

CHAPTER 2

CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS

Note: Corresponding page numbers from the text follow the answers.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. What are the two major components of culture?
- a. Food and Pop Music
 - b. Consciousness and Sub consciousness
 - c. Behavioral and Cognitive
 - d. Societal and Political

Answer: C, 48.

2. In addition to understanding national and local cultures, what must managers of MNCs understand and be able to manipulate in order to best serve their company?
- a. Organizational Culture
 - b. Community Culture
 - c. Workforce Self-Identity Awareness
 - d. Regional Culture

Answer: A, 48.

3. Which of the following cultural factors is the most difficult to learn?
- a. Dress
 - b. Food
 - c. Norms
 - d. Values

Answer: D, 57.

4. Assumption that all individuals in a certain group have the same characteristics is called _____.
- a. homogeneity
 - b. heterogeneity
 - c. stereotyping
 - d. parochialism

Answer: C, 49.

5. The overall foreignness we perceive when traveling abroad in terms of language, rules and norms refers to the _____.
- a. culture shock
 - b. cultural quagmire
 - c. cultural distance

d. cultural mismatch

Answer: C, 50.

6. Which of Hofstede's cultural dimensions was added last to his system?

- a. Individualism vs. Collectivism
- b. Confucian Dynamism
- c. Power Distance
- d. Uncertainty Avoidance

Answer: B, 58

7. Erik is a manager for a German manufacturing firm that specializes in automotive racing parts. His team has been recently asked to work with some Italian engineers on a joint venture. Initially, Erik experienced problems with his Italian counterparts. He could not understand their high-risk approach to engineering and did not like their informal procedures. Erik and his team are mostly risk-averse and operate on a very detailed oriented manner. Which of the following cultural dimensions best describes Erik and his team?

- a. Individualistic
- b. Power Equal
- c. High Uncertainty Avoidance
- d. Masculine

Answer: C, 58.

8. Chan and his management team in Shanghai, China often take calculated risks. They enjoy working a lot on intuition. They take chances with new projects, and Chan likes to employ a top-down approach which favors looking at the big picture verse the small details. Every evening, Chan and his team have dinner and drinks together at a local restaurant in order to foster better team relations. Unlike some Chinese managers, Chan insists that his employees call him by his first name and encourages them to see him about both work and personal issues. He is more like a friend/mentor to his employees than a direct boss. Which of the following cultural dimensions best describes Chan and his management style?

- a. Collectivist and Feminine
- b. Low Uncertainty Avoidance and Power Equal
- c. Masculine and Power Distant
- d. High Uncertainty Avoidance and Power Distant

Answer: B, 57

9. Lower-level employees in host countries often feel uncomfortable with expatriate managers from the United States who attempt to establish more participative and egalitarian management practices. This is an example of which of the following cultural dimensions at work?

- a. Collectivism
- b. Power Distance
- c. Masculinity
- d. Uncertainty Avoidance

Answer: B, 58

10. Cultures where employees value the group more than the individual and where relationships and networks are more important than achievements can be characterized by which of the following cultural dimensions?

- a. Collectivism and Ascription
- b. Collectivism and Femininity
- c. Universalism and Specific
- d. Affective and Mono-chronic

Answer: A, 60

11. Bjorn is a banker in Finland. He lives with his wife, Christa, and their two children. Although Bjorn is extremely busy with his work and very well received and respected in the Finnish business community and is a major player in banking industry in Finland, he still spends a lot of his time caring for the children, while Christa also works as a business professional in a separate field. Bjorn often cooks, cleans the house, and does other domestic duties while Christa attends international conferences. This couple's culture can be described as which of the following dimensions?

- a. Individualistic
- b. Achievement-based
- c. Feminine
- d. Neutral Culture

Answer: C, 61.

12. A culture's concern about public versus private spaces and how each space is handled has to do with which of the following cultural dimensions?

- a. Achievement vs. Ascription
- b. Universalism vs. Particularism
- c. Affective vs. Neutral Culture
- d. Specific vs. Diffuse Culture

Answer: D, 65.

13. This kind of culture values competition, achievement, and very specific gender roles, while always celebrating the glory of the winner, and never empathizing with the disappointment of the loser.

- a. Feminine
- b. Masculine
- c. Collectivist
- d. Power Distant

Answer: B, 61.

14. Susan was recently fired from IBM on a foreign assignment to India from Headquarters because as soon as she arrived in Delhi, she began to instruct, very pedantically, her local workers on how IBM does business in the United States, and that the way IBM conducts business in the United States is the only favorable and correct way of conducting business. She believed this strongly and communicated it forcefully to her local workers. There was a backlash, the bottom line fell dramatically, and corporate decided to have her replaced. What cultural dimension best describes Susan's world outlook?

- a. Universalism
- b. Achievement
- c. Ascription
- d. Collectivist

Answer: A, 64.

15. Jose is a real estate developer in Argentina. His usual day consists of working in the morning, heading out to meet clients for lunch and to show properties. Then he goes home and naps in the late afternoon before going back to the office to finish up before supper. When John, an American developer, came to Argentina to meet with Jose, he was upset when Jose was always 15 to 20 minutes late for all appointments, and that sometimes during their meetings, Jose would be talking on the phone or dealing with other people at the same time. After John expressed his reservations about Jose's punctuality, Jose was taken aback because he simply did not understand John's obsession with timeliness. In this example, which cultural dimension is most relevant and which dimension does Jose represent?

- a. Time Orientation, Poly-chronic time
- b. Time Orientation, Mono-chronic time
- c. Collectivism, Poly-chronic time
- d. Collectivism, Mono-chronic time

Answer: A, 67.

16. Globalization of markets causes which of the following to occur?

- a. Capitalism
- b. Cultural Convergence
- c. Anarchy
- d. Freedom of Information

Answer: B, 53.

17. The theories that a human should dominate his/her natural surroundings or that a human should live in harmony with his/her natural surroundings are best described in which cultural dimension?

- a. Affective vs. Neutral
- b. Power Distance
- c. Uncertainty Avoidance
- d. Orientation to Nature

Answer: D, 67.

18. Bill is a manager in a U.S.-based firm. He thrives on his ability to achieve better performance standards than his fellow managers, and encourages his employees to work alone on nascent projects. He also likes to make decisions by himself, and often ignores other's comments at meetings. Bill is _____?

- a. Collectivist
- b. Individualistic and Achievement Based
- c. Individualistic and Ascription Based
- d. Power Distant and Achievement Based

Answer: B, 65.

19. Globalization leads to convergence which leads to which of the following strategic implications?

- a. Cultural Divergence
- b. Product Differentiation
- c. Global Integration
- d. National Differences

Answer: C, 54.

20. Glocalization is the premise for which of the following?

- a. Cultural Convergence
- b. Crossvergence
- c. Divergence
- d. Integration

Answer: B, 55.

21. A culture's long-term vs. short-term orientation and their values based on the Chinese Value Survey is characteristic of which cultural dimension?

- a. Affective vs. Neutral
- b. Individualism vs. Collectivism
- c. Time Orientation
- d. Confucian Dynamism

Answer: D, 58.

22. Highly emotional cultures are what kind of cultures?

- a. Affective
- b. Collectivist
- c. Power Equal
- d. Poly-chronic

Answer: A, 66-67.

23. People in a _____ culture tend not to have a clear-cut distinction between private and public space.

- a. Specific
- b. Individualistic
- c. Affective
- d. Diffuse

Answer: A, 65.

24. _____ addresses different roles expected of superiors versus subordinates.

- a. Uncertainty Avoidance
- b. Power Distance
- c. Masculinity
- d. Collectivism

Answer: B, 58.

25. The GLOBE research separated Hofstede's concept of collectivism into two categories. They are _____ and _____.

- a. in group collectivism, out group collectivism
- b. eastern collectivism, western collectivism
- c. traditional collectivism, modern collectivism
- d. institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism

Answer: D, 69.

TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS

1. According to Geert Hofstede and his study of the national cultures, culture is more often a source of conflict than of synergy.

Answer: True, 47.

2. Managing cultural differences is only a small part in a large myriad of problems in the management of a global workforce, and can often times be a secondary priority.

Answer: False, 47.

3. Culture affects and governs all facets of life by influencing the values, attitudes, behaviors, subconscious motives, and technical facility of the people in a society.

Answer: False, 48.

4. Culture is defined as a system of values and norms that are shared among a group of people, and that, taken together, constitute a design for living, but taken separately, constitute moral directions for daily life decisions.

Answer: False, 48.

5. General stereotypes and general cultural patterns are basically the same thing and should be treated and analyzed as such.

Answer: False, 49.

6. Cultural divergence was particularly prominent in recent works that have challenged the universalism of U.S.-based principles of human resource management.

Answer: True, 64.

7. The United States is an individualistic, masculine, achievement-based culture but is polychronic in time orientation.

Answer: False, 67.

8. Time Orientation deals with punctuality, timeliness, and different culture's perception of time and appointment schedules.

Answer: True, 67.

9. Expatriation and Repatriation of employees for MNCs can sometimes be greatly affected both positively and negatively by affective versus neutral cultural differences, especially when those differences are polar opposites.

Answer: True, 66

10. Masculinity and Femininity has to do with Male vs. female and not the specification of gender roles.

Answer: False, 61

11. Crossvergence is the phenomenon of cultures becoming more localized, less homogenous, and is a result of globalization.

Answer: False, 63-64

12. Crossvergence and Cultural Convergence are essentially the same concept, one caused by Globalization and results in integration, the other caused by glocalization and results in balance between globalization and integration.

Answer: False, 63-64

13. Confucian Dynamism deals with long-term and short-term orientation, and can affect behaviors, action, and management styles.

Answer: True, 61

14. Cultures who dislike probability statements and are averse to risk are low on uncertainty avoidance.

Answer: False, 57.

15. Mexico and India are examples of high power distant cultures because of their high attention to rank, seniority, and the division between management and labor, partially a result of long cultural histories of both countries.

Answer: True, 57.

16. Individualistic countries are generally achievement-based cultures, are usually masculine, with high power distance, and affective culture, although time orientation varies greatly.

Answer: False, 58.

17. Collectivist countries generally value group activity and relationship nurturing, and tend to make decisions slower and in team form.

Answer: True, 58.

18. Universalism is generally consistent with individualism and specific cultures such as the United States and Japan.

Answer: False, 64.

19. In diffuse cultures, the distinction between public and private space is often unclear and blurry.

Answer: True, 65.

20. In ascription cultures, people are generally conferred to a certain status based on age, position, profession, and family background.

Answer: True, 70,71

21. Cultural distance or degree of adjustment challenge is usually symmetrical or experienced the same way in opposite directions.

Answer: False, 50.

22. Stereotyping could be problematic since intra-country cultural diversity can actually be as great as inter-country diversity.

Answer: True, 50.

23. Loose cultures tend to resist close inner-circle acceptance of those from foreign cultures.

Answer: False, 50, 51.

24. In general, we tend to overemphasize cultural differences than they actually are.

Answer: True, 69.

25. Social collectivism refers to how individuals express pride in and loyalty to family or organization.

Answer: False, 68-69.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Identify Hofstede's five different dimensions of national culture, and describe for each dimension one influence that it can have on HR management and workforce practices.

Answer: 57-61

2. What is cultural convergence, and how does it differ from cultural divergence? How is each phenomenon manifest in global workforce practices?

Answer: 53-55.

3. Define the concepts of "glocalization" and "crossvergence." What are examples of each of these concepts in today's global workplace?

Answer: 55-58.

4. Identify and discuss the cultural dimensions that the GLOBE study found useful as evidenced by replicating Hofstede's research results.

Answer: 68-69.

5. How do you think you would handle the cultural differences most effectively?

Answer: 69-71.