Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze work related values among four post-soviet countries. Due to the lack of previous findings about post-soviet countries in the literature, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Ukraine were selected for this study. The five work related values constructs were measured by using the Hofstede 1994 version of the Values Survey Module (VSM 94). The results of 626 business administration students in these countries revealed that, Russia has the highest power distance, Kyrgyzstan displays highest uncertainty avoidance, Kazakhstan stands out as more individualistic and Ukraine as more masculine than other countries. Among the countries studied, Russia’s long-term orientation is relatively higher than the others.

Keywords: Work values, VSM 94, Post-Soviet countries;

1. Introduction

In this study in order to measure work value dimensions, it will be focused primarily on the work values dimensions developed by Hofstede as it has been studied most extensively to date.

Hofstede (1980) study was based on a survey among IBM managers and employees in over 40 countries. Hofstede framework assesses five dimensions of work values: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, masculinity and long-term orientation. These five dimensions together have substantial face-validity and they empirically demonstrated to be related to many aspects of management and organization. Hofstede (2001) asserted that power distance would be correlated with the approachability of subordinates to their bosses; individualism-collectivism with negotiation behavior and, even strongly, with differences in management training courses results under individual or group focused condition; uncertainty avoidance with job satisfaction; masculinity-femininity with the percentage of female managers; and long versus short-term orientation with the propensity to save. Hence,
the positions of countries on Hofstede’s dimensions reflect real cultural differences that are influencing pertinent phenomena.

2. Literature Review

In his research Hofstede originally described four dimensions (individualism-collectivism; masculinity-femininity; uncertainty avoidance; and power distance) and in his work, a fifth dimension that is related to future orientation (Long term versus short term orientation) was added later. This new dimension was found in the answers of students from 23 countries to the Chinese Values Survey (CVS), which was developed by Michael Harris Bond. He calls this dimension as “Confucian work dynamism”. Confucian because the items of both poles of the dimension remind him to some of the teachings of Confucius, and dynamism because the positive pole groups future oriented items and the negative pole groups past and present oriented items (Hofstede, 2001). As Confucian work dynamism was found to be unrelated to any of Hofstede’s work value dimensions (The Chinese Culture Connection, 1987), it was added to Hofstede’s work value dimensions as a fifth dimension.

Hofstede’s work value dimensions can be described as follows:

1. Power distance (PD): Power distance indicates the extent to which a society accepts inequality in power among institutions, organizations and people. Power distance influences the extent of formal hierarchy, the decision-making structure, rules and regulations, as well as leadership styles in each culture (Hofsetede, 2001).

2. Uncertainty avoidance (UA): Uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which members of a society feel uncomfortable with unstructured situations and ambiguity. This situation increases reliance on clear procedures, well-known strategies, and well-understood rules so that discomforts with unknown situations among employees are reduced. In high uncertainty avoidance cultures, a hierarchical control role is seen, the power of superiors depends on their control of uncertainties, and the conception of management is highly formalized (Hofsetede, 2001).

3. Individualism-Collectivism (IDV/COL): This dimension is related to the integration of individuals into primary groups and also the degree to which individuals are supposed to look after themselves or remain integrated in groups. Autonomy, individual responsibility for results, individual level rewards are a few of the individualistic characteristics found in organizations whereas collective management practices emphasize work unit solidarity and team-based rewards. In collectivist cultures, employees act in the interest of their in-group rather than for themselves, collective decisions are preferred, employees are seen as family members, incentives are given to in-group employees, there is less control over job and working conditions.

4. Masculinity and Femininity (MAS/FEM): The masculinity dimension is the extent to which the dominant values (such as assertiveness, the acquisition of money and objects, heroism, achievement and disinterest in others, the quantity of life, cooperation, relationships and group decisions) in a society are “masculine”. In highly feminine cultures, people strive for a high quality of life, maintain relationships and care about their co-workers more than in highly masculine cultures. Hofstede (2001) states that the heroic manager in masculine cultures is decisive, assertive and aggressive. In feminine cultures, the “hero” is less visible, seeks consensus, and is intuitive and cooperative rather than tough and decisive. More masculine cultures are probably more tolerant of strong, directive leaders than feminine cultures, where a preference for more consultative, considerate leaders seems likely.

5. Long-term orientation and Short-term orientation (LTO/STO): Hofstede (2001) defines long-term orientation as “the fostering of virtues oriented towards future rewards, in particular, perseverance and thrift”. Its opposite pole, short-term orientation, stands for the fostering of virtues related to the past and present; in particular, respect for tradition and the fulfilment of
social obligation. The key differences between the short-term and long-term orientation dimensions are that in short-term orientation there is respect for tradition, leisure time, personal steadiness and stability; people expect quick results; immediate gratification of needs is expected; spending versus saving and investing has priority. In long-term orientation, on the other hand, personal adaptability and the adaptation of traditions to new circumstances are important; deferred gratification of needs is acceptable; there is government by people instead of government by law; relationships are ordered by status and this order is observed.

3. Methods

3.1. Purpose of this research

This research is carried out to understand whether countries studied are significantly different in work value dimensions or not.

3.2. Measures

The five work dimensions constructs were measured by using the Hofstede 1994 version of the Values Survey Module (VSM 94). The VSM 94 assesses five work values: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, masculinity and long-term orientation.

There are four items per subscale and three slightly different item formats. The first 12 items asked for ratings of importance on five-point scales from of utmost importance to of very little or no importance. The next two items asked for ratings of frequency, but used different response choices. The last 6 items asked for agreement on five-point scales from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The scales for the work value dimensions were calculated by weighing specific item means and adding constants to arrive at scales ranging from 1 (low) to 100 (high) using the formula provided by the Hofstede.

Original questionnaire was translated to native languages of studied countries first and then back-translated into English, for example, for Kazakh students, questionnaire were first translated into Kazakh and then back-translated into English. Similarly, for Russian, Kyrgyz and Ukraine students, questionnaire was first translated into Russian, Kyrgyz and Ukraine respectively and then back translated into English.

Measures of internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha) for the five work values scales for all the countries in this study was Cronbach’s alpha $\alpha$ = 89.29. Cronbach’s alpha for Kazakh sample = 91.23, for Kyrgyzstan = 89.20, for Russia = 86.38 and for Ukraine it was = 87.50.

3.3. the sample

The questionnaire was administered to total of 626 business administration students in four countries including, 126 students from Kazakhstan, 106 students from Kyrgyzstan, 195 and 199 students from Russia and Ukraine respectively. The study followed the strategy of matched samples (Hofstede, 1993), and many possible sources of variation that are not of interest in this study, like gender and age are ruled out.

4. Results

One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare country means across sample by using Hofstede’s recommended scoring procedure with all items.

Table 1 shows that there exist significant differences in all work values dimensions across the countries studied at 0.01 significant levels.
Table 1. One-way ANOVA between countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Value Dimensions</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PDI**</td>
<td>16.29</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAI**</td>
<td>17.77</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDV**</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAS**</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTO**</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Power distance (PD), Uncertainty avoidance (UA), Individualism-Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity and Femininity (MAS), Long-term orientation and Short-term orientation (LTO).

** The mean difference is significant at the 0.01 level.

In order to further explain the differences existing in the work value dimensions of these countries, the pairwise differences between means were tested by using Tukey’s (HSD) test. The mean scores related to the work value dimensions for each country was compared with each other and submitted at in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of Work Value Dimensions Scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kazakhstan</th>
<th>Kyrgyzstan</th>
<th>Russia</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PDI</td>
<td>29.67(^{c})</td>
<td>27.86(^{c})</td>
<td>49.66(^{a,b,d})</td>
<td>40.23(^{c})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(43.19)</td>
<td>(54.97)</td>
<td>(49.25)</td>
<td>(53.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAI</td>
<td>88.93(^{b,c})</td>
<td>105.50(^{a,c})</td>
<td>75.29(^{a,b})</td>
<td>87.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(67.30)</td>
<td>(75.67)</td>
<td>(70.66)</td>
<td>(74.49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDV</td>
<td>68.66(^{b})</td>
<td>59.48(^{a,c})</td>
<td>66.96(^{b,d})</td>
<td>60.41(^{c})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(50.72)</td>
<td>(55.88)</td>
<td>(54.39)</td>
<td>(54.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAS</td>
<td>58.00(^{c,e})</td>
<td>54.10(^{c,e})</td>
<td>60.21(^{a,b,d})</td>
<td>70.97(^{a,b,c})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(80.40)</td>
<td>(93.00)</td>
<td>(80.84)</td>
<td>(98.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTO</td>
<td>45.35(^{c})</td>
<td>45.90</td>
<td>50.10(^{a})</td>
<td>47.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(24.23)</td>
<td>(24.64)</td>
<td>(21.47)</td>
<td>(23.32)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Power distance (PD), Uncertainty avoidance (UA), Individualism-Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity and Femininity (MAS), Long-term orientation and Short-term orientation (LTO). Standard deviations are given in ( ).

** The mean difference is significant at the 0.01 level.

a – Significantly different from Kazakhstan.
b – Significantly different from Kyrgyzstan.
c – Significantly different from Russia.
d – Significantly different from Ukraine.

As shown in Table 2, countries were significantly different from each other in some work value dimensions. For example, Kazakhstan was significantly different from Russia in “power distance”, “uncertainty avoidance”, “masculinity and femininity” and “long-term and short-term orientation” work value dimensions. Ukraine was significantly different from studied countries in “masculinity and femininity” work value dimension. On the other hand, Table 2 indicates that some countries were found to be similar to each other in different work value dimensions, like, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were similar to each other in “power distance”, “masculinity and femininity” and “long-term and short-term orientation” work value dimensions. On the other hand, Russia and Ukraine were found to be similar in terms of “uncertainty avoidance” and “long-term and short-term orientation”.
5. Discussion

This study was mainly designed to examine to what extent do dimensions of work values vary across cultures? As there are, few studies in the literature concerning management practice in Post-Soviet countries (Ardichvili, 2001; Ergeneli at all., 2007; Latova at all., 2006) four countries named, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Ukraine were chosen for this study.

As regard with focus of this study, it was decided to compare the work value dimensions of the countries studied. Therefore, the main finding of this study was that there were significant differences between the work value dimensions of these countries. The results of 626 business administration students in these countries revealed that, Russia has the highest power distance, Kyrgyzstan displays highest uncertainty avoidance, Kazakhstan stands out as more individualistic and Ukraine as more masculine than other countries. Among the countries studied, Russia’s long-term orientation is relatively higher than the others.

Like many other studies this study has some limitations. First of all, the data collected from students who answered the questionnaire may not be representative of working people in the real business environment. Therefore, another thing to suggest for further studies would be to investigate the employee’s behavior in the real business situation.

References

