Table 5.4 Characteristics of Highly Individualistic and Highly Collectivistic Cultures

Highly Individualistic Cultures	Highly Collectivistic Cultures
Believe that people are only supposed to take care of themselves and perhaps their immediate families	Absolute loyalty to the group, though the relevant group might be as varied as the nuclear family, the extended family, a work group, a social organization, a caste, or a <i>jati</i> (a subgrouping of a caste)
The autonomy of the individual is paramount	Tend to be group-oriented
Decisions are based primarily on what is good for the individual, not for the group, because the person is the primary source of motivation	Decisions that juxtapose the benefits to the individual and the benefits to the group are always based on what is best for the group, and the groups to which a person belongs are the most important social units
Judgment about what is right or wrong can be made only from the point of view of each individual	Believe in obligations to the group, dependence of the individual on organizations and institutions, a "we" consciousness, and an emphasis on belonging
Example: Dominant cultures in Belgium, Hungary, the Netherlands, and the United States	Example: Cultures in Guatemala, Indonesia, Pakistan, and West Africa

and independent or conforming and interdependent. Hofstede refers to these variations as the **individualism–collectivism** dimension—the degree to which a culture relies on and has allegiance to the self or the group.

Table 5.4 shows the characteristics of highly individualistic and highly collectivistic cultures.

Huge cultural differences can be explained by differences on the individualism–collectivism dimension. We have already noted that collectivistic cultures tend to be group-oriented. A related characteristic is that they typically impose a large psychological distance between those who are members of their group (the ingroup) and those who are not (the outgroup). Ingroup members are required to have unquestioning loyalty, whereas outgroup members are regarded as almost inconsequential. Conversely, members of individualistic cultures do not perceive a large chasm between ingroup and outgroup members; ingroup members are not extremely close, but outgroup members are not as distant.

Individualistic cultures train their members to speak out as a means of resolving difficulties. In classrooms, students from individualistic cultures are likely to ask questions of the teacher; students from collectivistic cultures are not. Similarly, people from individualistic cultures are more likely than those from collectivistic cultures to use confrontational strategies when dealing with interpersonal problems; those with a collectivistic orientation are likely to use avoidance, third-party intermediaries, or other face-saving techniques. Indeed, a common maxim among European Americans, who are highly individualistic, is

that “the squeaky wheel gets the grease” (suggesting that one should make noise to be rewarded); the corresponding maxim among the Japanese, who are somewhat collectivistic, is “the nail that sticks up gets pounded” (so one should always try to blend in).

5.2.4: Masculinity versus Femininity

OBJECTIVE: Compare cultures’ expectations for achievement and assertiveness versus nurturance and social support

A fourth concern of all cultures, and for which they must all find solutions, pertains to gender expectations and the extent to which people prefer achievement and assertiveness or nurturance and social support. Hofstede refers to these variations as the **masculinity–femininity** dimension. This dimension indicates the degree to which a culture values “masculine” behaviors, such as assertiveness and the acquisition of wealth, or “feminine” behaviors, such as caring for others and the quality of life.

Table 5.5 shows the characteristics of masculine and feminine cultures.

Table 5.5 Characteristics of Masculine and Feminine Cultures

Masculine Cultures	Feminine Cultures
People are judged on their performance, and those who achieve have the right to display the material goods they acquired	Believe less in external achievements and shows of manliness and more in the importance of life choices that improve intrinsic aspects of the quality of life, such as service to others and sympathy for the unfortunate
Believe in ostentatious manliness, and very specific behaviors and products are associated with appropriate male behavior	Prefer equality between the sexes, less prescriptive role behaviors associated with each gender, and an acceptance of nurturing roles for both women and men
Men should be assertive and women should be nurturing	Men are far less interested in achievement
Sex roles are clearly differentiated, and sexual inequality is regarded as beneficial	Sex roles are far more fluid, and equality between the sexes is the norm
Teachers in masculine cultures praise their best students because academic performance is rewarded highly	Teachers rarely praise individual achievements and academic performance because social accommodation is more highly regarded
Male students strive to be competitive, visible, successful, and vocationally oriented	Male students try to cooperate with one another and develop a sense of solidarity, they try to behave modestly and properly, they select subjects because they are intrinsically interesting rather than vocationally rewarding, and friendliness is much more important than brilliance
Example: Cultures of Austria, Italy, Japan, and Mexico	Example: Cultures of Chile, Portugal, Sweden, and Thailand

5.2.5: Time Orientation

OBJECTIVE: Describe cultures' varying preferences toward the use of time.

A fifth concern of all cultures relates to its orientation to time. Hofstede has acknowledged that the four previously described dimensions have a Western bias, as they were developed by scholars from Europe or the United States who necessarily brought to their work an implicit set of assumptions and categories about the types of cultural values they would likely find. His time orientation dimension is based on the work of Michael H. Bond, a Canadian who has lived in Asia for many years and who assembled a large team of researchers from Hong Kong and Taiwan to develop and administer a Chinese Value Survey to university students around the world.⁵

Long- and Short-Term Time Orientations

The time orientation dimension refers to a person's point of reference about life and work. It ranges from long term to short term.⁶

WRITING PROMPT

What Is Your Orientation to Time?

Think about the ways in which time punctuates your everyday life and how you see the world. Which orientation to time most resonates with you? Why do you think that is so? How would your life be different if your culture preferred the other orientation to time?

▶ The response entered here will appear in the performance dashboard and can be viewed by your instructor.

Submit

5.2.6: Indulgence versus Restraint

OBJECTIVE: Contrast culture preferences for indulging in pleasure versus showing restraint

Recently Hofstede has included an additional dimension to those previously described. Based on recent research,

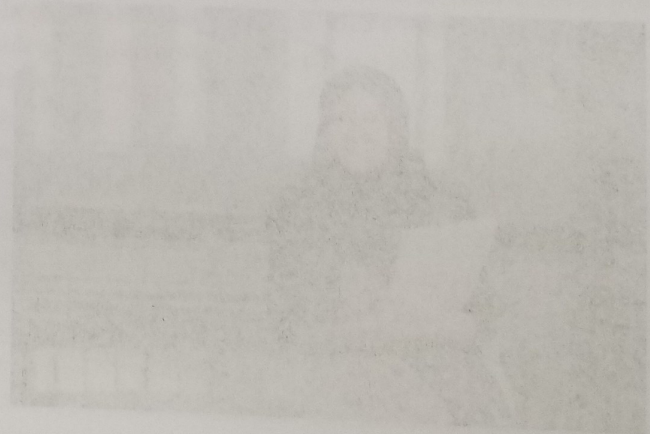
Interactive

Cultures with a Long-Term Time Orientation

- Cultures with a long-term time orientation toward life include those of Germany, Japan, Russia, and South Korea.
- They all admire persistence, thriftiness, and humility. Linguistic and social distinctions between elder and younger siblings are common, and deferred gratification of needs is widely accepted.

Cultures with a Short-Term Time Orientation

including ideas from Middle Eastern, Nordic, and Eastern European perspectives, Hofstede has added the dimension of indulgence-restraint to the taxonomy.



Indulgence versus Restraint

The indulgence versus restraint dimension juxtaposes hedonism with self-discipline.

Interactive

Indulgence

Restraint

Indulgence—the view that pleasure and the enjoyment of life are desirable—puts the focus on happiness as a way of life. Having fun, fulfilling one's appetites for delectable foods and drinks, indulging in social and sexual pleasures, and generally enjoying life by having pleasant and pleasurable experiences are characteristic. Cultures high on indulgence include those of El Salvador, Mexico, New Zealand, and Sweden. They all tend to encourage pleasure, enjoyment, spending, consumption, sexual gratification, and general merriment.

including ideas from Middle Eastern, Nordic, and Eastern European perspectives,⁷ Hofstede has added the dimension of **indulgence–restraint** to his taxonomy.



The hijab, or head scarf, is worn by many Muslim women as a statement of their cultural values.

5.2.7: Comparing Hofstede's Dimensions

OBJECTIVE: Describe the importance, to intercultural competence, of understanding cultures' differences related to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede's foundational work has been widely cited and appropriately praised for its importance, clarity, straightforwardness, simplicity, and excellence. Each of Hofstede's dimensions provides insights into the influence of culture on the communication process. Every culture, of course, forms an intricate and interrelated pattern; no one cultural dimension is sufficient to describe or understand this complexity.

Hofstede's dimensions describe cultural expectations for a range of social behaviors: *power distance* refers to relationships with people higher or lower in rank, *uncertainty*

avoidance to people's search for truth and certainty, *individualism–collectivism* to expected behaviors toward the group, *masculinity–femininity* to the expectations surrounding achievement and gender differences, *time orientation* to people's search for virtue and lasting ideals, and *indulgence–restraint* to psychological impulse control.

For additional numerical information on more than 70 cultures on Hofstede's dimensions, please turn to the **Resources**. There you will find information that is grouped by geographic region.

To guide you in understanding and using Hofstede's numerical data in the Resources, let's use the United States as an example. There are important differences between *nations* and *cultures*. Though Hofstede's data focus on national characteristics, the information is best understood as representing the dominant culture within a nation or group. When Hofstede did his research, the dominant culture in the United States was European American.

A look at Hofstede's U.S. data reveals that European Americans tend to be at the extremes: low on power distance (–92), uncertainty avoidance (–93), and time orientation (–84) and high on individualism (195), masculinity (68), and indulgence (104). Translating Hofstede's data into specific cultural characteristics suggests a cultural orientation in which European Americans prefer to minimize status differences (power distance), encourage risk taking (uncertainty avoidance), prefer short-term goals (time orientation), emphasize individual rights (individualism), highlight value achievement (masculinity), and desire pleasurable consumption (indulgence).

Similar analyses can be done with data from other cultures. If two cultures have similar configurations on Hofstede's dimensions, they would likely have similar communication patterns; conversely, cultures that are very different from one another would probably behave dissimilarly. Note, however, that even cultures that are located near others geographically are not entirely similar; these differences underscore the importance of being cautious when making generalizations about cultures, even when they are within the same regions of the world (for example, Latin America or the Middle East).

WRITING PROMPT

Locate Your Country in Comparison to Another Country

Look at the Resources. Trace the numerical figures for your country in terms of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions. What do these figures indicate about your country? Compare this with another country. How do you think these cultural dimensions influence your intercultural communication behaviors in your country? What about for the country of comparison?

▶ The response entered here will appear in the performance dashboard and can be viewed by your instructor.

WRITING PROMPT

Reflecting on Your Cultural Dimensions of Schwartz's Cultural Taxonomy

Identify which of Schwartz's cultural dimensions (from his Cultural Taxonomy) best represent your culture's response to problems and issues. Why do you think this is so?

▶ The response entered here will appear in the performance dashboard and can be viewed by your instructor.

Submit

5.4: The GLOBE Cultural Taxonomy

A recent and impressive study of differences in cultural patterns was conducted by Robert J. House and his team of more than 170 investigators.¹⁰ This ongoing research effort is called the GLOBE Project, which is an acronym for Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness. To date, the team has collected information from nearly 20,000 middle managers in 61 cultures.

The GLOBE research program builds on the work of Hofstede and Kluckhohn and Strodbeck. Nine dimensions are used to describe the dominant patterns of a culture:

power distance, uncertainty avoidance, ingroup collectivism, institutional collectivism, gender egalitarianism, assertiveness, performance orientation, future orientation, and humane orientation. The first six GLOBE dimensions are based on the work of Hofstede. The dimensions of power distance and uncertainty avoidance are identical in the two taxonomies. Hofstede's individualism–collectivism dimension has been separated into two GLOBE components: ingroup collectivism and institutional collectivism. Similarly, Hofstede's masculinity–femininity dimension has been divided into two components: gender egalitarianism and assertiveness. The remaining three GLOBE dimensions are based on the work of Kluckhohn and Strodbeck. The GLOBE's performance orientation dimension relates to Kluckhohn and Strodbeck's world orientation dimension. The future orientation dimension is based on Kluckhohn and Strodbeck's concept of time and the distinctions among past-, present-, and future-oriented cultures. The GLOBE's humane orientation dimension is anchored in Kluckhohn and Strodbeck's view of human nature, especially their distinction that cultures may regard humans on a continuum ranging from inherently "good" to inherently "bad." Table 5.6 provides the nine cultural dimensions studied in the GLOBE research, their cultural characteristics, and sample items. The information in this table provides a useful reference guide to help you understand the GLOBE ideas more easily.

Table 5.6 GLOBE Dimensions and Cultural Characteristics¹¹

Dimensions Based on	Dimension	Cultural Characteristics	Sample Items
Hofstede	Power Distance	The degree to which people believe that power should be stratified, unequally shared, and concentrated at higher levels of an organization or government.	Followers are expected to obey their leaders without question.
	Uncertainty Avoidance	The extent to which people strive to avoid uncertainty by relying on social norms, rules, rituals, and bureaucratic practices to alleviate the unpredictability of future events.	Most people lead highly structured lives with few unexpected events.
	Ingroup Collectivism	The degree to which people express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their families.	Parents take great pride in the accomplishments of their children.
	Institutional Collectivism	The degree to which a culture's institutional practices encourage collective actions and the collective distribution of resources.	Leaders encourage group loyalty even if individual goals suffer.
	Gender Egalitarianism	The extent to which people minimize gender-role differences and gender discrimination while promoting gender equality.	Boys are encouraged more than girls to attain a higher education (scored inversely).
Kluckhohn and Strodbeck	Assertiveness	The degree to which people are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships.	People are generally dominant in their relationships with each other.
	Performance Orientation	The extent to which people encourage others to improve their task-oriented performance and excel.	Students are encouraged to strive for continuously improved performance.
	Future Orientation	The degree to which people engage in future-oriented behaviors, such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying gratification.	Most people live in the present rather than for the future (scored inversely).
	Humane Orientation	The degree to which people encourage others to be fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind.	Most people are generally tolerant of mistakes.



By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- 5.4.1: Describe the consequences of various cultures' preferences for either small or large power distances
- 5.4.2: Explain cultures' varying preferences for avoiding uncertainty
- 5.4.3: Contrast cultures' varying regard for individual autonomy versus loyalty to the group
- 5.4.4: Describe how cultures vary in the degree to which they value the distribution of rewards based on group versus individual interests
- 5.4.5: Explain how cultures vary in their preference for equality between women and men
- 5.4.6: Compare how cultures vary in their preference for dominance and forcefulness versus nurturance and social support
- 5.4.7: Contrast how cultures differ in encouraging personal accomplishments
- 5.4.8: Compare how cultures plan and prepare for forthcoming events
- 5.4.9: Compare how cultures encourage and reward benevolence and compassion toward others
- 5.4.10: Analyze the relationship between the GLOBE dimensions and intercultural competence

5.4.1: Power Distance

OBJECTIVE: Describe the consequences of various cultures' preferences for either small or large power distances

As Hofstede suggested, one of the basic concerns of all cultures is the issue of human inequality. Cultures differ in the extent to which they view status inequalities as desirable or undesirable. Thus *power distance* refers to the degree to which cultures believe that social and political power should be distributed disproportionately, shared unequally, and concentrated among a few top decision makers.

Culture Connections

"So Griffoni's formality could be nothing more than deference to her position." Before Brunetti could object, she said, "Remember, she's a Sicilian, and they're far more hierarchical in their thinking than we are. If they come of good families, the impulse towards politeness is even stronger."

"It's been three years."

"They'll work things out. It sounds to me as if each is simply waiting for the other one to show some sign of informality."

—Donna Leon

Table 5.7 Characteristics of High Power Distance and Low Power Distance Cultures

Elements	High Power Distance Cultures	Low Power Distance Cultures
Social Class Differences	Very appropriate	Minimize or even eliminate
Upward Mobility	Limited because people already occupy their correct places in the social hierarchy	High because an equal opportunity for each person is an overriding goal
Decisions of Authorities	Met with unchallenged acceptance	Each person has a duty and responsibility to question and challenge the decision to ensure social and political power are used well
Example	France, Argentina, and Nigeria	Australia, Denmark, and Albania

Table 5.7 shows the differences in the characteristics of high power distance and low power distance cultures.

5.4.2: Uncertainty Avoidance

OBJECTIVE: Explain cultures' varying preferences for avoiding uncertainty

All cultures need to have some degree of predictability in their social worlds. While complete certainty can never be achieved, humans could not survive in a world of total and chaotic uncertainty. Thus cultures vary in the degree of predictability they prefer. These variations constitute the *uncertainty avoidance* dimension, which is the extent to which cultures feel threatened by the unpredictability of the future and therefore try to establish more structure in the form of rules, regulations, rituals, and mandatory practices.

Cultures such as those in Sweden, Switzerland, and China are relatively high on uncertainty avoidance. Therefore, they prefer to avoid uncertainty as a cultural value, desire or even demand consensus about societal goals, and do not tolerate dissent or allow deviation in the behaviors of cultural members. They try to ensure certainty and security through an extensive set of instructions about how one ought to behave. As a result, cultures that are high on uncertainty avoidance prefer to develop many ways to control people's social behaviors. These controls exist as formal regulations and as informal rules about acceptable conduct, and they also include elaborate rituals and religious practices that have a precise form or sequence.

Cultures such as those in Russia, Bolivia, and South Korea are relatively low on uncertainty avoidance. Therefore, they have a higher tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity and are much more comfortable with the unpredictability of life. Consequently, rules and regulations are kept to a minimum, dissent is tolerated, and deviance is more likely to be regarded as peculiar or eccentric rather than as threatening.

5.4.3: Ingroup Collectivism

OBJECTIVE: Contrast cultures' varying regard for individual autonomy versus loyalty to the group

The ingroup collectivism dimension is similar to what Hofstede calls individualism–collectivism. Individualistic cultures have low ingroup collectivism, whereas collectivistic cultures rate high on this dimension.

Ingroup collectivism reflects the degree to which people express pride, loyalty, and solidarity with their family or similar group. In cultures with high ingroup collectivism, individuals take pride in and define their sense of self—quite literally, their sense of who they are—in terms of their family or similar group. That is, people's identities within collectivistic cultures are closely tied to their ingroups, and strong group memberships are both required and desired. As the African saying suggests, in collectivistic cultures "I am because we are." Representative cultures that are high on ingroup collectivism include those in Georgia, Morocco, and the Philippines.

In individualistic cultures—those that are low on ingroup collectivism—the independence and autonomy of the individual is an overriding feature. People's identities within individualistic cultures are separate from, and perhaps very distant from, those of the group. Group membership is often regarded as voluntary, and allegiance with one's ingroup—even with one's family—is not expected to be overly strong. Included in this category are such cultures as those in New Zealand, Finland, and the Netherlands.

Culture Connections

One of the things I loved most about being Amish was the sense of community, of belonging, of being part of something bigger than myself. I loved the way my Amish brethren pulled together in the face of tragedy.

—Linda Castillo

5.4.4: Institutional Collectivism

OBJECTIVE: Describe how cultures vary in the degree to which they value the distribution of rewards based on group versus individual interests

Another aspect of the dimension that Hofstede called individualism–collectivism is concerned with the basis upon which decisions are made and how the group's resources are allocated.

Culture Connections

My job was managing the household. I told Joseph I didn't want any servants. Joseph wasn't listening.

"We can't afford servants," I protested ...

"You'll like Kamau," he said. "He is a good man."

"It's not a question of liking," I said. "I don't want a cook. It's ridiculous for the two of us to have a cook and a yard man."

"A man in my position must have servants. It's expected. In America, I kept silent and learned your ways. Now you must learn."

"But servants, Joseph? It's so un-American."

He laughed and took my hand. "Kamau is of my age group—we were initiated together. We will help him. It is not a matter of choice."

As it turned out, many things were not a matter of choice—my husband's monthly salary contributed to the school fees of several brothers or cousins and our garden was freely harvested by his family.

—Geraldine Kennedy

5.4.5: Gender Egalitarianism

OBJECTIVE: Explain how cultures vary in their preference for equality between women and men

If you carefully read the description of Hofstede's masculinity–femininity dimension, you will note that it combines two related attributes that, in the GLOBE Project, have been separated into separate dimensions: a belief in equality between women and men and a preference for forceful assertiveness. The first of these attributes is called **gender egalitarianism** and is the extent to which a culture minimizes differences in gender expectations for men versus women.

Cultures such as those in Hungary and Poland, which are near the midpoint of the gender egalitarianism dimension, believe that gender equality is preferred, that men and women should be treated in the same way, and that unequal treatment solely because of one's biological sex or gender constitutes discrimination and should not occur.

Conversely, cultures like those in Austria and Egypt, which are low in gender egalitarianism, engage in unequal treatment of men and women. In this view, there are inherent differences between men and women, and these differences require dissimilar expectations and treatments. Rather than regarding these fundamental differences negatively, cultures that are low on gender egalitarianism view

The dimension of **institutional collectivism** represents the degree to which cultures support, value, and prefer to distribute rewards based on group versus individual interests.

Interactive

High on Institutional Collectivism



Within Massai culture, which is high on institutional collectivism, there is a strong identification with the tribe. Here, a group of Massai women live in a communal village.

In cultures that are high on institutional collectivism, decisions that juxtapose the benefits to the group with the benefits to the individual nearly always base the decision on what is best for the group. Thus, in cultures like those in Qatar and Japan, group activities are typically preferred to individual actions.

Low on Institutional Collectivism

the divergence in gender roles and expectations as normal and natural.

5.4.6: Assertiveness

OBJECTIVE: Compare how cultures vary in their preference for dominance and forcefulness versus nurturance and social support

Another concern of all cultures, which also requires every culture to find a solution, pertains to the cultural preference for dominance and forcefulness or nurturance and social support. This **assertiveness** dimension describes the extent to which people value and prefer tough aggressiveness or tender nonaggressiveness.

Table 5.8 shows the characteristics of cultures high or low on the assertiveness dimension.

Table 5.8 Characteristics of Cultures Based on the Assertiveness Dimension

Cultures High on the Assertiveness Dimension	Cultures Low on the Assertiveness Dimension
Value strength, success, and taking the initiative	Value modesty, tenderness, warm relationships, and cooperation
Competition is good, winning is desirable, and rewards should go to those who are victorious	Competition is bad, a win-lose orientation is unacceptable, and rewards should be shared among all
People are encouraged to be competitive, visible, and successful	People give importance to nurturance and social support; friendliness is much more important than brilliance
Example: Germany and Hong Kong	Example: Kuwait and Thailand

5.4.7: Performance Orientation

OBJECTIVE: Contrast how cultures differ in encouraging personal accomplishments

The degree to which a culture encourages and rewards people for their accomplishments is called the **performance orientation** dimension.

WRITING PROMPT

Which Performance Orientation Is Your Culture?

Reflect on the information about low and high performance-oriented cultures. Explain which one best represents your culture, and describe the advantages and disadvantages of being a part of this type of performance-oriented culture.

▶ The response entered here will appear in the performance dashboard and can be viewed by your instructor.

Submit

5.4.8: Future Orientation

OBJECTIVE: Compare how cultures plan and prepare for forthcoming events

Locating one's world in time—and thereby giving structure, coherence, and significance to events—creates order and meaning in people's lives. The extent to which a culture plans for forthcoming events is the **future orientation** dimension. Related slightly to Hofstede's long-term dimension and very directly to Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's ideas on time orientation, the future orientation dimension describes the degree to which cultures advocate long-term planning and deferred gratification or the deeply felt satisfaction that comes from experiencing the simple pleasures of the present moment.

Cultures differ, of course, in the extent to which they prefer to focus on the future rather than on the

Elements Differentiating High and Low Performance-Oriented Cultures

Depending on the culture, some people might be regarded as superior to others because of who they are—the "correct" family background, age, gender, birth order, or school—whereas others may acquire status based on personal achievements, such as their amount of education, success in business, physical strength, occupation, or a wide variety of other characteristics.

Interactive

Status

Relationship with Nature

Values

Messages

In high performance-oriented cultures, such as those in Canada and Singapore, status is based on what a person has accomplished. Schooling and education are critical to one's success, people are expected to demonstrate some initiative in work-related tasks, and expectations are high.

Conversely, in low performance-oriented cultures, like those in Colombia and Guatemala, status is based on who you are. Attending the "right" school is important, as are family connections, seniority, loyalty, and tradition.

spontaneity of the present. Those high in future orientation, such as Iran and Hong Kong, believe that current pleasures are less important than future benefits, so they believe in planning, self-control, and activities that have a delayed impact. Cultures like those in Portugal and Venezuela are low in future orientation and thus prefer to enjoy fully the experiences currently under way; they like to live “in the moment” and are less constrained by doubts about the past or concerns about the future.

People from cultures that are high in future orientation want to save money and other resources. They believe in strategic planning, and they value economic success. People from cultures that are low in future orientation are more likely to spend now rather than save for later. They view material and spiritual achievements as opposing goals, and they prefer the latter. Thus, how cultures prioritize the orientation to time shapes and frames their behaviors and actions.

High versus Low Humane Orientation

Consider what types of actions you would characterize as humane behavior.

Interactive

High in Humane Orientation

Cultures high in humane orientation value expressions of kindness, generosity, caring, and compassion, and people who express social support for others are admired. Members of humane-oriented cultures are expected to help others financially and emotionally, to share information that others may need, to spend time with others, and to offer empathy and love. Representative cultures include those in Zambia and Indonesia.

Low in Humane Orientation

5.4.9: Humane Orientation

OBJECTIVE: Compare how cultures encourage and reward benevolence and compassion toward others

The final GLOBE dimension, **humane orientation**, refers to the extent to which cultures encourage and reward their members for being benevolent and compassionate toward others or are concerned with self-interest and self-gratification.

5.4.10: Comparing the GLOBE Dimensions

OBJECTIVE: Analyze the relationship between the GLOBE dimensions and intercultural competence

Cultural patterns represent a universal social choice that must be made by each culture and that is learned from the

family and throughout the social institutions of a culture: in the degree to which children are encouraged to have their own desires and motivations, in the solidarity and unity expected in the family, in the role models that are presented, and throughout the range of messages that are conveyed.

Additional numerical information about 61 cultures on the GLOBE dimensions can be found in the **Resources**. The regional groupings organize the cultures in the GLOBE studies by geographic areas. As we suggested previously, the data can be used to understand the tendencies of cultures that are of interest to you.

The GLOBE research expands our understanding of cultural patterns. By providing updated information on a wide range of cultures, and by revising and expanding the cultural dimensions that are relevant, this effort substantially increases our understanding of cultures and intercultural communication. To provide just one example of the usefulness of the expanded GLOBE dimensions, consider the information (in the **Resources**) about the Japanese culture on the dimensions of institutional collectivism and ingroup collectivism. Whereas the Japanese are extremely high in institutional collectivism (+222), they are below the average for ingroup collectivism (-68). This information clarifies why decisions in Japan are most often made, and resources among the Japanese are typically distributed, in a very collectivistic fashion, but the collective group for the Japanese—that is, the group with which people identify most closely—is not necessarily the family but rather the organization, the nation, or some other social unit. New Zealanders, Swedes, and Danes, among others, have patterns on these two dimensions that are similar to the Japanese; Greeks, Guatemalans, Colombians, and others have the opposite pattern.