



Journal of Intercultural Management and Ethics

JIME

ISSN 2601 - 5749, ISSN-L 2601 - 5749

published by

Center for Socio-Economic Studies and Multiculturalism
Iasi, Romania
www.csesm.warter.ro

Special Editors

Drs. Huib Wursten,
Author and Consultant, Netherlands
E-mail: huibwursten@gmail.com

Beatrice Gabriela Ioan
"Grigore T Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Iași, Romania
Dept. of Forensic Medicine
E-mail: ioanbml@yahoo.com

TABLE OF CONTENT

Editorial	5
Huib Wursten, Beatrice Gabriela Ioan	
A Global Pandemic in India	7
Divya Susan Varkey	
The Fight against Corona from a Danish Cultural Perspective	23
Pernilla Rorso	
Corona Revisited	33
Huib Wursten, Christi Degen	
Pandemics & Culture: Could Historical Pathogenic Prevalence Reinforce Collectivism?.....	41
Paulo Finuras	
Forgiveness, Unforgiveness and Health	51
Adina Karner-Huțuleac	
How Can Plato Be Relevant for Contemporary Medicine?	59
Tudor-Ștefan Rotaru	
Confidentiality of the Medical Act - Between Patient Preferences and the Collective Risk .	67
Andreea-Luiza Palamaru, Ioana-Florina Mihai, Elena Toader	
Burnout Syndrome in Palliative Care	71
Ana-Roxana Gănceanu-Rusu, Elena Rezuș, Nicoleta Dima, Codruța Bădescu, Daniela Tănase, Anca Ouatu, Andreea Clim, Ana-Maria Pop, Minela Aida Mărânducă, Ciprian Rezuș	
Burnout Syndrome in Forensic Pathology - Current Stage of Knowledge, Approach Proposals	79
Silviu Morar, Lilioara-Alexandra Muja	
Managing the Migration of the Doctors in a Multicultural Context	85
Elena Toader	

A Century Old Dream That May Turn Into a Nightmare	91
Mircea Gelu Buta	
Infertility and In Vitro Fertilization. Arguments to Support Proper Counseling	99
Mihail Adeodatus Ungureanu, Beatrice Gabriela Ioan	
General Principles Regarding Ethical Evaluation of Projects Involving Laboratory Animals in Scientific Research	105
Serban Morosan, Cristin Coman	
The Utility of Respecting the Ethical Code in Student-Teacher University Relations	113
Elena Gologan, Oana Timofte	

CORONA REVISITED

Drs. Huib Wursten,
Author and Consultant, Netherlands
E-mail: huibwursten@gmail.com

Christi Degen
Management of Public Organizations/ Associations/ Chambers
International Relations Management
E-mail: christi.degen@hofstede-insights.com

Abstract

In this paper Corona revisited we will concentrate on the consequence of one of the dimensions of culture: Uncertainty Avoidance

The Contest countries are all scoring low on Uncertainty Avoidance. The paper will describe the resulting preference for practitioners and their relatively low esteem for intellectuals and experts.

France and Germany score both high. But the combination with Power distance makes the consequences completely different. The key for this paper is that in the Well-oiled Machine cultures the need for structure and experts is so strong because of the combination of high Uncertainty Avoidance and a low score on the Power Distance index. It is typical for Germans, Austrians, the German speaking Swiss and Hungarians that they **internalize** the need for stability (“Ordnung muss sein”)

In France, Belgium and Italy experts are also in high esteem. But they score also high on PDI the acceptance of unequal distribution of power. This means that people accept that the top has the privilege and right to decide. The acceptance of top down decision making does not mean that people behave accordingly. The truth is found in a saying: “people only respect what you inspect” (by authorities). The need for structure and expert knowledge is not internalized and as a result the high power distance takes priority over expert credibility. Checking and enforcement after decisions are a must.

In these countries hierarchy (High PDI) takes dominance over UAI (expert knowledge) The Government is given the privilege to make decisions even if the experts advice otherwise. This has been a big problem for the "Stability pact" in the Euro zone. That's is the reason why the Northern (low PDI) countries are so much against the Euro bonds right now because, in their view, the governments of Solar System cultures do not always opt for the most reasonable expert options. They feel that these Governments act upon a self-interested political agenda.

There will be also a short paragraph about the Network. It will refer to research, showing that the deepest need for individual people in these countries is autonomy (Wursten, 2019). That's why Sweden is such a nice example of a country where the Government was very reluctant to intervene during the Corona crisis. The Netherlands is another example. The Government is "promoting the concept of an "intelligent lock-down". Using experts to legitimize certain lock down measurements but referring to the individual responsibility of the citizens to keep 1,5 meter social distance and not to meet more than 3 people. This is not a wording that is coincidental. Respecting as much as possible the autonomy is central in the policy message. The population is very much embracing this policy.

For a short overview of the Hofstede dimensions and the 7 Mental Images see: Notes at the end of this article

Keywords: Corona, crisis, Culture, Mental Images, Government intervention, expert credibility

Introduction

In the paper on Corona “There is a system in the madness” a first attempt was made to see the connection between the 7 mental Images of culture and the policies of Governments reacting to the Corona Pandemic.

Together Christi Degen and Huib Wursten decided to follow up on relevant details.

In this article we will elaborate further on how Uncertainty Avoidance is affecting the “rules of the game” as Wursten calls the Mental Images. Especially looking at the role of experts in the combination with Power distance.

We do this because the obvious low esteem given to expert advice by a highly visible politician like Donald Trump. Something that in a lesser visible way was exposed in the UK.

What became a case story in its own right was the way Donald Trump insulted Dr. Fauci, the infectious disease expert in the USA, who was insulted and ignored by the President and who faced threats from the general public is not a coincidence. Even not taking the special personality of President Trump into account!

Reports say that the immunologist who became a celebrity as an expert on coronavirus has received unwelcome messages from critics and supporters

The Washington Post of 2 Apr 2020 reported that:

While Fauci’s straight talk and willingness to gently correct the president’s outrageous exaggerations have drawn admiration from late-night “talk show hosts”, professional basketball players and doughnut shop owners alike, the doctor has received threats and unwelcome communications from both critics and fervent admirers. Fauci became a public target for: “rightwing pundits and bloggers who believe he is undermining the president.” (Stanley-Becker, Abutaleb, & Barrett, 2020).

It’s interesting to compare this attitude with reaction of a celebrity from (high UAI) Germany. Alexander Gerst, an astronaut, said in an interview for a magazine “Geo” about the expert decisions around Corona:

“We as astronauts we learn not to question decisions taken with reliable information too early, just because it is inconvenient for us. As long as the facts are not changing we should adhere to the decisions.

It is also in total contrast to what Angela Merkel communicated: “We don’t have sufficient knowledge about this virus and there is no therapy and no antidote. That’s why we align our approach to what experts tell us.”

We’ll analyze the dominant thinking systems that can be identified.

First we compare two Mental Images, The Contest and the Well Oiled Machine by looking at countries representing the two opposite thinking systems as a result of the score of only one dimension: The USA and Germany

Second comparison will be with the Solar System represented by France. In the Solar system high UAI goes together with a high score for Power Distance. In other words a high bottom up acceptance for unequal distribution of Power. People see it as “natural that the decisions are taken top down. Conclusion will be that experts are in high esteem but in decision making the (political) powerholders are accepted to have the privilege to decide on their terms

1. Contest and Well Oiled Machine

The **dominant thinking system in Germany is Deductive.**

In high UAI cultures the need is to be sure before you take action. The need is to know about what people in the past and present already found out about a certain subject. It is a pre-requisite for "**knowledge**" and "competence." This results in high status of experts.

Handbooks are beginning with the principles of (die Prinzipien von...) before talking about practical applications. A typical German concept in education is "Bildung", directly related to the way Plato defined the absolute truth as "Ideas"

A defining saying illustrating this way of thinking is: "Die Wahrheit triumphiert nie, ihre Gegner sterben nur aus". (Truth never triumphs. Her adversaries just fade away).

Keyword: "Think before you do"

For credibility it is needed to show formula's, laboratories, A "white coat"

Academic titles are important for the credibility of people.

People in high UAI cultures feel more stress

Two examples:

- One colleague of ours was invited to run a workshop in Portugal. Going there an apprentice was invited as co-trainer. It was an University professor who wanted to be trained as an intercultural consultant. Upon arriving at the airport and after being introduced the colleague was completely neglected by the host. The apprentice after introducing himself as a Professor was clearly in terms of status the one the hosts wanted to communicate with.
- Invited by a Governmental Institute in the EU one of the authors was involved in a series of seminars for European Managers. A very competent Greek consultant was part of the team.
- He told us that he was highly regarded in some Western European countries because of his technical hands on background. But in Greece he was not successful because he was not connected with an University.

Respect for experts is also leading to trust in what they recommend in these times of Corona.

This is not to be mistaken for "the experts are ruling the country"- the responsibility for implementing the expert advice and deciding on behavior is decentralized and to all levels involved.

The **dominant thinking system** of the Contest is **inductive and action orientated** It is called **Pragmatism**. We use the quote of William James (called the father of pragmatism) as a reference: *truth is when it works*. And how can you see it works? By the visible end result: behavior. Handbooks about everything relevant start by looking at visible practices. Conclusions are taking the shape of "best practices"

Summing up:

In the low UAI cultures the thinking is inductive:

Keywords: "Just do it", best practices, empiricism

Consequences:

- Belief in generalists and common sense
- a stronger belief in lay competence
- 'practitioners' have strong credibility
- People are more relaxed and do not worry too much

The influence of Masculinity:

In the Contest brand of inductive reasoning it can be further understood by adding the influence of a high score on MAS: strong action- and achievement orientation. This way of thinking is called pragmatism. Pragmatists are unwilling to be involved in too much speculation on what is going on in the minds of people. Abstract argumentation is something for "academics." What counts is whether specific actions lead to desired observable behavior: "the proof of the pudding is in the eating." "If we can work out what's

in the box – fine. It may help. If not – we’ll just do what seems to work. Even if we do work out what’s in the box and it doesn’t work – we’ll do something else.’

Huib Wursten: Some personal experience:

As a student in educational psychology I was sent now and then to Educational conferences in the UK. The idea of my Professors was that the UK was very advanced in thinking about secondary education and adult education. Only much later I dared to admit in my environment that every time I went to these conferences I was bored shitless after 1 hour listening to people who shared their practices. In all cases I remember I decided to go to the city center and to enjoy myself walking down the streets.

Only much later I had the arguments to explain my boredom. It has to do with the dominant inductive thinking style of the (what I now define as) Contest cultures.

What I missed, coming from a culture scoring in the middle of the UAI dimension, was a theoretical frame work explaining why the practices that were so brilliantly and humorously described, were chosen out of other possible approaches and why these were more successful than other options.

This resistance against theoretical frame works was, I discovered, also found in “Contest” handbooks on a myriad of subjects The handbooks value practical application over "academic" research.

UAI and legal systems:

even the legal systems are reflecting this difference In the high UAI cultures of continental Europe Roman law is practiced. The Judge is supposed to apply the rules blindfolded. In the low UAI cultures of the Contest he law system is common law (case based)

As a consequence the respect for experts in the contest countries is relatively low. Generalists are getting high esteem.

A quote to illustrate that:

In an article of this year in The Spectator (31 March 2020), the writer Brendan O’Neill is trying to spin this credibility issue by saying that:

“For some people, it isn’t enough that we have locked down our daily lives. They want us to lock down our brains, too. Raise so much as a peep of criticism about the shutdown of society in response to Covid-19 and you will be raged against. And the cry is always the same: ‘Are you an expert? No. So shut the hell up.’ Only experts are allowed to speak at the moment, apparently. The rest of us — us lowly, non-expert plebs — must simply sit at home and await our instructions from on high. (O’Neill, 2020)

In a later issue of the Spectator (Spectator USA, April 21) the heading made clear how the expert knowledge is appreciated: “There are lies, damned lies and epidemiological models” (Kimball, 2020).

One more detail about the Contest. They also have a high score on Individualism and Masculinity. The amazing consequence in this time of crisis: in the US the sales of weapons have multiplied. Store owners say: normally they sell 4-6 guns/machine guns per day - now they are selling around 50 per day. US citizens want to be prepared for the case that their houses could be raided for food by individuals or gangs.

2. Solar System: The influence of the power-distance dimension

Comparing The Well Oiled Machine and the Solar System the Solar System it is clear that they are different on two dimensions: MAS and especially PDI Again the “rules of the game” are as a consequence amazingly different.

Like the USA, Germany is a country with a decentralized system.

- a good example for the Well Oiled Machine is the governmental approach to delegate decisions (on cancelling events and closing schools) to the level of the Länder (regional) or even the cities (local) (PDI-), to gather information from experts, before deciding. Of course, it does play a role, that in Germany, after Nazi-times everyone has a natural rejection of signs of a strong/authoritarian leadership. And in addition, persons from former East-Germany, like Angela Merkel, have a rejection of too much state.

France is a clear example of a high PDI country. As the joke tells us: “even all roads lead to Paris”.

As we have seen; France and Germany score both high on UAI. But the combination with PDI make the consequences completely different.

An example: In both cultures officially the Central bank as expert system is independent from Government. Main task of the expert system is to make sure there is limited inflation and that Government debt is not over 60 % of national income. If the Government want to boost the economy by spending money it is the usual task of a Central Bank usually is saying no, because of inflation danger (a national trauma for Germans of course) This is taken seriously by the Germans/Austrians. France and Italy have proven not to accept this in reality. In these countries hierarchy (Large PDI) is more important than UAI (expert knowledge) The Government overrides the expert opinion. This has been a big problem for the "Stability pact" in the Euro zone. That's is the reason why the Northern countries are so much against the Euro bonds right now.

The key for our paper is that in the Well -Oiled Machine the need for structure and experts is because of the combination of high UAI and low PDI. This results in what is typical for Germans, Austrians and the German speaking Swiss, the **internalization** of the need for stability. The key word for understanding this behavior is “Planmäßig handeln”, the structural procedural approach. People have the tendency to be disciplined in following the expert decisions. If they disagree about a certain approach they will speak up. As a result leaders, like politicians, can trust the slogan “No News is good news”.

In high power distance cultures, this is generally not the case. It is uneasy to contradict the powerholders. You never know exactly what they can do to you.

Powerholders in these cultures know this of course. They find it natural not to wait till people speak up but to be active in inspecting what is happening in reality. In France, Belgium and Italy the saying is: “people only respect what you inspect”

The results are amazing: According to the French website “Verbalisé (parce que)” you’ll get a fine if you go to the bakery and order just one baguette instead of the obligatory two, or if you go to the pharmacy on your bike instead of by car. The website mentions that after the announcement of the measurements concerning Corona on March 17 the French police was having checks 11.8 million times and gave 700000 times a fine.

3 The Network cultures

The Network Cultures have a low to middle score on UAI in combination with Low PDI, High IDV and a Feminine value system..

In general they had a tendency to be (perhaps too-) relaxed hearing about the virus. As we have seen in the previous paper, they don’t like strong Government interventions and prefer a policy of “Nudging”

This is in line with research showing that the deepest emotional need for people in these countries is autonomy. That's why Sweden is such a nice example of a country where the Government was very reluctant to intervene. The Netherlands is another example. The Government is "promoting the concept of an "intelligent lock-down". Using experts to legitimize certain lock down measurements but referring to the individual responsibility of the citizens to keep 1,5 meter social distance and not to meet more than 3 people. This

concept of Intelligent lockdown is not coincidental. Respecting as much as possible the autonomy of the citizens is central in the policy message. The population is very much embracing this approach.

Fines are seldomly given. Strong advice is given by daily briefings by the Prime Minister usually accompanied by experts and on behalf of the experts to avoid going to parks on sunny the weekends and not to go to popular places like the beach.

The PM is giving positive feedback to the population and keeps on saying: “keep on going like this. We are not yet safe!”

Conclusion

In an earlier publication (Wursten, 2020), we already observed that it is a challenge to make a fact-based comparison between Government policies concerning the Corona virus. it is obvious that official policies are to a high degree identical. Politicians look at how international colleagues are approaching the crisis and have a tendency to copy what they call "best practices".

In finding these issues that are culture specific we have to look through rhetoric and official policy statements. In the book “The 7 Mental Images of National Culture” (Wursten, 2019), culture clusters are described with specific approaches to management, politics and society.

The position of experts is one of the elements making a difference.

In this paper we saw that the combination of the national scores on Uncertainty Avoidance and the position on Power distance explains the difference in the position and credibility of experts in policy towards Corona in the approach of the Well Oiled Machine, The Contest, the Solar System and the Network

Notes

1. The confirmed value preferences Hofstede found empirically are in shorthand:

PDI. Power distance Index: the way hierarchy is accepted as something existential or as something created for convenience.

IDV. Individualism versus collectivism: describing the emphasis of loyalty. To the Individual or to the In-group.

MAS. Masculinity versus Femininity: motivation by competition and challenges or by cooperation and consensus seeking.

UAI. Uncertainty Avoidance Index : the extent of the need for predictability. Is dealing with unknown risks uncertainty experienced as positive drive or a negative one. (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010).

In terms of research methodology it is important to emphasize that the 4 value dimensions are independent.

However: In applying the value dimensions for analysis in real life it is rare that explanations can be given by one single dimension. In most cases it is the combination that gives the full picture.

2. The Mental Images

The key issue is that the combination of the fundamental value dimensions is leading to a “Gestalt”, something new. An important consequence is that the different combinations lead to 6 different “pictures” in the mind of people of what society and organizations look like. Hence the name: ”mental images”.

Each mental image represents a cluster of countries which have certain characteristics (scores) in common.

1. **The contest model** (^winner takes all^)

Competitive Anglo-Saxon cultures with low power distance, high individualism and masculinity, and fairly low scores on uncertainty avoidance. Examples: Australia, New Zealand, UK and USA.

2. **The network model** (consensus)

Highly individualistic, 'feminine' societies with low power distance like Scandinavia and the Netherlands. Autonomy is central motivation. Everyone is involved in decision-making.

3. **The organization as a family** (loyalty and hierarchy)

Found in societies that score high on power distance and collectivism and have powerful in-groups and paternalistic leaders. Examples: China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore.

4. **The pyramidal organization** (loyalty, hierarchy and implicit order)

Found in collective societies with large power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Examples: much of Latin America, Greece, Portugal, Russia and South Korea.

5. **The solar system** (hierarchy and an impersonal bureaucracy)

Similar to the pyramid structure, but with greater individualism. Examples: Belgium, France, Northern Italy, Spain and French speaking Switzerland.

6. **The well-oiled machine** (order)

Found in societies with low power distance and high uncertainty avoidance, carefully balanced procedures and rules, not much hierarchy. Examples: Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Hungary, German speaking Switzerland.

7. **Japan.**

This country is standing alone

References

1. Stanley-Becker, I., Abutaleb, Y., & Barrett, D. (2020, April 2). Anthony Fauci's security is stepped up as doctor and face of U.S. coronavirus response receives threats. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/anthony-faucis-security-is-stepped-up-as-doctor-and-face-of-us-coronavirus-response-receives-threats/2020/04/01/ff861a16-744d-11ea-85cb-8670579b863d_story.html.
2. O'Neill, B. (2020, March 31). Yes, we need experts. But let's not politicise expertise. *The Spectator*. Retrieved from <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/let-s-not-treat-coronavirus-experts-like-gods>
3. Kimball, R. (2020, April 21). There are lies, damned lies and epidemiological models. *The Spectator USA*. Retrieved from <https://spectator.us/fatality-rate-ccp-virus-overreaction/>
4. Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. Berkeley: McGraw Hill
5. Wursten, H. (2019). *The 7 Mental Images of National Culture: Leading and Managing in a Globalized World*. Helsinki: Hofstede Insights
6. Wursten, H. (2020). There is a system in the madness The 7 mental images of national culture and the Corona crisis. *Journal of Intercultural Management and Ethics*, 1, 7-17.