ELJ101 Elementary Japanese 1
Global Learning Competence Assignment

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ASSIGNMENT: CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCE

In this assignment, you will discuss the study by Greet Hofstede and his colleagues (2010) on the modeling of national cultures. Your response should be about 300-500 words in length and should include at least two digital references such as images, photos, sound files, and videoclips. The response paper should be written in English.

You should follow the following guidelines to complete this assignment:

(1) Read *Hofstede's Model of National Cultures* below. You should focus on his research findings about the nation(s) where the language of your course is spoken (e.g., France for French, Italy for Italian, Egypt for Arabic etc).

(2) Prepare your response in English. Cite Hofstede et al. (2010) properly in the APA style. Your response should cover at least the following points:

  (a) Which nation you have selected.
  (b) A brief summary of Hofstede's findings, especially on which indexes you find large differences between the U.S. and the nation of your choice.
  (c) Whether or not you agree with the findings,
  (d) One or two anecdotal examples to support your conclusion.
  (e) [Only 103-level or above] Some researchers argue that this kind of research is detrimental to society because it reinforces stereotype about people of different nations. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

(3) Your written response should have at least two digital references. The digital references may include but not limited to: digital images, photos, sound files, video clips, and links to multimedia resources.

Hofstede's Model of National Cultures (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010)

Professor Geert Hofstede conducted one of the most comprehensive studies of how values in the workplace are influenced by culture. He analyzed a large database of employee value scores collected by IBM between 1967 and 1973. The data covered more than 70 countries. A few examples of the cross-national comparisons between the U.S. and other countries (Egypt and Japan) are listed below. Go to http://geert-hofstede.com/united-states.html for comparison with other nations.
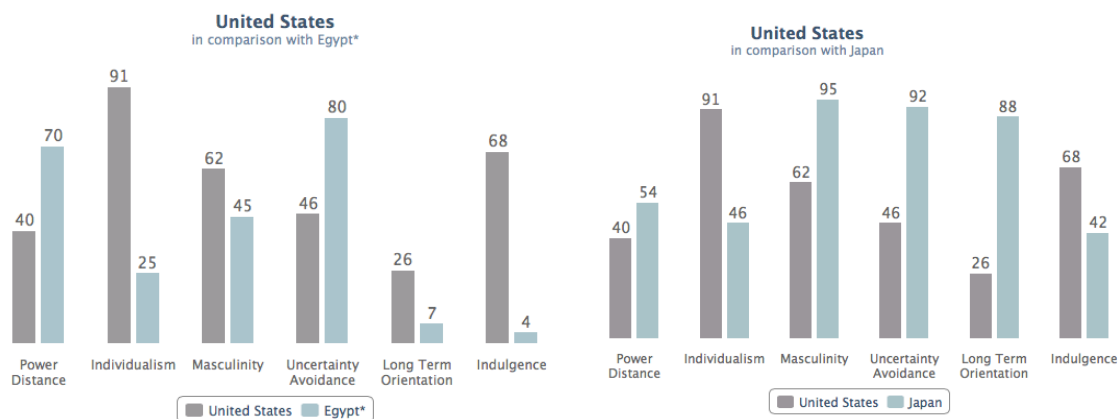
Below are the descriptions of the indices and a few examples for each index.

(a) Power Distance Index (PDI)

Small Power Distance (Low Score)
- Parents treat children as equals
- Older people are neither respected nor feared
- Student-centered education

Large Power Distance (High Score)
- Parents teach children obedience
- Older people are both respected and feared
- Teacher-centered education

(b) Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV)

Collectivism (Low Score)
- "We"-consciousness
- Stress on belonging
- Harmony should always be maintained

Individualism (High Score)
- "I"-consciousness
- Right of privacy
- Speaking one's mind is healthy

(c) Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS)

Femininity (Low Score)
- Men and women should be modest and caring
- Balance between family and work
- Sympathy for the weak

Masculinity (High Score)
- Men should be assertive and ambitious
- Work prevails over family
- Admiration for the strong

(d) Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)

Weak Uncertainty Avoidance (Low Score)
- Ease, lower stress, self-control, low anxiety
- Tolerance of deviant persons and ideas: what is different is curious
- Dislike of rules - written or unwritten

Strong Uncertainty Avoidance (High Score)
- Higher stress, emotionality, anxiety, neuroticism
- Intolerance of deviant persons and ideas: what is different is dangerous
- Emotional need for rules – even if not obeyed

(e) Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Normative Orientation (LTO)

Long-Term Orientation (Low Score)
- A good person adapts to the circumstances
- What is good and evil depends upon the circumstances
- Traditions are adaptable to changed circumstances

Short-Term Orientation (High Score)
- A good person is always the same
- There are universal guidelines about what is good and evil
- Traditions are sacrosanct

(f) Indulgence versus Restraint (IND)

Restrained (Low Score)
- Fewer very happy people
- Freedom of speech is not a primary concern
- Lower importance of leisure

Indulgence (High Score)
- Higher percentage of people are very happy
- Freedom of speech seen as important
- Higher importance of leisure

REFERENCES

Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The hofstede model in context. Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2(1).

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

McSweeney, B. (2002). Hofstede's model of national cultural differences and their consequences: A triumph of faith - a failure of analysis. Human Relations, 55(1), 89-118.