

THE EFFECT OF CULTURE ON EDUCATIONAL METHODOLOGIES IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS PROGRAMS: AN APPLICATION TO THE IMBA PROGRAM

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1. Introduction

Spanish University Strategy for 2015



<http://www.educacion.gob.es/eu2015>

To increase INTERNATIONALISATION through INTERNATIONAL POSTGRADUATE COURSES



Aims and Objectives of the IBSA program



www.uv.es/imba

Changes in the composition of the adult classroom, increasing diversity and bringing new associated teaching and learning problems.

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Innova iMBA Group

1. Introduction



DIVERSITY in student home-country has several challenges for educators who must determine the appropriate **teaching strategies** in a multicultural context.



Organizations are increasingly relying on the use of **TEAMWORK** processes to meet the challenges of global competition. **Business rely on teams to increase quality and efficiency** (Nielsen, 2010)



Group work is recognized within many academic disciplines as an **important pedagogical tool** when instructing graduate students.

1. Introduction



DIVERSITY in student home-country has several challenges for educators who must determine the appropriate **teaching strategies** for each content.



CULTURE may impact upon **TEACHING STRATEGIES**



Organizations increasingly use of **TEAMWORK** processes to meet the challenges of global competition. **Business rely on teams to increase quality and efficiency** (Nielsen, 2010)

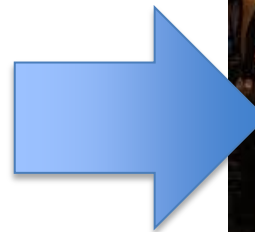
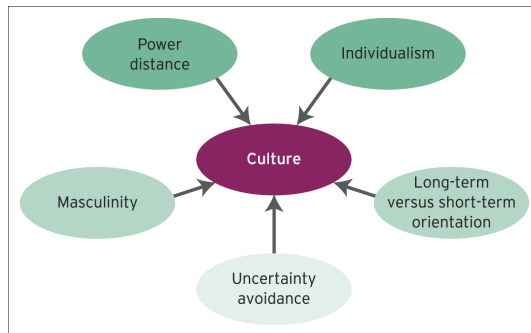
Group work is recognized within many academic disciplines as an **important pedagogical tool** when instructing graduate students.

2. Objective

CULTURE may impact upon TEACHING STRATEGIES

Primary objective:

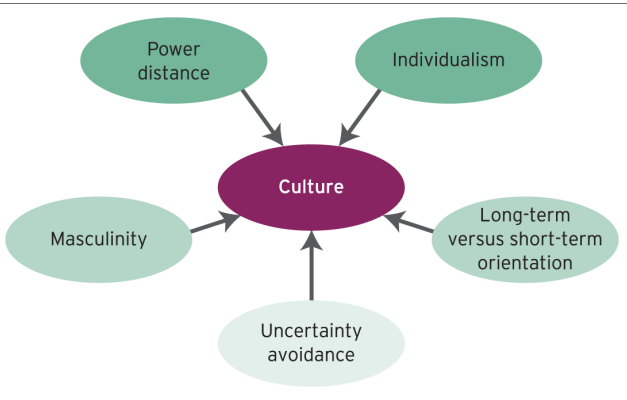
To analyze how **cultural differences** influence the **international students' perceptions towards working in teams**



Students' perceptions toward working in teams

3. Theoretical background

“Culture is the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others” (Hofstede)



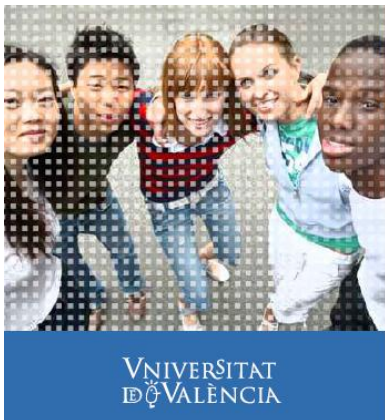
Positioning of countries on cultural dimensions

	Countries scoring high on left dimension attributes	Countries scoring average	Countries scoring high on right dimension attributes	
Collectivism	East and West Africa, Latin America, Portugal	Arab countries, Greece, Japan, Spain, Turkey	Australia, Switzerland, Scandinavia, France, UK, US, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium	Individualism
Low power	Scandinavia, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Ireland, US, UK, The Netherlands	Spain, Taiwan, Greece, Japan, Italy, Portugal	Malaysia, Guatemala, Arab countries, West African countries, Philippines	High power
Feminine	Scandinavia, Portugal, The Netherlands, Turkey	Belgium, France, Greece, Spain, Arab countries	Austria, Canada, UK, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, US	Masculine
Uncertainty tolerant	Scandinavia, UK, US, Ireland, Canada, India	Arab countries, Austria, Switzerland, Germany	Belgium, France, Greece, Japan, Portugal, Spain	Uncertainty avoidance
Short-term orientation	Pakistan, Nigeria, Canada, UK, US, Australia, Germany, Poland, Sweden	India, Thailand, Hungary, Singapore, The Netherlands	China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea	Long-term orientation
High context	Japan, China, Arab countries, Latin America	Italy, Spain, France, UK	North America, Scandinavia, Germany, Switzerland	Low context

Source: De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Van Den Bergh, *Marketing Communications*, 4th Edition, © Pearson Education Limited 2010

3. Theoretical background

- **Culture-based theory of education and team work**
 - Previous research highlights that **national culture** influences **learning preferences** (Dejoy and Dejoy, 1987; Kelly, 2009)
 - **Working in groups** enables learners to **leverage the strengths of fellow classmates** while experimenting and investigating their own abilities within a safe educational environment (see Rafferty, 2011).



However, students do not always come away with positive attitudes about teamwork and how teamwork relates to effective performance. Previous studies show that while most students recognize the importance of teamwork, they still prefer to work alone when the goal is achieving good performance (see Rafferty, 2011)



3. Theoretical background

“While cultural diversity within the group was viewed by all key study informants as *constructive and highly beneficial to their group work experiences*,

domestic students reported that LANGUAGE-RELATED DIFFICULTIES and CULTURAL HESITANCIES on the part of some international students often created SIGNIFICANT CONFLICT DURING GROUP WORK”

(Raffety, 2011, p. 9*)

As a result, there was a **lack of perception of positive group work outcomes** for domestic students

* Only key informants were US citizens who were part-time MBA students

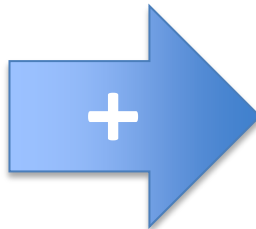
4. Research propositions

- **Power Distance (PDI):** how a society handles inequalities among people
 - People in societies exhibiting a *large degree of power distance* accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place and which needs no further justification.
 - In societies with *low power distance*, people strive to equalise the distribution of power and demand justification for inequalities of power.



<http://geert-hofstede.com/geert-hofstede.html>

High degree of power distance



Attitude toward team work

Individuals under a high PDI culture tend to depend more on the centralization and formalization of authority and display TOLERANCE FOR THE LACK OF AUTONOMY

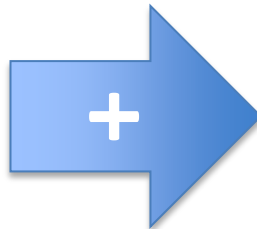
4. Research propositions

- **Individualism versus collectivism (IDV)**
 - Individualism: a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only.
 - Collectivism, represents a preference for a tightly-knit framework in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular in-group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty



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**High
collectivism**



**Attitude toward
team work**

Collectivist' cultures are more
group-oriented

4. Research propositions

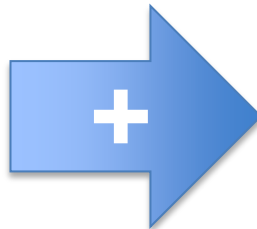
- **Masculinity versus femininity (MAS)**

- *Masculinity*: represents a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material reward for success. Society at large is more competitive.
- *Femininity*, stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life. Society at large is more consensus-oriented.



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**High
femininity**



**Attitude toward
team work**

In feminine cultures, relationships, cooperation and security are held in higher regard.

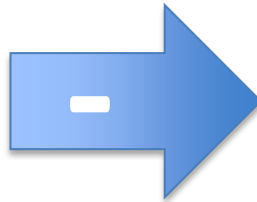
4. Research propositions

- **Uncertainty avoidance (UAI):** the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity.
 - Countries exhibiting *strong UAI* maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour and are intolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas.
 - *Weak UAI* societies maintain a more relaxed attitude in which practice counts more than principles.



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High UAI



**Attitude toward
team work**

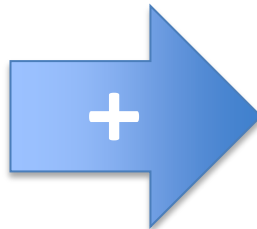
High uncertainty avoidance cultures are not comfortable with unstructured situations, creative approaches are not welcomed

3. Theoretical background

- **Long-term versus short-term orientation (LTO):** dealing with society's search for virtue.
 - Societies with a short-term orientation generally have a strong concern with establishing the absolute Truth. They are normative in their thinking. They exhibit great respect for traditions, a relatively small propensity to save for the future, and a focus on achieving quick results.
 - In societies with a long-term orientation, people believe that truth depends very much on situation, context and time. They show an ability to adapt traditions to changed conditions, a strong propensity to save and invest, thriftiness, and perseverance in achieving results.

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**Long-term
orientation**



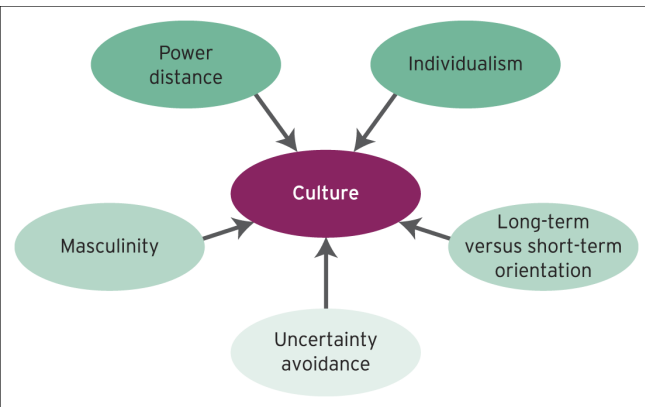
**Attitude toward
team work**

In long-term orientation, they show an ability to adapt traditions to change conditions..., perseverance in achieving results.



Quantitative study

- International students in the context of an international postgraduate courses (from different countries)
- Questionnaire:
 - Hofstede dimensions of culture
 - Attitude toward teamwork
 - Sociodemographics



		1="strongly disagree" to 7="strongly agree"						
HC1	Individuals should sacrifice self-interest for the group that they belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HC2	Individuals should stick with the group even through difficulties.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HC3	Group welfare is more important than individual rewards.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HC4	Group success is more important than individual success.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HC5	Individuals should pursue their goals after considering the welfare of the group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HC6	Group loyalty should be encouraged even if individual goals suffer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		1="strongly disagree" to 7="strongly agree"						
HU7	It is important to have instructions spelled out in detail so that I always know what I'm expected to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HU8	It is important to closely follow instructions and procedures.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HU9	Rules and regulations are important because they inform me of what is expected of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HU10	Standardized work procedures are helpful.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HU11	Instructions for operations are important.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		1="strongly disagree" to 7="strongly agree"						
HM12	It is more important for men to have a professional career than it is for women.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HM13	Men usually solve problems with logical analysis; women usually solve problems with intuition.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HM14	Solving difficult problems usually requires an active forcible approach, which is typical of men.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HM15	There are some jobs that a man can always do better than a woman.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		1="strongly disagree" to 7="strongly agree"						
HP16	People in higher positions should make most decisions without consulting people in lower positions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HP17	People in higher positions should not ask the opinions of people in lower positions too frequently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HP18	People in higher positions should avoid social interaction with people in lower positions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HP19	People in higher positions should not delegate important tasks to people in lower positions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HP20	People in lower positions should not disagree with decisions made by people in higher positions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

For the following block please indicate your opinion from 1="strongly unimportant" to 7="strongly important"

HL21	Careful management of money (thrift).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HL22	Going on resolutely in spite of opposition (persistence).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HL23	Personal steadiness and stability.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HL24	Long-term planning.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HL25	Giving up today's fun for success in the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HL26	Working hard for success in the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

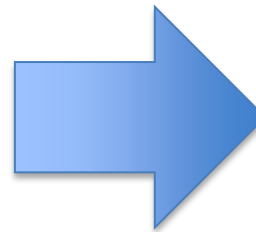
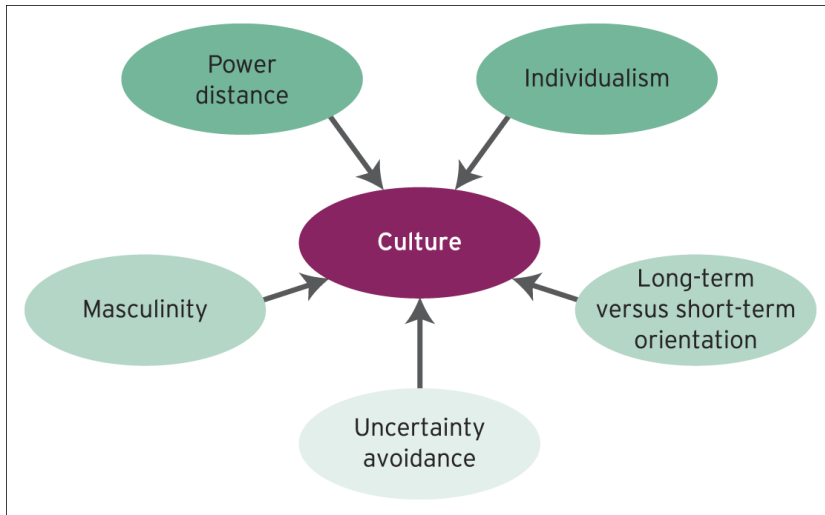
6. Expected results

ITEMS RELATED TO TEAM WORK (Pineda, Barger and Lerner, 2009- Journal of International Business and Cultural Studies)

A team is a group of individuals working together toward common goals.
Team members have common tasks to perform and share responsibility for team outcomes.
Teams can accomplish better outcomes than individuals working alone.
Teams can accomplish more than individuals working alone
A team is a group of individuals working together toward common goals
Team members have common tasks to perform and share responsibility for team outcomes
Teams can accomplish more than individuals working alone
Teams can accomplish more than individuals working alone
Teams can solve problems faster than individuals working alone
Working in a team is more satisfying to me than working alone
My experience with teams makes me want to work in teams again
Working in a team improves my ability to work in teams in the future
Working in a team would allow me to learn new things

7. Conclusion

Our **WORK-IN-PROGRESS** deals with how cultural differences along the Hofstede dimensions of individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term/short term orientation influence the international students' perceptions towards working in teams



Students' perceptions toward working in teams

8. Further insights

- Results can be **extended to other postgraduate courses.**
- Application to **undergraduate and postgraduate courses** will allow comparison between these groups of students.
- Another issue is **the selection of team members.** According to social identity theory, students will naturally select group members who are like themselves, and therefore, limit the experience of teamwork in the rich context of the diverse classroom.

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THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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