**Learning outcome: Examine the role of two cultural dimensions on behaviour**

Cultures vary in many ways. In order to simplify this complexity, cross-cultural psychologists have identified key **dimensions** that can help us make sense of cultural patterns in values and behaviours.

An influential model was put forward by **Hofstede (1980).** Hofstede analysed questionnaires about attitudes and values completed by more than **100,000 managers working for IBM in 40 countries**. He then carried out a **content analysis** on the responses. The trends he noticed he called dimensions. Hofstede isolated four key dimensions of cultural variation:

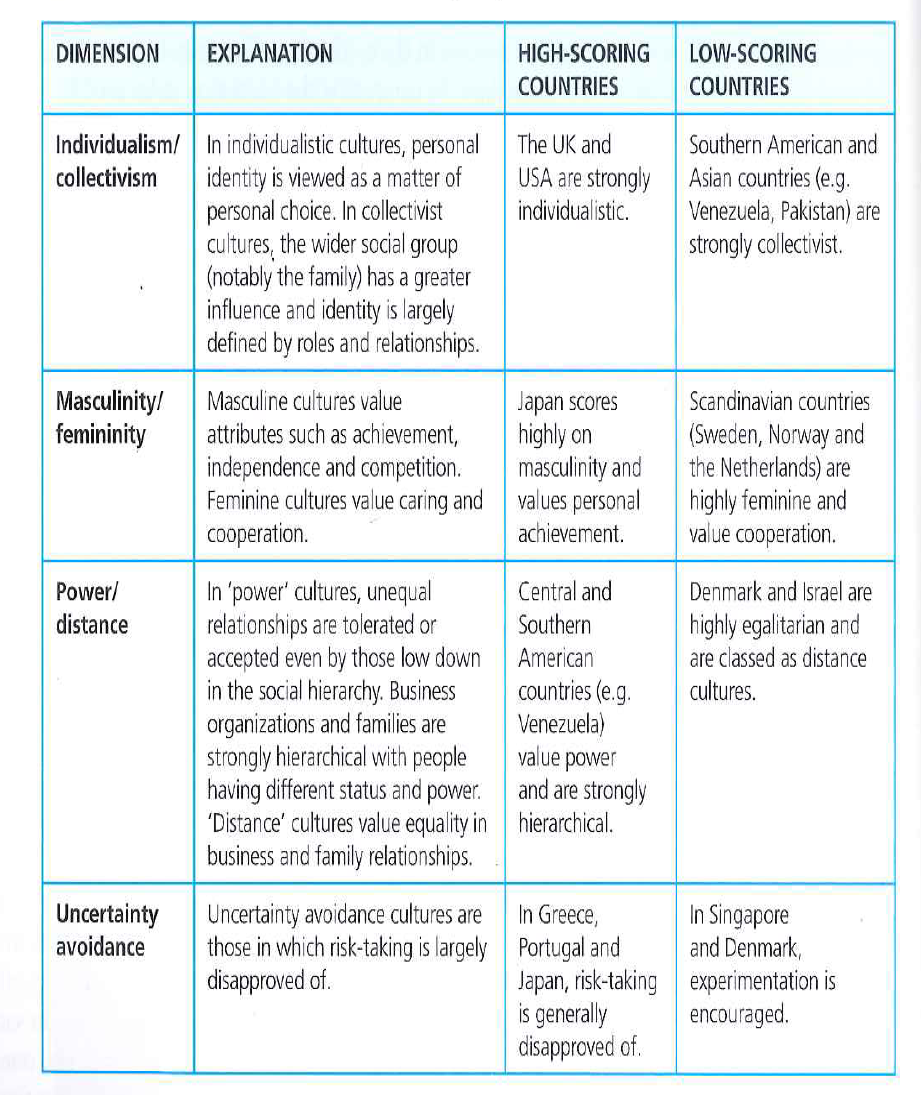
* Individualism/collectivism
* Masculinity/femininity
* Power/distance
* Uncertainty avoidance/risk taking

In 1991 using a larger sample of **50 countries**, based on research by **Michael Bond**, Hofstede added a **fifth dimension**:

* Time orientation, also known as Long term or short term orientation, which is also known as Confucian dynamism.

Each dimension represents a bipolar scale, with **two extreme poles.**

Hofstede’s four Culture Dimensions (1980)



**Long-term or short term orientation or Confucian dynamism**

This was the latest dimension to be added in 1991 based on research by **Michael Bond.** Many have argued that time is not defined and perceived in the same way everywhere. The way humans experience time is influenced by their culture (Hall 1959).

In the mid 80’s, Bond asked a number of Chinese social scientists to create a list of what Chinese people viewed as their basic values. A questionnaire based on this list was then given to people in 23 countries. As a result of this a new dimension called **Confucian dynamism** emerged. It reflected Confucius’s ideas about the importance of perseverance, patience, social hierarchy, thrift and having a sense of shame. It was later re-named **long-term vs short-term orientation**.

Culture with a **long-term orientation** show a dynamic, future orientated mentality. These are cultures that value long-standing, as opposed to short term, traditions and values. Individuals in such cultures strive to fulfill their own long-term social obligations and **avoid loss of face**.

Cultures with a short-term orientation are not as concerned with past traditions. They are rather impatient, are ‘in the present’ orientated and strive for immediate results.

Seven of the ten highest ranking countries on this dimension were in Asia. Western countries tend to be more short-term oriented.

Find out more about your country’s standing on the website below.

<http://geert-hofstede.com/>

Click on National Culture in the left menu bar. If you scroll down to [Hofstede dimensions of national culture](http://geert-hofstede.com/dimensions.html): you can find more information about the cultural dimensions.

Click on National Culture and then underneath it Countries. If you “select a country” you can find information about your own country. You can also compare your country with another.

**Write down the findings about two countries in the space below:**

**An interesting point from the website…**

**Culture only exists by comparison.**

**The country scores on the dimensions are relative - societies are compared to other societies. Without make a comparison a country score is meaningless.**