CROSS-CULTURAL CONSTRUCT COMPLEXITY: AN INITIAL EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF PERU*

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Abstract
Cross-cultural scholars continually request empirical research that broadens the complexity of culture. We examine the effects of culture following the broad conception of cultural constructs as cultural syndromes that are multifaceted. Based on past theoretical and empirical research, this study identifies three cultural syndromes, Individualism-Collectivism, Tolerance for Ambiguity and Status Identity, with the objective of utilizing original and existing conceptually sound measures of these constructs. The dimensionality of these constructs was assessed through the development and analysis of responses from a sample of 226 Peruvian managers and experienced employees. Results provide support for the multi-dimensionality of these dimensions.

INTRODUCTION

"Now the big challenge and threat is the gap in wealth and health that separates rich and poor. These are often styled North and South, because the division is geographic; but a more accurate signifier would be the West and the Rest, because the division is also historic. Here is the greatest single problem and danger facing the world of the Third Millennium" (Landes, 1998).

This passage taken from the introduction of the book, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, initiates a provocative journey through an historic evolvement of economic development. Arguably hegemonic in focus, the expressive message of the thesis

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is the undeniable importance of culture in the growth of a society. It is through this edict that scholars from multiple disciplines have accepted the challenge of highlighting cultural effects on business development.

Through the concept of culture, people are presumably cognitively programmed to perceive experiences, to interpret these experiences, and to generate social behavior (Frese & Zapf, 1994; Kluckhohn & Strodbeck, 1961; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Spradley, 1979). This mental mapping portrays individual experiences through their cultural values (Forgas & Bond, 1985; Schwartz, 1992). In Venezuela for example, a director of operations in a U.S. based marketing research company recently experienced great frustration when he asked his employees to approach him at any time with questions they may have regarding their duties. The U.S. company boasted of being a "flat" organization, with ready accessibility of the director as an important management practice. After one week of very few questions from the entire workforce, the director conversed with the employees only to discover there were many problems occurring. Upon asking his office manager why no one approached him with questions, she told him that the employees felt they could not come to him with problems because he was the "director of operations" and that this would not be appropriate. The complex nature of culture may inhibit or facilitate business interaction within and across organizations. Appreciating and understanding the complexities may be the difference between successful and unsuccessful business ventures.

From a practical standpoint, identifying cross-cultural models that capture broad value characteristics and beliefs has become a popular research pursuit. Hofstede (1980), through comprehensive research of one multinational organization, developed four dimensions along which culture may vary. Although he is among the most widely cited scholars (having conducted one of the earliest studies of cross-cultural differences in an organization), many other cross-cultural scholars and models exist. Previous researchers have noted many dimensions that classify culture (Haire, Ghiselli, & Porter, 1966; Kluckhorn & Stodtbeck, 1961; Parson & Shils, 1951; Ronen & Shenkar, 1985). For example, how individuals view themselves in relationship to their cultures (operationalized as the individualism-collectivism dimension) has been extensively researched by many scholars (Earley, 1997; Triandis, 1988), as well as being one of several core dimensions identified by Trompenaars (1993) and Hofstede (1980). Recently, researchers suggest culture is more multifaceted and contextual; they appeal for studies stimulating a broader understanding of this complexity (Earley & Gibson, 1998; Osland & Bird, 1998; Smith & Bond, 1996).

This article examines the effects of culture following a broad conception of cultural constructs known as cultural syndromes, which are multifaceted (Triandis, 1993). These syndromes represent a pattern of shared values, beliefs and attitudes around a particular theme (Chen, Chen & Meindl, 1998). Based on past theoretical and empirical research, this study identifies three cultural syndromes, Individualism-Collectivism, Tolerance for Ambiguity and Status Identity, that have surfaced through comprehensive review of the literature across several disciplines. *Table 1* provides

a broad range of various scholars and the focus of their research, providing the development of these syndromes. With the objective of utilizing existing as well as developing conceptually and methodologically sound measures of these constructs, we seek to explore three syndromes of culture. Research examining the multi-dimensionality of these constructs was conducted in Peru. The inferences drawn from this study provide initial insight into the culture and behavior of Peruvian employees and managers, to be compared later with cross-national samples. The results of this examination are reviewed with implications for future research discussed. These differences in cultural characteristics have important implications for individual behavior in organizations (Hoecklin, 1995).

The multi-dimensionality of Individualism-Collectivism

From early origins, scholars representing a myriad of disciplines have endeavored to identify differences among societies (Banfield, 1958; Durkheim, 1933; Parsons & Shils, 1951; Whyte, 1963). Cross-cultural research has tended to focus on the issue of culture through a construct scholars have labeled *individualism-collectivism* (Erez & Earley, 1993; Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, 1990, 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998; Trompenaars, 1993). A culture characterized by individualism accentuates the priority people have of themselves in relation to the aggregate to which they belong. Whereas a culture characterized by collectivism emphasizes the priority of the group over an individual, as well as the way in which a person's behavior impacts the group (Brockner & Chen, 1996; Earley, 1993; Hui, 1988).

Individualism-collectivism is often presented as a bipolar continuum along which a culture positions itself (Earley, 1989; Hofstede, 1980), yet more recently as two independent dimensions (Triandis, 1993;1995). In an individualistic culture, there is an intrinsic belief in individual decisions (Kluckhorn & Stodtbeck, 1961) and thus individual goals becomes the primary focus of individual behavior (Triandis, 1990). Put differently, individualism represents a societal situation in which people are assumed to look after themselves (Parsons & Shils, 1951; Schwartz,1992). Individualistic cultures reward individual inventiveness and ardent independence from the greater social community (McClelland, 1961; Triandis, Bontempo & Villareal, 1988). In an individualistic society, people may appear more competitive (McClelland, 1961), because as individuals they stand out more than if they were among a collective. Cultures with an individualistic identity are characterized by valuing those people who are assertive and who "speak up" when they need to ask questions. This cultural milieu lends itself to more direct communication.

Collectivism exemplifies a societal situation in which people belong to groups or collectivities that share a reciprocal concern for each other (Triandis, 1995). For the collectivist, there exists an intrinsic belief in group decisions and thus the focus becomes that which benefits the goals of the group (Douglas, 1982). Cultures with more of a collective identity encourage behavior in harmony with the group (Earley, 1993; Hui, 1988; Triandis, 1990). Further, this behavior reflects honor to the group and sacrifice of self (Kluckhorn & Stodtbeck, 1961). Individual notoriety is less important than in cultures with more

Table 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURAL SYNDROMES

SYNDROME	CHARACTERISTICS
Individualism-Collectivism	
Triandis (1989, 1993) Hofstede (1980)	-Individualism/Collectivism
Earley (1993) Hui (1988)	-Ingroup/Outgroup Individualism/Collectivism
McClelland (1961)	-Need for Achievement
Kluckhorn & Stodtbeck (1961)	-Individualism/Collaterality
Parsons & Shils (1951)	-Self-Orientation/Collectivity Orientation
Schwartz (1992)	-Self-Enhancement/Self-Transcendence
Banfield (1958)	-Familism
Morris (1956)	-Social Restraint/Self-Control
Durkheim (1933)	-Mechanical Solidarity/Organic Solidarity
Douglas (1982)	-Hi/Low Group
Tolerance for Ambiguity	
Chan, Gelfand, Triandis & Tzeng (1996) Pelto (1968) Triandis (1989)	
Witkin & Berry (1975)	-Tight/Loose
Hofstede (1980)	-Uncertainty Avoidance
Chinese Culture Connection (1987)	-Confusion Dynamism
Dawson, Law, Leung & Whitney (1971)	-Traditional/Modernity
Schwartz (1992)	-Openness to Change/Conservation
Kedia & Bhagat (1988)	-Absorptive Capacity
Berger (1975) Gudykunst (1983)	-Uncertainty Reduction
Status Identity	
Leung (1997) Schwartz (1994) Triandis (1982)	-Hierarchy/Egalitarian
Hofstede (1980)	-Power Distance
De Vos & Suarez-Orozco (1990)	-Status Equality
Parsons & Shils (1951)	-Achievement/Ascription
McClelland (1975)	-Need for Power
Whyte (1963) Barrett & Bass (1967)	-White-Collar/Pan-Worker Orientation
Sarnoff (1966)	-Prestige/Humility

of an individual identity; in fact it may be disruptive to the collective (Parsons & Shils, 1951; Schwartz, 1992). Thus, collectivist societies will emphasize "saving face" (Earley, 1997) and will seek to preserve the integrity of the group (Earley, 1993).

Individualist and collectivist tendencies exist in all humans. Triandis (1993) notes, "the difference is that in some cultures the probability that individualistic selves, attitudes, norms, values, and behaviors will be sampled and used is higher than in others" (162). If people residing in a particular culture usually select collectivist elements in most situations, that culture may tend toward being collectivist

(Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990). Elements that are recurrently used become habitual. Customs and institutions that reflect the habits often result from these habitual cultural elements. As well, individuals have a mixture of individualistic and collectivist elements in their cognitive systems.

Triandis (1993) notes that the activation of the collectivist cognitive system is likely when (a) the individual knows that others in the situation are collectivists, (b) the person is in a collective (ie. family), (c) focuses is on that which makes people the same as the collective, and (d) it is a cooperative task. Activation of the individualist cognitive system is likely when (a) the individual is aware that others in the situation are individualists, (b) focuses is on that which makes individual distinct from others, and (c) it is an individualistically competitive task. Analyzing these two dimensions separately may prove enlightening in assessing behavior tendencies of Peruvians. Hostede (1980) found that Peruvians tended to strongly favor collectivistic characteristics. However, he measured this cultural characteristic as unidimensional via the sum of responses on value items, with this analysis lacking sensitivity to individual responses (Triandis, 1993).

The multi-dimensionality of Tolerance for Ambiguity

The cultural syndrome tolerance for ambiguity refers to the extent to which ambiguous situations are threatening to individuals. It encompasses the notion of an uncertainty comfort level. Humans cognitively possess some varying level of tolerance for ambiguity (Budner, 1962; Norton, 1975). Festinger (1957) referred to this concept in his work on cognitive dissonance. It includes the degree to which a society is open to change and innovation as opposed to resisting change or innovation (Kedia & Bhagat, 1988). This dimension is partially comprised of the uncertainty avoidance cultural dimension of the Hofstede Model (1980), and uncertainty reduction concept (Berger, 1979). It is noted to vary differentially (Gudykunst, 1983) across high and low cultural context (Hall, 1976). In high tolerance for ambiguity cultures, fewer risks are taken by managers in decision making, and there is a extensive reliance on rules and procedures. Managers have a stronger interpersonal style in their interaction with subordinates, employees tend to be ambitious, and work tends to be less structured (Earley, 1997). The need to reduce uncertainty is a relevant consideration across several levels of analysis from the individual to the cultural level (Dawson, Law, Leung & Whitney, 1971).

Related to tolerance for ambiguity, "tight versus loose" delineates a dimension of culture (Chan, Gelfand, Triandis & Tzeng, 1996; Earley, 1997; Pelto, 1968; Triandis, 1996) which encompasses rules and norms that exist in and are enforced by a society (Witkin & Berry, 1975). Tight cultures are characterized by many rules supervising people's actions, and in such cultures individuals are to conform to standard practices (Triandis, 1989). Deviation from the rules is discouraged. In such cultures, there are significant formal information systems incorporated into organizational structures (Earley, 1997). These systems are designed to reduce ambiguity, deviant behavior, and possibly the need for seeking feedback. In societies characterized as having a loose culture, a

wide range of alternative channels exist through which norms are relayed, or cultures are more flexible in imposing their norms (Triandis, 1989). Adherence to formal organizational procedures is underdeveloped and values such as stability, solidarity and duration are not accentuated (Earley, 1997). Put differently, one's capacity to cope with ambiguity will motivate an information search, and culture is a determinant of this capacity.

High-tolerance for ambiguity cultures are more accepting of uncertainty (Earley & Stubblebine, 1989), and they are not threatened by opinions and behaviors different from their own (Berger, 1979). They will be less likely to find value in a formalized information search to reduce this uncertainty. Individuals in these cultures embrace life a day at a time, feel relatively secure, and take risks more easily than their low-tolerance for ambiguity cultural counterparts (Hofstede, 1980). Low-tolerance for ambiguity cultures are concerned with reducing ambiguity and will tend to avoid risk and create security (Schwartz, 1992). However, members of societies characterized as having a low-tolerance for ambiguity may tend to avoid confrontations if they know there is a difference of opinion.

In low-tolerance for ambiguity cultures, conflict in organizations is undesirable because it creates more instability in the environment (Hofstede, 1980). Inversely, in high-tolerance for ambiguity cultures conflict in organizations is viewed broadly as a natural occurrence. The propensity for low tolerance for ambiguity cultures is to avert risk and confrontation, and high-tolerance for ambiguity cultures to accept risk and confrontation when information is greatly valued (Dawson, 1969; Dawson, Law, Leung & Whitney, 1971). In low-tolerance for ambiguity cultures, such as presumed in Peru, conflict in organizations may be undesirable because it creates more instability in the environment (Hofstede, 1980). On the other hand, in higher-tolerance for ambiguity cultures conflict in organizations is viewed with less apprehension and is considered more of a natural occurrence (Dawson, 1969). Low tolerance for ambiguity cultures may shun the potentiality of conflict (Pelto, 1968). In Peru, the scope of previous research has been limited to the uncertainty avoidance component of this syndrome (Hostede, 1980). Given these prior findings, it is anticipated that Peruvians may display a lower tolerance for ambiguity.

The multi-dimensionality of Status Identity

The cultural syndrome of status identity was gleaned from across a variety of disciplines. This syndrome is comprised of a myriad of cultural values, beliefs and characteristics (DeVos & Suarez-Orozco, 1990). Considered emically, DeVos (1990) describes status inequality, a component of status identity, as best comprehended "as modalities of expected behavior reinforced externally by formal or informal sanctions and expectations, and internally by the predisposing personality propensities set up by prior socialization" (p. 28). Identity begins early in cultural development and involves a "selective permeability" to social experience. It relies on structural mechanisms of internalization that differentiates individuals within a society (Barrett & Bass, 1967). Status encompasses such concepts as age, gender, class, caste and ethnic behavior. It involves the experience of intentionally, power and

causality occurring within as well as originating external to the individual (DeVos, 1990).

This syndrome also encompasses many aspects of achievement-ascription relational cultural orientation (Trom-penaars, 1993), based on theory developed by Parson & Shils (1951). Some societies accord status to people on the basis of their achievements, other cultures determine status partially through the respect and loyalty given a person by others according to factors like birthright, gender and such. Status differentials are assigned. Societies characterized by achievement illustrate a lower status identity culture; societies characterized by ascription demonstrate a higher status identity culture. In a high status identity culture, interaction brings with it great gain or great loss. Loss of face is very risky in such cultures (Earley, 1997).

Included in the status identity syndrome, the cultural value of hierarchy versus egalitarianism creates assumptions for how power and status is perceived in a culture (Leung, 1997; Triandis, 1982). Hierarchical cultures favor differential social status, implying distribution of social power. High status members of a society have a degree of social responsibility to lower-status members of a society. Lower-status members concede respect to higher-status members (Brett & Okumura, 1998). In egalitarian cultures, social status differences exist but individuals are less receptive to power differentials than are individuals in hierarchical cultures (Leung, 1997). Egalitarian cultures prefer equal engagement in social interaction, however hierarchical cultures expected unidirectional interactions (Triandis, 1982), with the notion of power more salient in the latter than the former culture. In a hierarchical culture, power is associated with the person's status in the social structure. This power is viewed as fixed and is suggested as more important in hierarchical societies than in egalitarian societies (Brett & Okumura, 1998).

The notion of status identity is also seen in the research on the cultural dimension of power distance (Earley, 1997; Hofstede, 1980), involving the extent to which power is distributed across members of a culture. Elaborating power distance, Earley (1997) explains that employees engage in various social behaviors that are universal (e.g., influence tactics) in organizations to maintain an equilibrium position. The point at which these behaviors are applied tends to vary across cultures. Put differently, in higher status identity societies, the equilibrium point affords a larger disparity between superiors and subordinates, although it provides a smaller discrepancy in lower status identity societies. A low-power-distance culture is characterized by a society of people having equal rights, exemplified by cooperation across the powerful and powerless. A high-power-distance culture distributes power unequally, with those individuals in higher power status positions allowed special privileges not afforded the less powerful (Triandis, 1990).

Notably, a low status identity culture environment presents a more equal sharing of power, and thus information, between organizational members (i.e. no apparent oppression). A high status identity culture distributes power unequally, with those individuals in higher power status positions allowed special privileges not afforded the less powerful (De Vos & Suarez-Orozco, 1990; Triandis, 1990). The environment of equal power distribution

allows workers to move up and down the organization pyramid, or throughout the organization network, with little face cost. We propose perceived status discrepancy will promote a significant difference in how people span the hierarchy. Previous peripheral research in Peru focusing on the single component of power distance noted that the country measured high on power distance. Similar to these past findings, we anticipate the results to show that higher status identity is more salient in Peruvian culture.

The specifically defined dimensions of each of these cultural syndromes provide an augmented and more comprehensive view of cultural behavior. Prior divergent research (Van Muijen & Koopman, 1994) may find explanation through a refined conceptualization of culture (Bond & Smith, 1996). As with other constructs in cross-cultural research (i.e. value orientation), identification and empirical support for multiple dimensions increases knowledge of these concepts as well as their relationships with organizational interactions (Law, Wong & Mobley, 1998). A multi-dimensional perspective of individualism/collectivism, tolerance for ambiguity and status identity may help in comprehending the complexity of behaviors observed across cultures and explain divergent findings.

METHODS

Sample

The population for this study was composed of students who attended the Escuela de Administración de Negocios para Graduados (ESAN), executive MBA program in Lima, Peru. Surveys were completed by 226 of the 300 students (75%). Participation in the research was voluntary. This sample was comprised of individuals who held positions at many levels (middle to executive) in the service, extraction, commercial and manufacturing industrial sectors. Company size varied from small (1 to 4 employees) to large (over 200 employees). Work experience ranged from 2 to 26 years, with an average tenure of 9,1 years. The average age of the respondents was approximately 32 years. This study was part of a larger current cross-national research project.

Scale development

Given the focus of this study, items measuring the cultural dimension of Individualism and Collectivism were utilized (Triandis, 1996; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998), which allowed for assessment each dimension respectively. Selecting an instrument to adequately measure these dimensions was complicated by the abundance of instruments used previously to assess this construct (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992; Earley & Erez, 1997; Hofstede, 1980; Hui, 1988; Singelis, 1994; Triandis et al, 1990; Wagner, 1995). By defining specific dimensions of individualism-collectivism syndrome, the conceptual framework provides an underlying construct to effectively measure. Lack of specific conceptualization and definition of this construct has been a decisive problem in measuring this dimension (Earley & Gibson, 1998).

Adequate established scales for the cultural syndrome dimensions of Tolerance for Ambiguity and Status Identity were not found to exist by the author. As a result, multidimensional measures of both

Tolerance for Ambiguity and Status Identity, grounded in the conceptual literature, were developed and tested. Multiple items were refined to address each of the conceptual dimensions of the constructs. To evaluate the constructs of Tolerance for Ambiguity and Status Identity, scales were designed to assess different aspects of these concepts. Scale development followed acceptable guidelines to scale development defined by DeVellis (1991). Items originated through a comprehensive review of related literature as well as from work setting experiences, reviewed by a focus of group of Peruvian MBA students, and subjected to content validation by one native Peruvian and two U.S. scholars. It was further validated through the administration to select diverse Peruvian managers and scholars. Measures withstanding this analysis were administered to a large sample of Peruvians with management and work experience.

Exploratory factor analysis was performed to analyze the factor structure of the measurement items of Tolerance for Ambiguity and Status Identity. Traditional factor analysis with orthogonal rotation (varimax) was used to explore the factor structure of the items from both cultural dimensions. The decision to retain an item was based on two criteria: (a) item loadings greater than 0,45 on at least one factor, and (b) a minimum gap of 0,1 between cross-factor loadings (Nunnally, 1978). Incremental data reduction proceeded through an iterative process of factor analysis until a clean factor structure emerged. Several criteria were used to determine the number of factors to extract (a) latent root (or eigenvalue test), (b) a priori, (c) percentage of variance, and (d) screen test (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Grablowsky, 1979).

Measures

Several demographic variables were coded categorically, including the respondent's personal characteristics (gender, age, marital status, education level, presence of children, job level, organizational tenure, and demographic region of origin) and their organization's characteristics (size, industry sector, and public/private/multinational type).

All scale items were measured using a 7-point Likert-format (1=Never, 7=Always). Special attention was given to the number of scale categories used to record responses of the participants. In previous studies, Hui & Triandis (1989) found that Hispanics tend to use the extreme points of a scale more often than non-Hispanics samples do. Seven points are sufficient to capture variance in opinion without creating an extreme skew of the data. Additionally, respondents were asked to rate how frequently they would agree with the statements provided. Previous research shows Hispanics respond to and expect more agreeable behavior (simpático), therefore the wording of the scale was chosen to reflect this preference (Triandis, Marin, Lisansky & Betancourt, 1984). To best measure the responses of Peruvians participants, the following instructions were included with each section of the questionnaire:

> "We want to know if you strongly agree or disagree with the following statements.
>
> On the 7-point scale, place in the blank after each question the number that most characterizes how often you would *agree with each statement*".

To assess the individualism/collectivism cultural syndrome, we implemented a 28-item survey adapted from Triandis & Gelfand (1998) and Triandis (1996) instrument. The cultural dimension of Tolerance for Ambiguity was measured by a 24-item instrument gleaned from the literature to address the conceptual dimensions (structure and rules/structure, interpersonal, and role) of ambiguity tolerance. To measure the cultural dimension of Status Identity, a 21-item instrument was conceived. The conceptual dimensions of Status Identity (distance, age and position) were to be assessed through this combination of items.

Given the focus of this study, items measuring the cultural dimension of Individualism-Collectivism as recommended by Triandis (personal communication, 1998) were utilized. A 28-item survey adapted from Triandis & Gelfand (1998) and Triandis (1996) served as the instrument to assess this cultural syndrome. The alpha coefficients for the Individualism and Collectivism items were 0,75 and 0,75 respectively.

Regarding the Tolerance for Ambiguity dimension, three factors emerged leaving a final factor structure of ten items. Together, the factors that emerged from the exploratory factor analysis explained 57,4% of the variance in the data. The first factor emerging from the exploratory analysis included four items that had been theorized to tap into the construct of *rules/ structure* and ambiguity tolerance. The less tolerant a society, the more strict that society will be in enforcing rules, and less likely people will be to break rules in those societies. This factor is theoretically linked to the "tight-loose" concept discussed earlier (Earley, 1997; Pelto, 1968; Triandis, 1996). The second factor that emerged included three items designed to examine *interpersonal* ambiguity. In a less tolerant society, people will tend to be bothered when they cannot understand the behavior of other people. The final factor to emerge included three items exploring how people cope with *role* ambiguity. In a society, the higher the tolerance of role ambiguity, the more comfortable the members are with making decisions in ambiguous situations or juggling different tasks at once. The alpha coefficient of the three factors was 0,76 for rules, 0,68 for people and 0,53 for roles.

For the Status Identity dimension, the exploratory factor analysis revealed three factors, comprised of nine items. These three factors explained 52,2% of the variance in the data. The first factor to emerge was comprised of four items, which were designed to theoretically address the notion of *social distance*. Societies with a lower social distance may promote more frequent interaction between superiors and subordinates, and participation in decision-making may be encouraged. The second factor to surface from the factor analysis included of two items designed to examine the status identity component of *age*. In a higher status identity culture, age is an important societal consideration. A final factor to emerge from the exploratory factor analysis was composed of two items, encompassing the factor *societal position*. Seniority and influence are respected more than knowledge and skills in a high status identity culture. The alpha coefficient of the three factors was 0,57 for social distance, 0,62 for age and 0,45 for position.

Although many of the factors measures did not meet the traditional 0,70 level for acceptable reliability suggested by

Table 2
EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS RESULTS

Tolerance for Ambiguity	**Rules**	**People**	**Roles**
"We want to know if you strongly agree or disagree with the following statements:"			
1. People who break rules should be punished.	–0,669		
2. I think that rules should be broken if necessary.	0,711		
3. Sometimes I go against the rules and try doing things a way I'm not suppose to.	0,772		
4. Almost always I rely on company rules and procedures to do my job.	–0,668		
5. It bothers me when I don't know how other people react to me.		0,824	
6. I am just a little uncomfortable with people unless I feel I can understand their behavior.		0,686	
7. It bothers me when I am unable to follow another person's train of thought.		0,684	
8. I prefer to make decisions in situations where problems do not have clear answers.			0,598
9. I work better when I am juggling Several different tasks at the same time.			0,705
10. If I were a doctor, I would prefer the unpredictable work of a cancer doctor to the more defined work of someone like a x-ray specialist or surgeon.			0,748
Cronbach's alpha	0,76	0,68	0,53
Eigenvalue	2,312	1,881	1,548
Percent Explained Variance	23,125	18,807	15,479

Table 3
EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS RESULTS

Status Identity	Distance	Age	Position
"We want to know if you strongly agree or disagree with the following statements:"			
1. Normally I can approach my supervisor with questions and concerns.	0,621		
2. Usually I participate in all the aspects of the decisions related to my work.	0,594		
3. I believe my accomplishments largely determine my place in society.	0,598		
4. I feel comfortable expressing disagreement with my superiors.	0,665		
5. The age of the person is an important consideration when selecting a manager.		–0,757	
6. In the selection of a manager, age is not a determining factor.		0,684	
7. Respect given to a person is mostly based on seniority.			0,583
8. A person's respect is largely based on his/her position and influence rather than on his knowledge and skills.			0,759
Crobach's alpha	0,57	0,62	0,45
Eigenvalue	1,855	1,585	1,259
Percent Explained Variance	20,615	17,606	13,992

Nunnally (1978), he also states that alphas in the 0,45-0,60 range are acceptable in the early stages of theory testing. We suggest the Tolerance for Ambiguity scale and the Status Identity scale in a cross-cultural context meets the criterion of early theory testing.

Procedures

The survey was administered at the university in person by the senior author as a part of a larger study. A central location was chosen, and times were scheduled for all respondents to complete the instrument.

Potential respondents were invited to participate and received information regarding the survey administration via their email accounts. The total survey instrument included 177 questions. The respondents completed the survey in two separate sittings. The separate administrations of the questionnaire insured the responses were not primed to the dependent variable.

All items were translated in accordance with the recommendations of Brislin (1980). Back-translation procedures were conducted by native Peruvian, Spanish speaking individuals. Separately, a group of students and an academic colleague at the university reviewed all back-translations for translation quality and psychological construct consistency. Following this, the principal investigator piloted each administration of the survey to a sample group of individuals. Given the exploratory nature of several of the cross-cultural constructs, the concurrent translation processes were undertaken to help ensure overall reliability and construct validity.

Results

Inspecting the raw scores, several issues emerge that provide preliminary insight. The mean average individualism-collectivism cultural dimension was higher for collectivism than individualism, with means of 5,35 and 4,93 respectively. However, the overall mean indicated a moderate collective culture. Previous research has posited very high collectivist characteristics in the country of Peru (Hofstede, 1980). The averages of this study seem to indicate more moderate characteristics.

Examining the factors that comprise Tolerance for Ambiguity, these data report a moderate overall average on this dimension (4,28 mean). The respondents in this study show a greater tolerance for ambiguity for both roles and rules in society than we expected, and as suggested from previous research. However, these individuals show less of a tolerance for interpersonal ambiguity. On a related issue, Hofstede (1980) describes Peru as a country characterized by a high need to avoid uncertainty. The uncertainty avoidance dimension as defined by Hofstede is similar to the *interpersonal* component identified in the larger construct of Tolerance for Ambiguity. Notably, the results of this measure differ from those found for uncertainty avoidance a generation ago. The *role ambiguity* factor displayed the greatest mean score (5,05), with the *rules* and *interpersonal* factor exhibiting slightly lower yet similar means, reporting 4,02 and 3,76 respectively.

Finally, the Status Identity cultural dimension reflects an adjusted overall mean average of a moderate score on this dimension (4,40). The respondents suggest they have a culture characterized by moderately low *social distance* (mean score 5,52, with higher scores reflecting lower Status Identity). This *social distance* factor is similar to the cultural dimension of power distance proposed by Hofstede. It, too, is one component of what we define as a larger construct, with the preliminary findings of this sample differing from earlier studies. People reported less of a social distance between themselves and their superiors. Individuals did register moderately higher mean scores on the *position* factor (adjusted mean score 3,10, with lower scores reflective of higher Status Identity). Position in society appears to be based largely on one's ascribed status,

Table 4
CULTURAL DIMENSIONS FOR INDIVIDUALISM-COLLECTIVISM, TOLERANCE FOR AMBIGUITY AND STATUS IDENTITY

Variables		Means	Standard Deviation
Individualism-Collectivism			
	Collectivism	5,35	0,63
	Individualism	4,93	0,66
Tolerance of Ambiguity			
	Role Ambiguity	5,05	0,99
	Rules/Structure	4,02	0,57
	Interpersonal	3,76	1,11
Status Identity			
	Social Distance	5,52	0,69
	Age	4,57	1,35
	Position	4,90	0,90
Cultural Dimension Score Interpretation			
IC	Individualism	(higher score = higher individualism)	
	Collectivism	(higher score = higher collectivism)	
TA	Role Ambiguity	(higher score = higher ambiguity tolerance)	
	Rules/Structure	(higher score = higher ambiguity tolerance)	
	Interpersonal	(higher score = lower ambiguity tolerance)	
SI	Social Distance	(higher score = lower SI)	
	Age	(higher score = lower SI)	
	Position	(higher score = higher SI)	

rather than one's achieved status. Whereas, *age* does not emerge as a factor of societal status (mean score 4,57, with higher scores reflective of lower Status Identity).

DISCUSSION

We agree with the conceptualization of culture as a complex whole composed of a set of interrelated cultural dimensions (Lytle, Brett, Barsness, Tinsley, & Janssens, 1995) through a defined conception of cultural syndromes. These multifaceted syndromes represent patterns of mutual values, beliefs, and attitudes encompassing a particular theme (Chen, Chen, & Meindl, 1998). Several implications of these cultural syndromes become salient from this study. There is a tendency to find more individualistic themes in Western and more collectivist themes in Eastern and traditional cultures (Triandis, 1993). Largely, research that examines individualism-collectivism has been conducted in Eastern cultures (Earley & Gibson, 1998). A

preponderance of the research on which the concept of collectivism is based has been conducted with this focus (see exceptions: Bouvy, Van de Vijver, Schmitz, & Boski, 1994; Kim, Triandis, Kagitcibasi, Choi, & Yoon, 1994; Schwartz, 1990). This study expands the breadth of this substantially studied cultural syndrome beyond the East-West focus, as has been requisitioned by many scholars (Bond & Smith, 1996; Earley & Gibson, 1998; Lytle et al, 1995).

These results imply that Peru is not as sharply collectivist as Hofstede (1980) reported in his early study. We would be remiss to deny the collective nature of this culture. The group orientation reflected through the immense importance of the family in Peru is manifest of this characteristic. However, the individualism score indicates that the respondents identify modestly with this dimension. Several researchers suggest that as cultures become more industrialized or modernized, those societies develop more individualist characteristics (Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, 1989; 1990). This being the case, these preliminary results reveals that Peru appears to have assimilated some individualist syndrome attributes.

On the tolerance for ambiguity dimension, Peruvians emerge as more tolerant of ambiguous situations than predicted. Through conversations on this issue, several Peruvians indicated to the lead researcher that their culture has become accustom to ambiguity, given the tumultuous political and economic period the country experienced during the past twenty years. In discussing the Hofstede study, they noted that these findings may have been true twenty years ago, but argue against the validity today. Although the Hofstede dimension of uncertainty avoidance is only one factor in our conceptualization of Tolerance for Ambiguity, the cross-cultural comparative analysis of this cultural dimension should prove enlightening. The higher tolerance for ambiguity characterization, which surfaced in the Peruvian sample, implies this culture is less "tight" and more «loose» in structure (Pelto, 1968). A closer look at this culture would support this characterization. Peru's society is comprised of several diverse ethnic populations, consisting of various ethnic groups of Asian, Spanish, African and indigenous backgrounds. Cultures characterized as "loose" are typically less homogeneous, which leads to greater tolerance of others opinions and beliefs. Geographically, countries having enhanced access to other countries and cultures (i.e. sea and ocean access, air and sea ports) tend to have greater trading activity. Often, this increased activity yields a flexibility, which may slowly shift a culture to become more tolerant of ambiguity.

The Status Identity dimension reflects more complexity in the Peruvian society. The findings indicate that social distance (similar to power distance) and age were not factors one which high status identity is based. Respondents implied that they felt they could interact with their supervisors (even in expressing disagreement) and have some degree of participation in decision-making. Contrary to these results, the respondents indicated they believe that seniority and position are more salient indicators of respect than knowledge and skills. Put differently, respect is based on who you are rather than what you know. These results imply that inside of the organization the respondent's experienced lower status identity, but outside the organization the person's position may be

more notable, implying a multidimensionality of this construct.

Indicative of much culture research, levels of analysis issues become notable (Ilgen, personal communication, 1997). Indeed, we are deriving implications for individual level behavior from group level context. That is, we are proposing that culture is a homogeneous effect that may create individual level differences across cultural boundaries. Naturally this discussion raises multi-level challenges (Klein, Dansereau, & Hall, 1994; Smith & Bond, 1995). Not unlike previous research (Chen, Brockner, & Katz, 1997; Peterson & Smith, 1997; Wagner, 1995), we intentionally restrict our discussion to the individual level behavior. Given the stage of theoretical development of our model and the desire for clarity of investigation, we believe this limitation is warranted, and various scholars support this argument (Chen, Chen & Meindl, 1998; Earley & Gibson, 1998). As the results indicate, we found some support for aggregating individual level responses to the cultural level. We proposed that culture is a homogeneous effect that may create individual level differences across cultural boundaries. Correlations indicate that the groups showed no significant differences within the sample, supporting the argument for aggregating individual responses to the cultural level. Nonetheless, an argument for the use of appropriate-level variables in understanding variation at a cultural level will continue to be a criticism of such research (Hofstede et al, 1993).

There are several limitations in this study. First, we surveyed MBA students with work experience. Although similar to the Hofstede (1980) sample, these respondents may not be reflective of the entire population of the country. Future research should tap into a larger organizational and demographic sample. Markedly absent from prior research is a diversity of class among the samples, with the present sample included. Although obtaining this information may be problematic across cultures, it is a variation that needs to be studied, especially as individuals from lower classes are affecting the business environment throughout South America.

Secondly, replication is important to confirm or disconfirm research. Further studies need to be conducted to assess the validity and replicability of these multidimensional constructs. Multiple measures would be preferable when assessing any cross-cultural differences (Triandis, 1995). Future research may implement several methods (i.e. scenarios, questionnaires, qualitative interviews, observations) to ensure that an accurate portrait of culture is captured.

Contextual considerations should be heeded in evaluating cultural syndromes. It is possible to have increased confidence regarding specific cultural findings only if precise conceptual arguments are developed predicting when cultural effects are explicit in work behavior. Future researchers should create their own framework, or extrapolate from existing theory, and postulate cultural influences in guiding behaviors. Extensive knowledge gleaned through research assessing such issues as the influence of cross-cultural differences on information seeking (Sully de Luque & Sommer, 1998), cooperation (Chen, Chen & Meindl, 1998), and group interaction (Wagner, 1995) enriches our abilities to enact appropriate reward systems, motivation incentives and organizational structures.

Finally, many of the cultural syndromes defined in this study are correlated (Earley & Gibson, 1998), and this precludes making precise conclusions from this initial research. This acknowledgment does not negate the value of these preliminary findings. It challenges us to continue developing and refining these constructs, both conceptually and empirically, to allow a better understanding of cultural dimensions and their ramifications for business development.

As researchers look for business methods to better assist managers, it is necessary to comprehend the complexity of the dimensions of culture in concert with individual differences of behavior. We hope the preliminary research presented here provides a framework and forum for cross-cultural comparisons and future research. As this study is contrasted with samples from other countries, significant discussion of cultural implications for business practices may begin.

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