PART I

# Cultural Foundations

CHAPTER 1

# The culture theory jungle: divergence and convergence in models of national culture

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On both a conceptual and empirical level, serious research on cultural differences in organization and management has been simultaneously facilitated and inhibited by the existence of multiple and often conflicting models of national culture. These models offer useful templates for comparing management processes, HRM policies, and business strategies across national borders. Some models have gone a step further and offered measures or numerical indicators for various countries that have been used widely in cross-cultural research. However, a problem that continues to plague organizational researchers in this area is a lack of convergence across these models. This divergence represents what we refer to as the *culture theory jungle* – a situation in which researchers must choose between competing, if sometimes overlapping, models to further their research goals and then defend such choices against a growing body of critics. This reality fails to facilitate either parsimony or rigor in organizational research, let alone useful comparisons across studies and samples.

As such, after a brief review of the divergence that currently exists in the most commonly used models of culture, we argue in this paper that a clear need exists to seek convergence across the various models where it exists in ways that facilitate both research and meaningful cross-cultural comparisons. We then seek such convergence by identifying five relative common themes, or *core cultural dimensions*, that pervade the various extant models. Based on these themes, culture ratings for country clusters are presented based on data secured through the use of multiple measures and multiple methods.

## Divergence in models of national culture

At present, there are at least six models of national cultures that continue to be widely cited and utilized in the organizational research literature. These include models proposed by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, Hofstede, Hall, Trompenaars, Schwartz, and House and his GLOBE associates. Each model highlights different aspects of societal beliefs, norms, and/or values and, as such, convergence across the models has been seen as being very limited. Below we summarize each of the six models very briefly as a prelude to a comparative analysis and attempted integration later in the paper. (Readers are referred to the original sources for a more in-depth discussion of each model.)

### Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck

Based on the initial research by Clyde Kluckhohn (1951), cultural anthropologists Florence Kluckhohn and Fred Strodtbeck (1961) suggested one of the earliest models of culture that has served as a principal foundation for several later models. They proposed a theory of culture based on value orientations, arguing that there are a limited number of problems that are common to all human groups and for which there are a limited number of solutions. They further suggested that values in any given society are distributed in a way that creates a dominant value system. They used anthropological theories to identify five value orientations, four of which were later tested in five subcultures of the American Southwest: two Native American

**Table 1.1 Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's cultural dimensions**

| Cultural Dimensions | Scale Anchors | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Relationship with Nature*: Beliefs about the need or responsibility to control nature. | Mastery: Belief that people have need or responsibility to control nature. | Harmony: Belief that people should work with nature to maintain harmony or balance. | Subjugation: Belief that individuals must submit to nature. |
| *Relationship with People*: Beliefs about social structure. | Individualistic: Belief that social structure should be arranged based on individuals. | Collateral: Belief that social structure should be based on groups of individuals with relatively equal status. | Lineal: Belief that social structure should be based on groups with clear and rigid hierarchical relationships. |
| *Human Activities*: Beliefs about appropriate goals. | Being: Belief that people should concentrate on living for the moment. | Becoming: belief that individuals should strive to develop themselves into an integrated whole. | Doing: belief on striving for goals and accomplishments. |
| *Relationship with Time*: Extent to which past, present, and future influence decisions. | Past: In making decisions, people are principally influenced by past events or traditions. | Present: In making decisions, people are principally influenced by present circumstances. | Future: In making decisions, people are principally influenced by future prospects. |
| *Human Nature*: Beliefs about good, neutral or evil human nature. | Good: Belief that people are inherently good. | Neutral: Belief that people are inherently neutral. | Evil: Belief that people are inherently evil |

tribes, a Hispanic village, a Mormon village, and a farming village of Anglo-American homesteaders. The five dimensions are identified in table 1.1. Each dimension is represented on a three-point continuum.

## Hofstede

Dutch management researcher Geert Hofstede (1980, 2001) advanced the most widely used model of cultural differences in the organizations literature. His model was derived from a study of employees from various countries working for major multinational corporation and was based on the assumption that different cultures can be distinguished based on differences in what they value. That is, some cultures place a high value on equality among individuals, while others place a high value on hierarchies or power distances between people. Likewise, some cultures value certainty in everyday life and have difficulty coping with unanticipated events, while others have a greater tolerance for ambiguity and seem to relish change. Taken together, Hofstede argues that it is possible to gain considerable insight into organized behavior across cultures based on these value dimensions. Initially, Hofstede asserted that cultures could be distinguished along four dimensions, but later added a fifth dimension based on his research with Michael Bond (1991). The final five dimensions are illustrated in table 1.2.

## Hall

Edward T. Hall (1981, 1990), a noted American cultural anthropologist, has proposed a model of culture based on his ethnographic research in several societies, notably Germany, France, the US, and Japan. His research focuses primarily on how cultures vary in interpersonal communication, but also includes work on personal space and time. These three cultural dimensions are summarized in table 1.3. Many of the terms used today in the field of cross-cultural management (e.g., monochronic-polychronic) are derived from this work.

## Trompenaars

Building on the work of Hofstede, Dutch management researcher Fons Trompenaars (Tromepaars, 1993; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998)

**Table 1.2 Hofstede's cultural dimensions**

| Cultural Dimensions | Scale Anchors | |
|---|---|---|
| *Power Distance*: Beliefs about the appropriate distribution of power in society. | Low power distance: Belief that effective leaders do not need to have substantial amounts of power compared to their subordinates. Examples: Austria, Israel, Denmark, Ireland, Norway, Sweden. | High power distance: Belief that people in positions of authority should have considerable power compared to their subordinates. Examples: Malaysia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia. |
| *Uncertainty Avoidance*: Degree of uncertainty that can be tolerated and its impact on rule making. | Low uncertainty avoidance: Tolerance for ambiguity; little need for rules to constrain uncertainty. Examples: Singapore, Jamaica, Denmark, Sweden, UK. | High uncertainty avoidance: Intolerance for ambiguity; need for many rules to constrain uncertainty. Examples: Greece, Portugal, Uruguay, Japan, France, Spain. |
| *Individualism-Collectivism*: Relative importance of individual vs. group interests. | Collectivism: Group interests generally take precedence over individual interests. Examples: Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Pakistan, Latin America. | Individualism: Individual interests generally take precedence over group interests. Examples: US, Australia, UK, Netherlands, Italy, Scandinavia. |
| *Masculinity-Femininity*: Assertiveness vs. passivity; material possessions vs. quality of life. | Masculinity: Values material possessions, money, and the pursuit of personal goals. Examples: Japan, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Mexico. | Femininity: Values strong social relevance, quality of life, and the welfare of others. Examples: Sweden, Norway, Netherlands, Costa Rica. |
| *Long-term vs. Short-term Orientation*: Outlook on work, life, and relationships. | Short-term orientation: Past and present orientation. Values traditions and social obligations. Examples: Pakistan, Nigeria, Philippines, Russia. | Long-term orientation: Future orientation. Values dedication, hard work, and thrift. Examples: China, Korea, Japan, Brazil. |

**Table 1.3 Hall's cultural dimensions**

| Cultural Dimensions | Scale Anchors | |
|---|---|---|
| *Context*: Extent to which the context of a message is as important as the message itself. | Low context: Direct and frank communication; message itself conveys its meaning. Examples: Germany, US, Scandinavia. | High context: Much of the meaning in communication is conveyed indirectly through the context surrounding a message. Examples: Japan, China. |
| *Space*: Extent to which people are comfortable sharing physical space with others. | Center of power: Territorial; need for clearly delineated personal space between themselves and others. Examples: US, Japan. | Center of community: Communal; comfortable sharing personal space with others. Examples: Latin America, Arab States. |
| *Time*: Extent to which people approach one task at a time or multiple tasks simultaneously. | Monochronic: Sequential attention to individual goals; separation of work and personal life; precise concept of time. Examples: Germany, US, Scandinavia. | Polychronic: Simultaneous attention to multiple goals; integration of work and personal life; relative concept of time. Examples: France, Spain, Mexico, Brazil, Arab States. |

presented a somewhat different model of culture based on his study of Shell and other managers over a ten-year period. His model is based on the early work of Harvard sociologists Parsons and Shils (1951) and focuses on variations in both values and personal relationships across cultures. It consists of seven dimensions, as shown on table 1.4. The first five dimensions focus on relationships among people, while the last two focus on time management and society's relationship with nature.

## Schwartz

Taking a decidedly more psychological view, Shalom Schwartz (1992, 1994) and his associates asserted that the essential distinction between societal values is the motivational goals they express. He identified ten universal human values that reflect needs, social motives, and social institutional demands (Kagitçibasi, 1997). These values are purportedly found in all cultures and

**Table 1.4 Trompenaars' cultural dimensions**

| Cultural Dimensions | Scale Anchors | |
|---|---|---|
| *Universalism-Particularism*: Relative importance of applying standardized rules and policies across societal members; role of exceptions in rule enforcement. | Universalism: Reliance on formal rules and policies that are applied equally to everyone. Examples: Austria, Germany, Switzerland, US. | Particularism: Rules must be tempered by the nature of the situation and the people involved. Examples: China, Venezuela, Indonesia, Korea. |
| *Individualism-Collectivism*: Extent to which people derive their identity from within themselves or their group. | Individualism: Focus on individual achievement and independence. Examples: US, Nigeria, Mexico, Argentina. | Collectivism: Focus on group achievement and welfare. Examples: Singapore, Thailand, Japan. |
| *Specific-Diffuse*: Extent to which people's various roles are compartmentalized or integrated. | Specific: Clear separation of a person's various roles. Examples: Sweden, Germany, Canada, UK, US. | Diffuse: Clear integration of a person's various roles. Examples: China, Venezuela, Mexico, Japan, Spain. |
| *Neutral-Affective*: Extent to which people are free to express their emotions in public. | Neutral: Refrain from showing emotions; hide feelings. Examples: Japan, Singapore, UK. | Affective: Emotional expressions acceptable or encouraged. Examples: Mexico, Brazil, Italy. |
| *Achievement-Ascription*: Manner in which respect and social status are accorded to people. | Achievement: Respect for earned accomplishments. Examples: Austria, US, Switzerland. | Ascription: Respect for ascribed or inherited status. Examples: Egypt, Indonesia, Korea, Hungary. |
| *Time Perspective*: Relative focus on the past or the future in daily activities. | Past/present oriented: Emphasis on past events and glory. Examples: France, Spain, Portugal, Arab countries. | Future oriented: Emphasis on planning and future possibilities. Examples: China, Japan, Korea, Sweden, US. |
| *Relationship with Environment*: Extent to which people believe they control the environment or it controls them. | Inner-directed: Focus on controlling the environment. Examples: Australia, US, UK. | Outer-directed: Focus on living in harmony with nature. Examples: China, India; Sweden, Egypt, Korea. |

represent universal needs of human existence. The human values identified are: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security.

Schwartz (1994) argued that individual and cultural levels of analysis are conceptually independent. Individual-level dimensions reflect the psychological dynamics that individuals experience when acting on their values in the everyday life, while cultural-level dimensions reflect the solutions that societies find to regulate human actions. At the cultural level of analysis, Schwartz identified three dimensions: conservatism and autonomy, hierarchy versus egalitarianism, and mastery versus harmony, summarized in table 1.5 below. Based on this model, he studied school teachers and college students in fifty-four countries. His model has been applied to basic areas of social behavior, but its application to organizational studies has been limited (Bond, 2001).

## GLOBE

Finally, in one of the most ambitious efforts to study cultural dimensions, Robert House led an international team of researchers that focused primarily on understanding the influence of cultural differences on leadership processes (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta, 2004). Their investigation was called the "GLOBE study" for Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness. In their research, the GLOBE researchers identified nine cultural dimensions, as summarized in table 1.6. While several of these dimensions have been identified previously (e.g., individualism-collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance), others are unique (e.g., gender egalitarianism and performance orientation).

Based on this assessment, the GLOBE researchers collected data in sixty-two countries and compared the results. Systematic differences were found in leader behavior across the cultures.

**Table 1.5 Schwartz's cultural dimensions**

| Cultural Dimensions | Scale Anchors | |
|---|---|---|
| *Conservatism-Autonomy*: Extent to which individuals are integrated in groups. | Conservatism: individuals are embedded in a collectivity, finding meaning through participation and identification with a group that shares their way of life. | Autonomy: individuals are autonomous from groups, finding meaning on their own uniqueness. Two types of autonomy: Intellectual autonomy: (independent pursuit of ideas and rights) and Affective autonomy (independent pursuit of affectively positive experience). |
| *Hierarchy-Egalitarianism*: Extent to which equality is valued and expected. | Hierarchy: cultures are organized hierarchically. Individuals are socialized to comply with theirs roles and are sanctioned if they do not. | Egalitarianism: Individuals are seen as moral equals who share basic interests as human beings. |
| *Mastery-Harmony*: Extent to which people seek to change the natural and social world to advance personal or group interests. | Mastery: individuals value getting ahead through self-assertion and seek to change the natural and social world to advance personal or group interests. | Harmony: individuals accept the world as it is and try to preserve it rather than exploit it. |

For example, participatory leadership styles that are often accepted in the individualistic west are of questionable effectiveness in the more collectivistic east. Asian managers place a heavy emphasis on paternalistic leadership and group maintenance activities. Charismatic leaders can be found in most cultures, although they may be highly assertive in some cultures and passive in others. A leader who listens carefully to his or her subordinates is more valued in the US than in China. Malaysian leaders are expected to behave in a manner that is humble, dignified, and modest, while American leaders seldom behave in this manner. Indians prefer leaders who are assertive, morally principled, ideological, bold, and proactive. Family and tribal norms support highly autocratic leaders in many Arab countries (House *et al.*, 2004). Clearly, one of the principal contributions of the GLOBE project has been systematically to study not just cultural dimensions but how variations in such dimensions affect leadership behavior and effectiveness.

## Seeking convergence in models of national culture

Taken together, these six culture models attempt to accomplish two things: First, each model offers a well-reasoned set of dimensions along which various cultures can be compared. In this regard, they offer a form of intellectual shorthand for cultural analysis, allowing researchers to break down assessments of various cultures into power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and so forth, and thus organize their thoughts and focus attention on what otherwise would be a monumental task. Second, four of the models offer numeric scores for rating various cultures. For example, we can use Hofstede to say that Germany is a 35 while France is a 68 on power distance, suggesting that Germany is more egalitarian than France. Regardless of whether these ratings are highly precise or only generally indicative of these countries, they nonetheless provide one indication of how these countries might vary culturally.

As is evident from this review, there are many different ways to represent cultural differences. Unfortunately, the six cultural models available frequently focus on different aspects of societal beliefs, norms, or values and, as such, convergence across the models seems at first glance to be limited. This lack of convergence presents important challenges both for researchers attempting to study cultural influences on management and for managers trying to understand new cultural settings.

Instead of advocating one model over another, we suggest that all of the models have important factors to contribute to our understanding of culture as it relates to management practices. In order to navigate this culture theory jungle, we argue

**Table 1.6 GLOBE's cultural dimensions**

| Cultural Dimensions | Scale Anchors | |
|---|---|---|
| *Power Distance*: Degree to which people expect power to be distributed equally. | High: Society divided into classes; power bases are stable and scarce; power is seen as providing social order; limited upward mobility. | Low: Society has large middle class; power bases are transient and sharable; power often seen as a source of corruption, coercion, and dominance; high upward mobility. |
| *Uncertainty Avoidance*: Extent to which people rely on norms, rules, and procedures to reduce the unpredictability of future events. | High: Tendency to formalize social interactions; document agreements in legal contracts; be orderly and maintain meticulous records; rely on rules and formal policies. | Low: Tendency to be more informal in social interactions; reliance on word of people they trust; less concerned with orderliness and record-keeping; rely on informal norms of behavior. |
| *Humane Orientation*: Extent to which people reward fairness, altruism, and generosity. | High: Interests of others important; values altruism, benevolence, kindness, and generosity; high need for belonging and affiliation; fewer psychological and pathological problems. | Low: Self-interest important; values pleasure, comfort, and self-enjoyment; high need for power and possessions; more psychological and pathological problems. |
| *Institutional Collectivism*: Extent to which society encourages collective distribution of resources and collective action. | High: Individuals integrated into strong cohesive groups; self viewed as interdependent with groups; societal goals often take precedence over individual goals. | Low: Individuals largely responsible for themselves; self viewed as autonomous; individual goals often take precedence over societal or group goals. |
| *In-Group Collectivism*: Extent to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations and families. | High: Members assume they are interdependent and seek to make important personal contributions to group or organization; long-term employer-employee relationships; organizations assume major responsibility of employee welfare; important decisions made by groups. | Low: Members assume they are independent of the organization and seek to stand out by making individual contributions; short-term employer-employee relationships; organizations primarily interested in the work performed by employees over their personal welfare. |
| *Assertiveness*: Degree to which people are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in relationships with others. | High: Value assertiveness, dominance, and tough behavior for all members of society; sympathy for the strong; value competition; belief in success through hard work; values direct and unambiguous communication. | Low: Prefers modesty and tenderness to assertiveness; sympathy for the weak; values cooperation; often associates competition with defeat and punishment; values face-saving in communication and action. |
| *Gender Egalitarianism*: Degree to which gender differences are minimized. | High: High participation of women in the workforce; more women in positions of authority; women accorded equal status in society. | Low: Low participation of women in the workforce; fewer women in positions of authority; women not accorded equal status in society. |
| *Future Orientation*: Extent to which people engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing, and delayed gratification. | High: Greater emphasis on economic success; propensity to save for the future; values intrinsic motivation; organizations tend to be flexible and adaptive. | Low: Less emphasis on economic success; propensity for instant gratification; values extrinsic motivation; organizations tend to be bureaucratic and inflexible. |
| *Performance Orientation*: Degree to which high performance is encouraged and rewarded. | High: Belief that individuals are in control of their destiny; values assertiveness, competitiveness, and materialism; emphasizes performance over people. | Low: Values harmony with environment over control; emphasizes seniority, loyalty, social relationships, and belongingness; values who people are more than what they do. |

that the most productive approach is to integrate and adapt the various models based on their utility for better understanding business and management in cross-cultural settings. In doing so, we seek common themes that collectively represent the principal differences between cultures. While no single model can cover all aspects of a culture, we believe it is possible to tease out the principal cultural characteristics through such a comparative analysis.

**Table 1.7 Common themes across models of national culture**

| Common Themes | Culture Models | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kluckhohn/ Strodtbeck | Hofstede | Hall | Trompenaars | Schwartz | GLOBE |
| Distribution of power and authority | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Emphasis on groups or individuals | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Relationship with environment | 2 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Use of time | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 1 |
| Personal and social control | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 |
| Other themes (see text) | | | 1 | 2 | | |

*Note*: Numbers indicate the number of cultural dimensions from the various models that fit within each theme.

In our view, five relatively distinct common themes emerge from this comparison (see table 1.7):

1. *Distribution of power and authority in society*. How are power and authority distributed in a society? Is this distribution based on concepts of hierarchy or egalitarianism? What are societal beliefs concerning equality or privilege?
2. *Centrality of individuals or groups as the basis of social relationships*. What is the fundamental building block of a society: individuals or groups? How does a society organize for collective action?
3. *People's relationship with their environment*. On a societal level, how do people view the world around them and their relationship with the natural and social environment? Is their goal to control the environment and events around them or to live in harmony with these external realities?
4. *Use of time*. How do people in a society organize and manage their time to carry out their work and non-work activities? Do people approach work in a linear or a nonlinear fashion?
5. *Mechanisms of personal and social control*. How do societies try to insure predictability in the behavior of their members? Do they work to control people through uniformly applied rules, policies, laws, and social norms or rely more on personal ties or unique circumstances?

To achieve this clustering, we must recognize that in a few cases multiple dimensions in the original models can be merged into a single more general or unifying cultural dimension (e.g., institutional and in-group collectivism in the GLOBE model), as discussed below. In addition, we need to look beyond the simple adjectives often used by the various researchers and seek deeper meaning in the various concepts themselves, also as discussed below.

At first glance, these five themes seem to replicate Hofstede's five dimensions, but closer analysis suggests that the other models serve to amplify, clarify, and, in some cases, reposition dimensions so they are more relevant for the contemporary workplace. Indeed, we believe that the commonality across these models reinforces their utility (and possible validity) as critical evaluative components in better understanding global management and the world of international business. As such, each model thus adds something of value to this endeavor.

## Core cultural dimensions: an integrative summary

Based on this assessment, we suggest that the advancement of cross-cultural organizational research lies not in developing new models of national culture or debating the validity of the various extant models, but rather in seeking commonalities or convergence among existing ones. To accomplish this, we examine each of the five principal themes of cultural differences that emerged

**Table 1.8 Core cultural dimensions: an integrative summary**

| Core Cultural Dimensions | Focus of Dimensions |
|---|---|
| Hierarchy-Equality | *Power distribution in organizations and society:* Extent to which power and authority in a society are distributed hierarchically or in a more egalitarian and participative fashion. |
| Individualism-Collectivism | *Role of individuals and groups in social relationships:* Extent to which social relationships emphasize individual rights and responsibilities or group goals and collective action; centrality of individuals or groups in society. |
| Mastery-Harmony | *Relationship with the natural and social environment:* Beliefs concerning how the world works; extent to which people seek to change and control or live in harmony with their natural and social surroundings. |
| Monochronism-Polychronism | *Organization and utilization of time:* Extent to which people organize their time based on sequential attention to single tasks or simultaneous attention to multiple tasks; time as fixed vs. time as flexible. |
| Universalism-Particularism | *Relative importance of rules vs. relationships in behavioral control:* Extent to which rules, laws, and formal procedures are uniformly applied across societal members or tempered by personal relationships, in-group values, or unique circumstances. |

from our comparison, identifying similarities and differences where they exist and teasing out the details. We refer to these themes as *core cultural dimensions* (CCDs) to reflect both their centrality and commonality in cross-cultural organizational research (see table 1.8). However, it should be emphasized that credit for the identification of these dimensions goes to previous researchers; our focus here is simply to identify a means of integrating, interpreting, and building upon their signal contributions.

## Hierarchy-equality

The first common theme running through the various models relates to how individuals within a society structure their power relationships. That is, is power in a society distributed based primarily on vertical or horizontal relationships? Is power allocated *hierarchically* or in a more *egalitarian* fashion?

Hofstede's (1980) refers to this as power distance and defines it as the beliefs people have about the appropriateness of either large or small differences in power and authority between the members of a group or society. Some cultures, particularly those in several Asian, Arab, and Latin American countries, stress "high power distance," believing that it is natural or beneficial for some members of a group or society to exert considerable control over their subordinates. Subordinates are expected to do what they are told with few questions. However, this control does not necessarily have to be abusive; rather, it could be benevolent where a strong master exerts control to look after the welfare of the entire group. Other cultures, particularly those in Scandinavia, stress a "low power distance," believing in a more egalitarian or participative approach to social or organizational structure. They expect subordinates to be consulted on key issues that affect them and will accept strong leaders to the extent that they support democratic principles.

Schwartz (1994) recognizes a similar cultural dimension, which he calls hierarchy and egalitarianism, the terms we have adopted here. In "hierarchical" societies, the unequal distribution of power, roles, and resources is legitimate. Individuals are socialized to comply with obligations and roles according to their hierarchical position in society and are sanctioned if they do not. In "egalitarian" cultures, individuals are seen as moral equals and are socialized to internalize a commitment to voluntary cooperation with others and to be concerned with others' welfare. According to Schwartz' research, China, Thailand, and Turkey are hierarchical cultures, while Denmark, Sweden, and Norway are egalitarian cultures.

The GLOBE study (House *et al.*, 2004) also includes a cultural dimension referring to the power distribution in society. However, it also

adds a more specific cultural dimension, referring to the issue of gender egalitarianism. For the GLOBE researchers, the "power distance" dimension focuses on the degree to which people expect power to be distributed equally, while the "gender egalitarianism" dimension focuses on the degree to which gender differences are minimized.

Trompenaars (1993) takes a somewhat different approach here. Rather than focusing on the distribution of power, he focuses on how status and rewards are allocated in a culture. In "achievement" cultures, status and rewards are based on an individual or group's accomplishments, while in "ascription" cultures, such recognition is based largely on such things as seniority, inheritance, class, or gender. Achievement cultures use titles only when they are relevant and their leaders typically earn respect through superior performance. By contrast, people in ascription cultures use titles routinely as a means of reinforcing a hierarchy and typically select their leaders based on age or background.

As noted in table 1.9, several key questions pertaining to power orientation include the following: Should authority ultimately reside in institutions such as dictatorships or absolute monarchies or in the people themselves? Should organizations be structured vertically (e.g., tall organization structures) or horizontally (e.g., flat organization structures or even networked structures)? Is decision-making largely autocratic or participatory? Are leaders chosen because they are the most qualified for a job or because they already have standing in the community? Are leaders elected or appointed? Are people willing or reluctant to question authority?

**Table 1.9 Hierarchy-equality dimension**

| Hierarchical | Egalitarian |
|---|---|
| Belief that power should be distributed hierarchically. | Belief that power should be distributed relatively equally. |
| Belief in ascribed or inherited power with ultimate authority residing in institutions. | Belief in shared or elected power with ultimate authority residing in the people. |
| Emphasis on organizing vertically. | Emphasis on organizing horizontally. |
| Preference for autocratic or centralized decision-making. | Preference for participatory or decentralized decision-making. |
| Emphasis on who is in charge. | Emphasis on who is best qualified. |
| Acceptance of authority; reluctance to question authority. | Rejection or skepticism of authority; willingness to question authority. |

## Individualism vs. collectivism

The cultural dimension that has by far received the most attention in the research literature is individualism–collectivism. All six models recognize that cultures vary in the fundamental structures of social organization. A common theme that permeates the models is recognition that some cultures are organized based on groups, while others are organized based on individuals. The most common terms used to describe this are *individualistic* and *collectivistic*. The fundamental difference across the models refers to the extent to which this dimension is related to or separated from the power orientation dimension (see below). Some researchers suggest that a single dimension dealing with relationships among people (including both group orientation and power) is more appropriate to distinguish between cultures, while others retain these as separate dimensions. For our purposes, we will discuss these two dimensions separately, although we recognize that their relationship to each other is important.

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) suggested that there are important variations in how individuals relate to each other across cultures. They classified cultures in three types: individualistic, collateral, and lineal. In "individualistic" cultures, individual goals are considered more important and are encouraged to pursue their own personal interests at the expense of others. In "collateral" cultures, individuals see themselves as part of a social group, formed by laterally extended relationships. In "lineal" cultures, the group is equally important but the nature of the group changes. One of the most important goals of lineal societies is the continuity of the group through time, resulting in a strong emphasis in ordered positional succession.