Advances and Perennial Problems of Cross-Cultural Business Research Practices: A Review of Reviews

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1 Introduction

In this introductory chapter the setting of the study as well as its aims and structure are outlined.

1.1 Setting

Over the last six decades, the accelerating globalization of business, has increasingly led academic researchers in the fields of marketing, management and organizational psychology to recognize the importance of understanding the relationship of culture with consumer and employee behavior as well as with management decision styles. After the publication of pioneering cross-cultural research articles in the late 1950s, scholars began to perceive this type of research as a distinct field of research in itself (Nath, 1969; Schöllhammer, 1969; Ajiferuke & Boddewyn, 1970; Kraut, 1975). In recent years, the number of publications in cross-cultural management, organizational psychology, and marketing research has increased greatly (Kastanakis & Voyer, 2014; Spector, Liu & Sanchez, 2015; Sun, D'Alessandro, Johnson & Winzar, 2014). For example, Nakata (2009b: 209) noted that the role of culture as a source of variation in marketing-relevant phenomena has become the central focus of research crossing borders and countries:

> *Nakata (2009b: 209): "The dramatic increase [in publications] suggests that culture is becoming a, perhaps the, leading theory in international marketing. Culture has been used to explain and predict everything from export channel controls, use of humor in global advertising, and new product diffusion to consumer innovativeness, word-of-mouth effects among industrial firms, and marketer adaptations to immigrant consumers."*

Likewise, Kirkman, Lowe and Gibson (2006), Taras, Kirkman and Steel (2010), and Tsui, Nifadkar and Ou (2007) documented that a growing number of management re-

searchers are investigating culture as a factor influencing all aspects of management decision styles and employee behavior.

Cross-cultural research has the potential to test whether the concepts, hypotheses, and theories developed in specific context are also applicable to other cultural and/ or national environments. Insights from cross-cultural research can also be used to enrich and extend existing conceptualizations, hypotheses, and theories. Moreover, published research results support intercultural exchange, understanding and cooperation by informing researchers and practitioners about the interaction between culture and human behavior (Matsumoto & van de Vijver, 2010; Slater & Yani-de-Soriano, 2010; Watkins, 2010). Shavitt, Lee and Johnson (2008: 1103) underlined the relevance of cross-cultural research to engagement in business activities across national and cultural borders:

> *Shavitt et al. (2008: 1103): "Every year, multinational companies spend billions of dollars in marketing their products around the world. Some of this money is wasted or, worse, actually damages the marketer's reputation through cultural or linguistic faux pas. As new global markets emerge, and existing markets become increasingly segmented along ethnic or subcultural lines, the need to market effectively to consumers who have different cultural values has never been more acute."*

In addition to its promise of advancing marketing and management theory and business practices, the field of cross-cultural research is also characterized by a wide range of inherent pitfalls and almost insurmountable difficulties related to the research process. These challenges stem from the fact that data is usually compared from at least two diverse cultural settings which differ not only in terms of their cultural profile but most likely also with regard to other characteristics such as climate, religion, social structures, economic, educational and politcal situation, legal system, language, infrastructure etc. (Berry, Guillén & Zhou, 2010). It is inevitable that these characteristics somehow influence the way respondents interpret and react to survey designs and also the interpretation of data by researchers. Cross-cultural research cannot be conducted in a sterile environment where other sources of noise can be controlled much

more easily. In fact, cross-cultural studies have been associated with a whole host of issues and problems that do not arise in research projects conducted in a single environment. Eminent scholars commenting on the state of affairs of research process-oriented steps pointed out that tradition and inertia in designing and conducting research on the relationship between culture and human behavior have hindered progress (de Mooij, 2015; Nakata, 2009; van de Vijver, Chasiotis, Breugelmans, 2011). For instance, Tsui et al. (2007: 427) note that conceptual, theoretical, empirical, and analytical pitfalls inherent in the research process of cross-cultural studies were identified as seriously hampering the production of valid and reliable results.

> *Tsui et al. (2007: 427): "[...] cross-cultural studies in cross-national contexts are more complex than are domestic cross-cultural studies. To begin with, this research requires cross-level theorizing and research methods by relating national level characteristics to individual- or team-level responses. In addition, cross-national data collection introduces issues related to matching samples and construct equivalence. These challenges go beyond those faced by scholars studying cross-cultural differences in a single country or at a single level when cultural values are treated as individual differences variables."*

The risk of publishing research results that are biased and not replicable is enormous if the inherent challenges and complexity of process-related issues are not recognized and handled appropriately. Like no other domain in business-related disciplines, cultural phenomena are criticized as unapproachable and at the same time deemed as incumbent on today's globalized market realities (Beugelsdijk, Kostova & Roth, 2017). On the one hand cross-cultural research is stimulating great interest, but on the other, it faces huge challenges during the research process.

Given the importance of cross-cultural research in today's global business environments, the assessment, refinement, and development of steps in the research process have been deemed necessary to improve rigor in the field and to obtain more reliable and valid insights. Nakata (2009c: 6) argued that it is imperative for the field to assess the development of procedural steps reported in empirical studies and to take stock periodically of what has been accomplished in terms of rigor. Such stock-taking

will help the field *"to better understand where culture studies as a body of knowledge stands and the direction we need to move to."* Taras and Steel (2009: 55) further argue that it is important to address pitfalls and problems as well as to consider directions that promise more rigor and produce better results.

> *Taras and Steel (2009: 55): "[…] to the degree we address any weaknesses in our field, we would be rewarded with a concomitant increase in the practical relevance and adoption of our findings."*

This need to assess, refine, and redefine research process issues was met by a substantial number of review publications regulary appearing during the past six decades (e.g., see Appendix 1 on page 238). Since the late 1960s review publications have assessed the procedural steps reported in published empirical research studies. These publications shed light on how the field addressed the wide range of problems occurring at all stages of the research process, such as theoretical foundation, construct development, measurement processes, data collection, sampling choices, data analysis and interpretation of results (e.g., Aulakh & Kotabe, 1993; Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982; Boddewyn, 1981; Engelen & Brettel, 2011; Hult et al., 2008; Nakata & Huang, 2005; Roberts, 1970; Samiee & Jeong, 1994; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003; Schöllhammer, 1973).

These review publications were written by the field's most productive and cited scholars and were disseminated mostly in its top journals. They assessed and consolidated the development of cross-cultural research practices in the disciplines of marketing, management, and organizational psychology. This study argues that a systematic synthesis of the plethora of review publications appears to be a logical and appropriate next step to synthesize these review publications from a comprehensive perspective. A comprehensive review of existing reviews allows a longitudinal analysis to be made of the critical assessments and insights. The need for systematic content analysis appears particularly important in the light of the observation by van de Vijver et al.`s (2011) that flaws of research process-oriented issues are more or less a déjà vu, as new publi-

cations are still subject to the same limitations inherent in previous ones. One possible reason for this lack of rigor is that cross-cultural research has also been conducted and published by researchers who do not specialize exclusively on cross-cultural research and are thus, not always acquainted with the methodological criteria for rigorous cross-cultural-research. In this regard, van de Vijver et al. state:

> *Van de Vijver et al. (2011: 14-15):"There is still an important task ahead of us to inform this group about methodological requirements of cross-cultural studies. The "quick and dirty" solution to compare mean scores obtained in two cultures […] is a habit that dies hard […]."*

Furthermore, Fischer (2009: 27) states that given *"the increasing maturity of cross-cultural research […], it is important to critically question both our theoretical approach as well as the adequacy of our current tools and methods"*. Systematic content analysis of review publications thus can help to provide easily accessible and comprehensive critical insights that stimulate discourse, further the development of approaches and research practices, and supports progress in the field in terms rigor.

1.2 Research Aims – A Review of Reviews

To address the need described above for the systematic content analysis of existing reviews, this study aims to conduct a *"review of reviews"* (see Figure 1). Its purpose is to identify, appraise and synthesize existing review publications using a transparent, replicable process. The development of such a systematic analysis is facilitated by the qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA[©19] (see Section 3 for a description). The term, review of reviews, was chosen to describe the aim of analyzing the manifest content of existing reviews, which assess the procedural steps reported in empirical cross-cultural research studies. These steps include, for example, the theoretical foundation of the research project, the conceptualization and operationalization of culture and substantive constructs (e.g. measuring behavioral or cognitive outcomes), as well as the empirical steps (e.g., data collection, sampling) and analytical steps (e.g. data preparation and analysis). Accordingly, the focus of this study is not on analysing

research themes, substantive problems, results, or accumulated knowledge, but on an-
swering the following questions:

> **What process-related research issues were assessed in review publications of
>   cross-cultural research?**
> **How are the single procedural steps interrelated?**
> **What stages of progress and areas of persistent failure with regard to research
>   procedural steps can be identified in review publications?**
> **What are promising directions for more rigorous cross-cultural
>   research practices?**

These questions served as the reference point that penetrated and shaped the decisions
made during the unfolding of the literature-review process (see chapters 3, 4, and 5).

By addressing these questions, this study synthesizes the assessments made in
exsting review publications to permit analysis of the assessments contained in review
publications: comprehensively (by examining all the research steps assessed), longitu-
dinally (by considering all published reviews in top academic journals across the last
six decades), and critically (by identifying stages of progress and areas of persistent
problems). Based on the findings of advances and areas of perennial problems, a list of
directions that promise to improve the rigor of cross-cultural research practices will be
developed (see Chapter 5 and Table 12 on page 209). This list aims to provide scholars
with an overview of potential coping mechanisms in addressing the countless pitfalls
in conducting empirical cross-cultural research. It must, however, be emphasized that
its purpose is not to develop a normative and detailed compendium of criteria for
cross-cultural-research practices, but rather a synthesis of good practices, current
trends and future directions for more rigorous approaches. This list draws on the in-
sights of the field's leading scholars.

Concisely, this study aims to distil the vast amount of information in the scien-
tific debate into a comprehensive form. It may thus constitute a valuable resource for
the field's new and established scholars in planning and executing cross-cultural re-

search projects. The outcome desired from this approach is to improve the reader's understanding of where the field came from, and where it needs to go in an effort to deal successfully with the inherent pitfalls and challenges of cross-cultural research and to stimulate further scientific discourse.

Figure 1: Overview Research Purpose
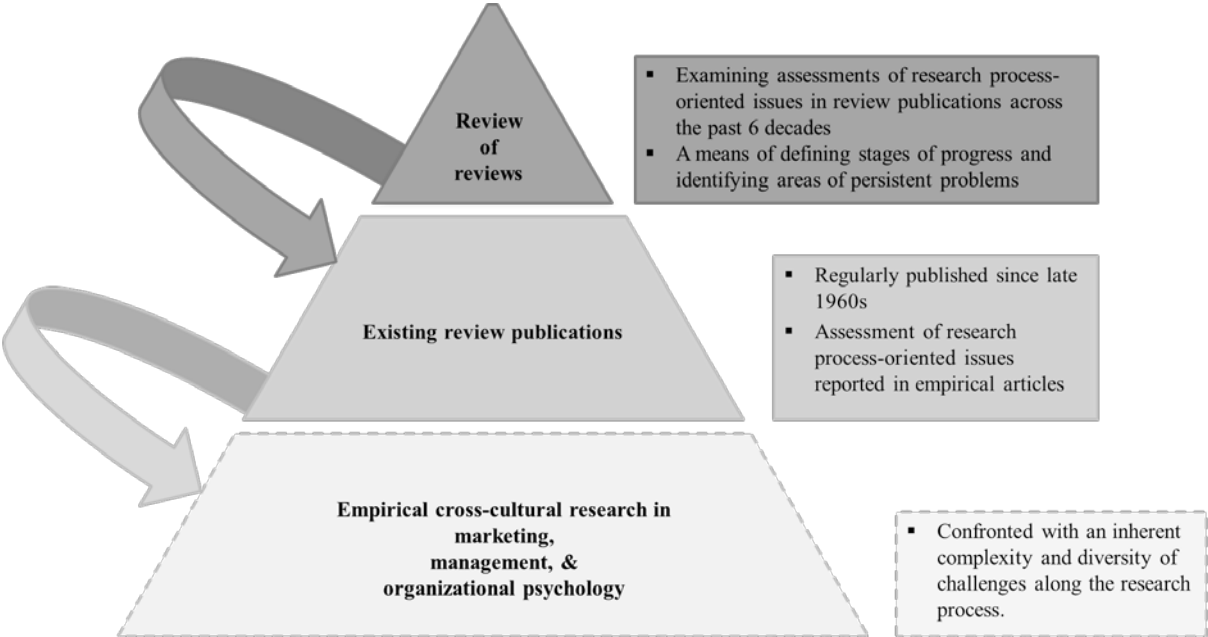
1.3 Structure and Content

After the setting and aim of this research project described in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 sets the scene by specifying the key terms of this study. In Chapter 3, the sequential steps in reviewing the field's development with regard to research process-oriented steps are reported. Specifically, the chosen analyitical approach of a systematic literature review using MaxQDA[©19] as a qualitative tool-support technique, is described in detail. Chapter 4 reports the results of the systematic examination of assessments made in reviews during the typical stages of a research process. The report identifies advances and areas of perennial problems. A summary of all perennial problems is given in Section 4.8. Chapter 5 outlines the in reviews and recently published literature suggested directions and recommendations for future cross-cultural research studies. And finally, Chapter 6 discusses the limitation of this study and provides directions for further critical debate. Figure 2 provides an overview of these chapters, which aims to illustrate how the individual chapters of this study fit together.

Figure 2: Overview of Chapters in Research Report

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Setting

1.2 Research aims - a review of reviews

1.3 Structure and content

Chapter 2 – Definition of key terms

2.1 Cross-cultural research
2.2 Cross-cultural research practices
2.3 Review publications
 • Typology of review types and associated review approaches

Chapter 3 – Study method

3.1 Definition of the research area and time frame
3.2 Selection of publication outlets
3.3 Identification of review publications
3.4 Strategies used for coding and data analysis
 • Open coding
 • Axial coding
 • Selective coding
 • Using memos along the coding procedure

Chapter 4 – Tracking the developments of cross-cultural research practices

4.1 Research strategies – Paradigmatic positioning of cross-cultural research
4.2 Structure of the research team – Ignoring the benefits of multicultural research collaboration
4.3 Theoretical foundation – From theoretical infancy to adolescence
4.4 Specification of culture – Chasing the elusive definition and measurement of culture
4.5 Research instrument design – The thorny topic of dealing with measurement equivalence problems
4.6 Sampling – Bonds of inertia and progress in sampling choices
4.7 Data analytical steps – Substantial progress in data analysis approaches
4.8 Summary of advances and perennial problems

Chapter 5 – Directions for more rigorous cross-cultural research

5.1 Research strategies – Embracing a paradigm interplay
5.2 Structure of the research team – Engaging in multicultural research collaboration
5.3 Theoretical foundation – Increasing theoretical rigor
5.4 Specification of culture – Utilizing alternative approaches to specify culture
5.5 Research instrument design – Implementing cultural sensitivity in measurement instrument development
5.6 Sampling – Moving towards theory-driven sampling choices
5.7 Data analytical steps – Applying more sophisticated data analysis approaches

Chapter 6 — Conclusion

Chapter 7 – Limitations and suggestions for further critical debate

2   Definitions of Key Terms

Before discussing the development of research practices, it would be helpful to define the key terms around which the study develops. The first key term in need of a brief definition is the research field under study, namely **cross-cultural research** in marketing, management and organizational psychology. In addition, **cross-cultural research practices** are specified as the focal object of analysis. Finally, **review publications**, as the medium of scientific debate focusing on the development of research practices, also need to be described, as they provide the data set on which this study is built. A brief discussion of these terms is important to indicate how this study fits into the scientific debate on cross-cultural research practices.

2.1 Cross-Cultural Research

In order to achieve the research aim of reviewing the manifest content of review publications on cross-cultural research in marketing, management, and psychology, it was important to understand how the authors of the identified reviews (see Section 3.3 and appendix 1 on page 238) defined cross-cultural research in their own assessments of the literature. The following bulleted points are amalgamations (not direct quotes) of definitions commonly used by authors in the publications reviewed. The common component of these definitions is that they describe what cross-cultural research does and how the relationship between human behavior, cognition and culture is understood:

- *Cross-cultural research is conducted across nations or culture groups and aims to systematically compare two or more cultural settings.*
- *Cross-cultural research is interested in behavioral and cognitive similarities and differences across cultures, and in identifying the role of culture as an explanatory variable for observed cross-cultural differences and similarities.*

- *Cross-cultural research aims to find empirical evidence for the incidence, distributions, and causes of cultural variation.*
- *Cross-cultural research integrates culture, implicitly or explicitly (including equating culture with geographical, political, and organizational boundaries and cultural entities above or below such levels) as an explanatory variable.*
- *Cross-cultural research examines how, when, what aspect(s) of, and why culture influences human behavior and cognition.*
- *Cross-cultural research aims to test and document the universality and generality of theories and concepts across cultures. It likewise sets out to spur the development of more adequate theories and concepts, and to identify new theories and concepts.*

The ancestral roots of cross-cultural research can be traced back to a variety of social and behavioral sciences (i.e. psychology, anthropology, ethnography and sociology, see for instance Berrien, 1967). However, Van de Vijver et al. (2011: 4) argued that the strongest influence on the field's paradigmatic positioning is rooted in mainstream psychology:

> *Van de Vijver et al. (2011: 4): "Most pioneers in the field were originally trained as psychologists, and by far the most of our theories and models have been directly or indirectly derived from psychology. This dominance has led to a preference for the use of quantitative methods in cross-cultural studies […]"*

Likewise, the content-analyzed reviews indicate that most cross-cultural research in marketing, management, and organizational psychology is rooted in a tradition of experimental, quantitative psychology characterized by the largely quantitative nature of its strategies and approaches to answering questions in cross-cultural research (see also Section 4.1 for an account of the field's paradigmatic positioning). Accordingly, empirical cross-cultural research collects and compares mainly quantitative data from two or more cultures in a quasi-experimental comparative design in order to analyze how, when, what aspect(s) of, and why culture influences substantive phenomena (Leung, 2005; Earley 2006; Oyserman, Kemmelmeier & Coon, 2002; Watkins, 2010). As a consequence of this paradigmatic positioning, most cross-cultural research understands culture as a set of shared norms, values, beliefs and practices that differentiate one culture from another (Sun, D'Alessandro, Johnson, & Winzar, 2014). These elements of

culture are usually quantified through psychological constructs when measuring culture. The culture measures obtained are then used to explain variance in behavioral and cognitive mechanisms across cultures (see also Section 4.4 for an account of approaches to specifying culture in empirical research).

One definition that best synthesizes the amalgamations and discussion presented above has been developed by Adamopoulos and Lonner (2001). Their definition is quoted here as it accurately demarcates the stream of literature relevant to this study:

> *Adamopoulos and Lonner (2001: 18)"[Cross-cultural research] is a method used to help us understand how and why cultural and ethnic factors serve to mask, mediate, or modify an otherwise common core of regularities in human thought and behavior."*

Using the above definition as a basis, review publications assessing empirical articles that can be grouped under the above definitions were selected for the succeeding systematic content analysis (see also Section 3.3 for a description of the selection criteria). Furthermore, it is important to mention that this study deliberately chose the term *cross-cultural research* instead of other, often interchangeably-used terms such as cross-national or international research. The term *cross-cultural research* is more accurate as it reflects more precisely the possibility of differences and similarities in behavior and cognition across national cultures, across subgroups below the national level (e.g. different social classes or religious groups within the same country) as well as across groups at a higher level (such as regional cultures and trade unions).

2.2 Cross-Cultural Research Practices

Cross-cultural research is fundamentally a methodological strategy and a means of focusing on research process-oriented issues that are not encountered to the same degree in domestic research (Gelfand, Chiu & Hong, 2015). One way to conceptualize cross-cultural research is to focus on the research process, as it comprises a large number of epistemological and methodological choices that determine the quality of the obtained research results. Adamopoulos and Lonner (2001: 11) distinguish cross-

cultural research from other areas of business research based not only on the research topics and questions investigated, but also on the field's epistemological positioning.

> *Adamopoulos & Lonner (2001: 11) "Cross-cultural psychology can be understood not only in terms of the contents of its inquiries, but also in terms of scientific philosophy— the logic underlying the nature of science and the production of knowledge."*

By referring to cross-cultural research practices, this study focuses on epistemology, the approach to knowing, including metaphysical assumptions about culture and behavioral phenomena, as well as their interrelationship. The techniques and procedures applied in the single steps of the research process for coming to terms with social reality across cultures through a comparative, quasi-experimental research design are the central objects of analysis in this study. Thus, the analysis focuses on the origin, nature, methods, and limits of cross-cultural research practices.

It has been widely observed that conducting research in several cultures with the intention of comparing results in a quasi-experimental design is challenged by a large number of unique methodological issues and pitfalls (Douglas & Craig, 2009; Taylor, Bowen & Bang, 2011; Slater & Yani-de-Soriano, 2010; Tsui et al., 2007). Such issues and challenges play a role in each step of the research process (see sections 3 and 4 for further discussion and identification of relevant research process-oriented issues). Gelfand, Raver and Ehrhart (2002: 218) noted that **not** taking care of challenges and pitfalls by applying the appropriate research steps and coping mechanisms may introduce *"numerous extraneous variables that are often completely unrelated to the research question of interest"* (Chapter 4 will elaborate on this discussion in more detail). Due to the inherent complexity of research-process related challenges in cross-cultural research, it is imperative for the discipline that the development of research practices be assessed and stock taken of what has been accomplished. Reviews on these topics have been published regularly in the field's most authoritative journals.

The next subsection will briefly explain the characteristics of such review publications.

2.3 Review Publications

Furtmueller, Miskon, Gorbacheva, Beekhuyzen and Bandara (2015) contended that reviewing the literature constitutes a fundamentally important scientific activity. Review publications enable the attentive audience to identify deficiencies, advances and promising trends. In the field of cross-cultural research, review publications have appeared regularly in academic outlets since the late 1960s. As a result, today a substantial number of reviews discussing and criticizing the state of affairs with regard to research-process oriented issues is available. These publications have been essential for the field to spur a prosperous debate which has helped the field to refine, revitalize, and even redefine cross-cultural research practices (Nakata, 2009b; Taras, Rowney and Steel, 2009). This very debate provides an interesting data set in order to define stages of progress and areas of perennial problems in cross-cultural research. In order to get an understanding of this specific type of publication, its characteristics within the field of cross-cultural research will be described here. This information is important to understand how the current study is placed within the existing body of review publications.

Over the plast six decades, empirical cross-cultural research has been reviewed in different ways. One approach frequently used can be best described as a **critical review** (see Furtmueller et al., 2015, Grant & Booth, 2009 for a categorization of review types and approaches). This review type is written by experienced and authorative scholars with an extensive understanding of the field's latest developments in terms of research process-oriented issues (see also Appendix 1 on page 238 for an overview of the review publications identified and examined in this study). The aim is to comment critically on the quality of several (but not necessarily all) interrelated research practices in empirical research publications, usually within a timeframe of ten years. The focus of these reviews is often directed towards one single discipline (i.e. marketing, management, or organizational psychology). These review publications are not sys-

tematic in the sense of including information with regard to the literature search, selection, and analysis process, which makes the results less replicable and transparent. However, based on the seniority and expertise of the authors, narrative insights into weaknesses and advances, as well as suggestions with regard to research process-oriented issues, can be trusted.

Another type of review publication can be characterised as a **systematic review approach**. Authors include explicit information about the scientific discipline, publication outlets, and time frame under review as well as the type and number of studies included and excluded. The analytical approach (i.e. content anlysis) and coding schemeis are also described in detail. The synthesis of the field's state of affairs is typically narrative, accompanied by statistical tables indicating the percentage of certain research practices at different intervals (e.g. percentages of articles using nation as a proxy for culture or including a specific definition and measurment of culture within a specific time period). This information adds accuracy and credibility to assessments of the state of affairs in research practices.

A third type of review publications can best be labeled a **focused critical review**. Unlike critical and systematic reviews focusing on several research-process oriented issues, these review publications focus on single analytical steps in order to highlight weaknesses clearly and point out new perspectives and paths. Addressing specific steps in the research-process (e.g. the conceptualization of culture), are responses to bottleneck issues at the time of publication. Specific weaknesses documented in previous review publications are usually a starting point, followed by an elaboration in greater depth of associated problems and promising paths to circumvent such problems. The current state of knowledge about methodological rigor for specific aspects of the research process is also emphasised by drawing from the literature of related disciplines.

It is important to mention that the types described above are not mutually exclusive and review publications may possess several of the above described characteristics.

3   Study Method

The literature review process is conducted in this study using a qualitative content-analysis approach, and treating review publications as the data set. The review process is divided into a systematic four-phased process (see Table 1) as recommended by the systematic review standards formulated by Higgins and Green (Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions, 2008), and Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff and Altman (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses: The PRISMA Statement, 2009). These authors formulated guidelines for conducting a comprehensive search of the literature, a purposive selection of publications (here reviews); and in-depth analysis of the written content by synthesizing textual data using narrative, graphic, and tabular methods. These guidelines were used in this study to achieve transparency and replicability, and to enhance the value and trustworthiness of results.

Table 1: Four-stage process for a systematic review of cross-cultural research practices

Stages	Task
3.1 Definition of the research area and time frame	▪ To specify the field of research ▪ To place boundaries around the type of publications of interest ▪ To identify a reasonable time frame
3.2 Selection of publication outlets	▪ To determine the appropriate outlets to be screened for potential review publications
3.3 Identification of review publications	▪ To decide on inclusion and exclusion criteria ▪ To refine the sample ▪ To select the final sample of review publications

3.4 Startegies used for Coding and Data Analysis	▪ To analyze the written content through a Grouded Theory approach aided by MAXQDA[©19]
	▪ To structure and systematize the written content using the following coding techniques:
	  • Open Coding
	  • Axial Coding
	  • Selective Coding
	  • Memo writing

First, the research field under review and the time frame for the literature as-
sessment was specified (see section 3.1). Second, the search strategy for identifying
review publications in journals and books was determined (see section 3.2). Third, the
inclusion and exclusion criteria to be applied in the literature screening process for
identifying review publications were defined (see section 3.3). In a final step, the iden-
tified review publications were examined using Grounded Theory as an approach to
the rigorous examination of their content. In addition, MAXQDA[©][19] was applied to
facilitate the systematic examination of written content (see section 3.4). The follow-
ing subsections elaborate on the choices made during this four-stage review process.

3.1 Definition of the Research Area and Time Frame

The first step in conducting any type of review is to place boundaries around the
literature being examined. This study focuses on review publications analysing re-
search process-oriented steps applied in academic cross-cultural research within three
business-related disciplines, namely marketing, management, and organizational psy-
chology (see also Section 2.1 for a definition of cross-cultural research). Cross-cultural
research in these disciplines emerged in the 1960s as a distinctive research entity
(Nath, 1968: 35; Schöllhammer, 1969: 82; Ajiferuke & Boddewyn, 1970: 153). There-
fore, the time period covered in this study aims to encompass all development stages
from the field's infancy in the 1960s to the most recent developments (see Section 1.2
for an explanation of the research aim).

3.2 Selection of Publication Outlets

In the second step, the type of outlets to be screened for review publications was
determined. Since, our interest was specifically geared to top academically refereed
research, our selection included only reputable scientific publication outlets in terms of
impact and immediacy. Such a focus ensures that review publications were subject to

the most rigorous standards (usually double-blind peer review process by the fields' most expert scientists). Thus, the findings of these reviews represent objective and valid assessments of cross-cultural research practices in the periods examined. Such findings can be regarded as representative of the state of affairs in the field's top and frontiering empirical studies.

However, due to the fact that review publications of cross-cultural research practices have been published since the 1960s, the type of sources cannot be limited to the field's current top publication outlets. For instance, some academic journals have been discontinued, merged, or have lost their immediacy and impact for the academic community. Since a journal's impact factor is subject to change, it was important to identify ranking studies published from the 1960s to the present. Hence, the sample of journals for this study was determined by considering prominent ratings of marketing, management, and organizational psychology journals, as well as ratings estimating the impact of journals specifically geared toward cross-cultural research (i.e., Anseel, Duyck, Baene & Brysbaert, 2004; Guidry, Guidry Hollier, Johnson, Tanner & Veltsos, 2004; Hult, Neese & Bashaw, 1997; Jobber & Simpson, 1988; Johnson & Podsakoff, 1994; DuBois & Reeb, 2000; Luke & Doke, 1987; Fry, Walters & Scheuermann, 1985; Moore & Taylor, 1980; Moussa & Touzani, 2010).

On the basis of these evaluations, the following academic journals were selected for the purpose of this study (see Table 2).

Table 2: List of Journals included in the Review of Reviews and Number of Review Publications

Discipline/ Journal	Year intro-duced	Country of publication	Number of reviews identi-fied within journal
Marketing			
Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	1973	Germany	1
Journal of Business Research	1973	UK	4
Journal of Consumer Psychology	1992	USA	1
Journal of Marketing	1936	USA	1
Management			
Academy of Management Journal	1958	USA	2
Administrative Science Quarterly	1956	USA	1
Academy of Management Review	1976	USA	2
Journal of Management	1975	USA	1
Journal of Organizational Behavior	1980	USA	1
Management Science	1954	USA	1
Organizational Research Methods	1999	USA	1
Organization Studies	1980	Germany	3
Research in Organizational Behavior	1979	USA	2
Psychology			
American Psychologist*	1990	USA	1
Annual Review of Psychology*	1950	USA	1
Journal of Applied Psychology	1917	USA	1
Psychological Bulletin	1990	USA	1
Journals specializing in Cross-cultural Research			
Advances in International Marketing*	2000	UK	1
International Business Review	1993	UK	2
International Journal of Psychology	1966	USA	2
International Marketing Review	1983	UK	12
International Studies of Management & Organization*	1971	UK	2
Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology	1996	USA	5
Journal Culture and Organization*	1995	UK	1
Journal of International Business Studies	1970	UK	10
Journal of International Consumer Marketing*	1997	UK	1
Journal of International Management	2002	UK	1
Journal of International Marketing	1993	USA	3
Management International Review	1966	Netherlands	4
Book publications* (see Appendix 1 on page 238)			9

*Although outlets are not ranked among the top journals, review publications were selected from these sources. This is justified by the eminent status of the authors. Review publications within these journals were identified in the course of the snowball search process.

3.3 Indentification of Review Publications

In the third step, criteria were specified for identifying potential review publications issued in the above journals. For this purpose, two frequently cited review publications in each of the six last decades were used to develop a set of pertinent keywords related to the assessment of cross-cultural research practice (i.e. Albaum & Peterson, 1984; Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982; Cavusgil & Das, 1997; Engelen & Brettel, 2011; Sun et al., 2014; Green & White, 1976; Nath, 1969; Roberts, 1970; Samiee & Jeong, 1994; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003; Kirkman et al., 2006; Schoellhammer, 1969). The derived list of keywords included the following:

- *cross-cultural research, international research, comparative research*
- *review, critical literature assessment, state-of-the-art assessment, literature evaluation*
- *research methodology, methodological approaches, methodological steps, research practices*
- *challenges, issues, problems, limitations, developments*
- *future research directions, guidelines for future research*
- *marketing, management, organizational psychology*

Based on the list of keywords every single issue of the journals identified above was screened using ISI Web of Knowledge and EBSCO search engines to access the journals' published material. In each issue, articles were selected that included a combination of the above keywords in their title and abstracts. This process resulted in a total sample of 187 potential review publications (see Figure 3 below).

This screening process was then combined with an additional literature search process based on references and citations in identified review publications. The references and citations of each article identified were checked until no new potential reviews were found. As a result of this backward and forward search, an additional 32 review publications, published in books and less impactfull journals were identified. These publications were nevertheless considered to match the puspose of this study since they were written by authoritative scholars. A good example is Nakata's (2009a)

handbook *"Beyond Hofstede: Culture frameworks for global marketing and management."* which includes review articles examining the use of culture frameworks in cross-cultural marketing, and management research.

Next, to ensure the suitability of these initially identified samples for this study's purpose, articles selected for further analysis had to satisfy the following criteria:

- *a straightforward positioning as a reviewof research process-oriented steps*
- *the scope and focus of analysis had to assess at least one research process-oriented step pertaining to cross-cultural research studies*
- *the disciplinary focus needed to be on marketing, management, and/ or organizational psychology*

To decide whether the identified articles satisfied the above requirements, the full texts of these potential reviews were screened. In this way, it was possible to distinguish between reviews assessing research practices and those assessing study topics and the results obtained. So only review publications examining how research was conducted in cross-cultural marketing, management, and organizational psychology were considered for further analysis. Through the application of the above exclusion and inclusion criteria, the number of reviews was reduced to 78. An overview of this selection process is depicted in Figure 3.

The final sample of 78 reviews was chosen for a detailed and in-depth analysis of the field's development (see Table 2 for an overview of the number of reviews identified in each journal). The selected sample is sufficient to trace the development of research process-related issues across the last six decades (see Chapter 4). This becomes obvious by looking at Figure 4. This figure depicts the time span in which the identified reviews assessed research practices in the field. Reviews tracing research practices in cross-cultural marketing are depicted above the time line, whereas reviews examining cross-cultural research in management and organizational psychology are listed below the time line. The overview illustrates that the selected sample allows the efficient review cross-cultural research practices from a long-term perspective, as the review publications collectively covered the last six decades of empirical research. An

overview of the final sample of selected review publications, including their character-istics and scope is depicted in Appendix 1 (see page 238).

Figure 3: Flow of Selection Process

Potentially relevant review publicatons re-trieved in the literature search in top journals
n = 187
Potentially relevant review publications retrieved from references and citations of the above
n = 32
Total   n = 219

Review publications advanced to Full-text screening
n = 219

Publications in the review of reviews
Final   n = 78

Excluded at the full-text screening when article does not…
- …assess at least one research pro-cess-oriented step pertaining to cross-cultural research studies.
- …track the development of re-search practices in either market-ing, management, and/ or organi-zational psychology.
n = 141

Figure 4: Identified Review Publications and Time Spans covered
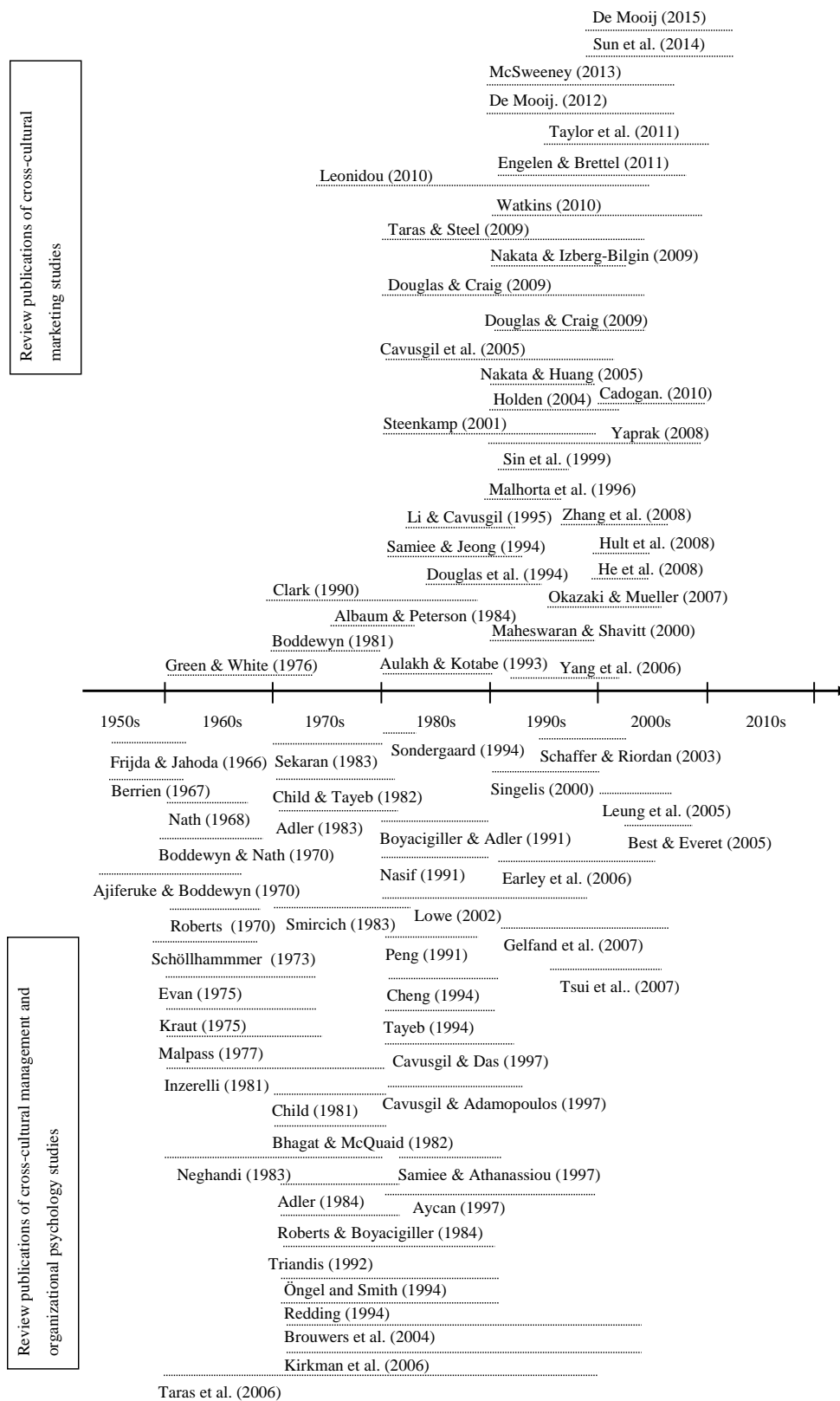
3.4 Strategies used for Coding and Data Analysis

The approach to analyzing the development of research practices in the field was inspired by Wolfswinkel, Furtmueller & Wilderom's (2013) paper on using Grounded Theory, originally advanced by Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998), as a method for conducting a systematic literature review. As argued by Wolfswinkel et al. (2013: 46) Grounded Theory allows for the systematic identification of assessments in review publications. This approach *"enables the key concepts to surface, instead of being deductively derived beforehand; they emerge during the analytical process of substantive inquiry" (47).* This approach matched the evolutionary nature of scientific discourse in review publications well. Instead of examining the literature on a pre-defined set of research process-oriented steps, this study focused on evolving themes of discussion. A cursory reading of the available reviews at the very beginning of the study revealed that both the research process-related challenges and the scientific terminology assessing these issues have evolved in a step-by-step manner over the last six decades. This gradual development made it a challenging task to identify, organize, and classify assessments of steps in the research process into thematic groups in the research process. The themes developed and reported in chapter 4 were thus, derived inductively from content analysis of the literature. The inductive coding procedure was important in tracking the development of research practices. Chapter 4 discusses the indentified themes pertaining to the core concerns, arguments, perspectives, and evaluations of the field's development manifested in the examined review publications.

Coding followed the three stages described by Grounded Theory, referring to the procedures for open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Birks & Mills, 2015; Charmaz, 2014). These coding procedures constitute the systematic and interlinked analytical process that was applied to differentiate, integrate, and distinguish the assessments made in review publications. To facilitate the systematic examination of the

vast amount of information within the sample of 78 reviews, the qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA[19] was applied[1]. The tool-supported coding procedure of the textual data assisted the solid and rigorous coding procedures suggested by the Grounded Theory Approach by helping to maintain a constant and time-saving comparison of the information on the field's development in reviews (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Sinkovics & Ghauri, 2008; Sinkovics, Penz & G., 2005). The following subsections explain in greater detail how Grounded Theory was utilized in this study.

3.4.1 Open Coding

The coding process started by utilizing the open coding technique. First, each review in the data set was examined in order to identify passages in the text assessing the state of cross-cultural research practices. "In vivo codes" labels were assigned to each identified assessment using MAXQDA[19]. These labels reflect the original word choice in the review publications. The advantage was that the assigned labels were not de-contextualized but rather embedded in the respective review context. The risk of misrepresenting authors' ideas was limited by the application of the open coding procedure. The aim of the open coding procedure was to generate thematic groupings of research process-oriented steps. Thematic groupings are described by Charmaz (2014) as higher-order, core, or key categories.

The initial codes were provisional, comparative, and grounded in data (Charmaz, 2014). By constantly comparing the identified assessments the initial codes were if necessary re-named, re-organized, broken up into different codes, or merged into one higher-order code. The derived set of thematic groupings pertaining to research process-oriented issues had to be mutually exclusive.

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[1]MAXQDA is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software that aids the coding of data. It also offers a variety of retrieval functions which help to structure a vast amount of information and provide immediate and fast access to the coded data. An overview of the software's functions can be found on the website of the program www.maxqda.com.

3.4.2 Axial Coding

After the phase of open coding, axial coding was applied, which describes the process of further encapsulating thematic groupings. The aim of this coding step is to further specify categories, define their properties, dimensions and sub-dimensions. Through systematic inter-text and intra-text comparison, sub-categories of the previously identified codes were identified. First, comparisons were conducted within each review (intra-text analysis). This made it possible to examine the applicability of the thematic groupings. Second, the thematic groupings were triangulated across the total sample of review publications (inter-text analysis) to identify all sub-categories belonging to a particular thematic group. The aim was to check and examine the consistency and robustness of the assigned thematic groupings and sub-categories.

3.4.3 Selective Coding

The last step in the coding procedure was selective coding, which aims to refine and integrate the groupings identified in the previous two steps. In this way, more refined and nuanced codes were gradually developed and stages of development and areas of persistent problems identified. This iterative process continued until no further changes in the coding scheme were necessary and all the relevant and identified text passages could be ascribed to specific, mutually exclusive codes.

During the process, it became clear that the assigned thematic groupings had to be refined, classified and synthesized to better capture their relationship with the other groupings in terms of research process-oriented steps (see argumentation Chapter 4.3 and Chapter 4.4). Moreover, the coded material was closely compared as regards stages of progress, and areas of persistent problems. Such meta-insights into the development of research process-oriented steps began to emerge from the data in a step-like manner, in response to the review questions formulated in Section 1.2. As noted by

Wolfswinkel et al. (2013: 51) *"distilling […] meta-insights about an area can be seen as a largely differentiating abstraction step, requiring a reviewer's analytical and creative skills when reading, understanding and analyzing in order to capture the knowledge to date. The ultimate goal […] is to identify a set of categories or a bird's eye image of the study's findings […]."*A detailed picture thus emerged of how research process issues have developed over time. The constant comparison made it possible to recognize interrelationships of procedural issues and likewise permitted a more efficient demarcation of development stages and areas of persistent problems (see Chapter 4).

In summary, open coding is the analytical process of generating categories with a higher-abstraction level. Axial coding is the further development of categories, relating them to their possible sub-categories. The selective coding process helps to refine and integrate findings to derive meta-insights (here stages of development and areas of perennial problems). These coding steps allow the literature assessments to be continuously compared, related and linked to each other and to the review publications studied. This interwoven analytic process of going back and forth between reviews, assessments, thematic groupings, and sub-categories continued until "data saturation" occurred. Data saturation means that no new interesting links (interrelationships, development stages, areas of persistent problems) emerged in the review process (cf. Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Data saturation is mandatory for a convincing and representative review (Wolfswinkel, 2013).

3.4.4   Using Memos along the Coding Process

As noted by Charmaz (2014) and Strauss and Corbin (1990) memo-writing constitutes a fundamental element in a grounded theory approach. Memo-writing refers to the systematic process of capturing the researcher's ideas, thoughts and questions during the analysis. In this study memo-writing helped to structure the vast number of

assessments, viewpoints, and suggestions included in review publications across the last six decades. The memos supported development of the detailed facets of research process-oriented steps, aided understanding of the interrelationships between single steps, and fostered awareness of stages of progress and areas of perennial problems. In this study, memos were written in tables during coding (see for example Table 3).

Table 3 provides an example of the coding procedure. The table contains an excerpt of the coding process with regard to text passages assessing the treatment of culture in empirical cross-cultural studies.The first reading identified several passages, each evaluating how culture was specified in cross-cultural research studies. While re-reading and comparing these passages, different ways to conceptualize and operationalize culture were distinguished and stages of development identified.

Table 3: Example of Tables developed during the Coding Procedure

Selected text passage referring the thematic group "treatment of culture"	Memos, notes, thoughts	Developed Code	Stage of development
"[Researchers] view culture as a vague entity, caste it as their independent variable, and forget it. Consequently, they do not know what aspects make up the domain culture, how they can be expected to influence anything else, or how various cultural groups in their samples differ. Culture is still a reality to be explained and as such cannot yet explain other realities." Roberts (1970: 330) *"Researchers recognize that a variable called culture exerts some influence on organizations, but do not know exactly what culture is. This concern must be examined more closely."* Sekaran (1983: 66)	# Culture is a black box # Culture is not conceptualized and operationalized # It is not possible to specify which facets of culture influence substantive phenomena # Stereotypical assumptions about culture # Only post-hoc explanations possible	Culture as a residual variable (Nation as a proxy for culture)	**1960s – 1980s** **Pioneering research interest in the concept of culture in management and marketing research**
"Most of the studies [...] used little, but Hofstede's (1980) work has provided a genuine advance [...]. [Cross-Cultural Research] is more likely to be productive when it focuses on specific dimensions of cultural variation, such as those uncovered by Hofstede, than when global variables such as culture or country are employed." Triandis (1994: 126) *"It is necessary to be selective in using the appropriate definition of culture for cross-cultural management studies. One of the more useful definitions may be to rely on the concept of value orientation [...]"* Neghandi (1983: 18)	# Hofstede put forth a tractable conceptualization of culture # Hofstede's framework provides a mechanism for developing hypotheses about the relationship between culture and behavioral outcomes # Positivist view of culture	Culture specified and measured as a set of value dimensions	**1970s – 1980s** **Turning the spotlight on values as the central core of culture**
"The indirect method uses data from existing research and assigns country scores on cultural dimensions to the sample under consideration (indirect value inference). Most of the studies that build upon the dimensions and country classifications of Hofstede (2001) use the indirect method; in fact, 80% of all the cross-cultural marketing studies that are part of the current study assess national culture on the basis of indirect value inference." Engelen & Brettel (2011: 521)	# Hofstede made his measures about national value differences available to researchers # Instead of measuring culture directly,	Indirect value-inference	**Early 1990s – to date** **Proliferation of the Hofstedean paradigm**

Table 3: Continued

"Very few studies reviewed here actually measured the culture construct. While few studies used cultural constructs in forming hypotheses, even fewer measured the dimensions at the individual level […]."Zhang et al. (2008: 221)	researchers extrapolated Hofstede's value index to the samples surveyed. # The indirect value inference has become the dominant approach		
"[…] the ontological assumptions of culture as cognitive, bounded, immutable, coherent, and unified—assumptions held of culture by Hofstede, Triandis, and Hall and [are] descriptive of culture as framed in global marketing" Nakata & Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 71, 72)	# Review publications were critical of the constraints of the Hofstede paradigm	Ontological assumptions about culture	**Early 2000s – to date** **Challenging the ontological and epistemological assumptions about culture**

4   Tracking the Development of Cross-Cultural Research Practices

"Science [...] is made up of mistakes, but they are mistakes which it is useful to make, because they lead little by little to the truth."
(Verne & Butcher, Journey to the Center of the Earth, (1998, 1992))

Before analyzing the evolutionary development of the theoretical foundation of cross-cultural research, I would like to express my appreciation of and gratitude to the scholars who conducted empirical research in this demanding field of scientific inquiry, which is characterized by countless hurdles in the research process. My analysis of the research process is not intended to underestimate the enormous value and impact of published cross-cultural research studies. Instead, in the sense of the above quote taken from Verne & Butcher (1998), I have set out to map the development of research practices, and to outline possible directions in which persistent problem areas may be overcome (see Chapter 5).

Figure 5 illustrates the range of research process-oriented steps identified in review publications through the analytic process described in the previous section. This overview provides a visual aid to the structure and sequence of my discussion of results in this chapter. Specifically, the content analysis identified stages of progress and areas of persistent problems in each successive step of the research process. The steps were classified in the following seven higher order categories, each consisting of further sub-categories (as depicted in figure 5):

- *Procedural Step 1: Research strategies (see Section 4.1 and 5.1)*
- *Procedural Step 2: Structure of the research team (see Section 4.2 and 5.2)*
- *Procedural Step 3: Theoretical foundation (see Section 4.3 and 5.3)*
- *Procedural Step 4: Specification of culture (see Section 4.4 and 5.4)*
- *Procedural Step 5: Research instrument design (see Section 4.5, 5.5, and 5.7)*
- *Procedural Step 6: Sampling (see Section 4.6 and 5.6)*
- *Procedural Step 7: Data handling and analysis (see Section 4.7 and 5.7)*

These seven seminal steps in the cross-cultural research process outline the structure of the research report on the evolution of research practices in this chapter. In addition, the discussion in Chapter 5 on the future directions suggested in the analyzed literature is also structured according to procedural steps outlined above. This seven-step framework is a simplification of what is, in reality, a highly interrelated and interdependent process. The specific sequence of procedural steps was developed during the analysis process. The main aim was to develop a framework that clearly arranged the procedural steps, which in research reality rather mesh together, like the teeth of gear wheels. Wherever possible, the interconnectedness of procedures and methods is highlighted and their consequences and implications for steps carried out at earlier or later stages are discussed. Moreover, as it will become evident in the succeeding discussion, the cross-cultural research process itself is not linear, but rather ipsative.

Procedural Step 1 focuses on the basic set of beliefs that guide researchers through the research process. The paradigmatic positioning of a cross-cultural research study influences research design choices (e.g., the qualitative versus quantitative approach, instrument design, sampling choices, data analysis etc.). It was thus decided that the report should begin with this particular issue as it influences and determines the research steps that follow.

Procedural Step 2 concerns how a cross-cultural research project is organized. It seemed reasonable that at the beginning of a research project, the scholars involved decide whether researchers of one culture dominate the decisions made during the research process or whether the development of the research design is decentralized through cross-cultural collaboration among researchers.

Procedural Step 3 involves the theoretical foundation of a cross-cultural research project. Specifically, this important step describes the theoretical approaches used by empirical researchers to understand, test, and explain the relationship between culture and behavioural phenomena. It was decided to discuss theoretical issues at the beginning of the research report, as the content analysis showed that the theoretical assump-

tions made by researchers influence (or should influence) decisions related to the specification of culture, research instrument design, and sampling as well as data handling and analysis (see in particular Sections 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7 for an in-depth discussion on the interrelatedness of these procedural steps).

Procedural Step 4 deals with the evolutionary development of the conceptualization and measurement of culture as a construct, which has been recognized as the principal explanatory variable in cross-cultural research. This step is highly interwoven with the previous one, since ideally the specification of culture is theoretically driven by the scope and nature of the developed hypothesis (see Sections 4.4 and 5.4 for an in-depth discussion of the interrelatedness of the theoretical foundation and specification of culture). For that reason it was decided to discuss the development of cross-cultural research practices with regard to theoretical issues beforehand.

Procedural Step 5 discusses the development of the research instrument design. This stage constitutes a reasonable next step, as concepts (i.e. concepts at both the cultural level and substantive level; see Section 4.3 for a definition of these terms) are usually specified and operationalized in accordance with the previously developed theoretical framework.

Procedural Step 6 involves the sampling of cultures and respondents which can only be done when the theoretical framework and its concepts are operationalized. Moreover, in the ideal case, sampling choices should be aligned to the theoretical foundation of a study (see Section 4.6 and 5.6).

Procedural Step 7 comprises the analysis of data collected across cultures. Empirical data can only be collected when the research design is in place. Hence, it makes sense to discuss the evolutionary development of approaches to data analysis at the end of both Chapter 4 and 5.

Figure 5: Overview of Identified Research Process-Oriented Steps

Research process-oriented issues

1 Research Strategies
- Etic Approach
- Positivism
- Pseudo-etic Approach
- Emic Approach
- Interpretavism
- Combined emic-etic approach
- Paradigm interplay

2 Structure of the research team
- Centralized vs. decentralized organization
- Monocultural vs. multicultural teams

3 Theoretical foundation
- Theoretical foundation of the substantive level
  - Descriptive Research
  - Testing Empirical Relationships
- Linkage between cultural and substantive level (epistemological approach)
  - Post-hoc & pre-hoc explanations
  - Theory driven studies (explicit a-priori predictions)
  - Positioning of culture in relation to other constructs
    - Independent construct
    - Moderator
    - Dependent construct
- Level of theorizing (one-level vs. multi-level theorizing)
- Attention to alternative explanations

7 Data analytical steps
- Analytical techniques used (level of sophistication)
  - Descriptive
  - Positivist techniques
    - Complex multivariate techniques
  - Interpretative techniques
- Testing within-group homogeneity and between-group variability
- Testing the multi-level nature of cultural phenomena (multi-level modeling)
- Testing alternative explanations

6 Sampling
- Selection of Cultures
  - Cultural level
    - Number of Cultures
  - Sample frame representativeness
    - Sample frame comparability
  - Respondents level
    - Nature of the sample
    - Sample size

5 Research instrument design
- Construct equivalence
  - Functional equivalence
  - Conceptual equivalence
  - Category equivalence
- Measure equivalence
  - Translation equivalence
  - Calibration equivalence
  - Metric equivalence

4 Specification of culture
- Conceptualizing culture
  - Positivistic conceptualization
  - Interpretative conceptualization
    - Mental or cognitive cultural facets such as values, norms, attitudes (measurable through a psychometric approach)
    - Material or social artefacts (observable through ethnological descriptions)
- Operationalizing culture
  - Use of proxies
  - Direct value-inference
  - Indirect value-inference
- Level of conceptualization/ measurement
  - Individual
  - Group (various subgroup combinations)
    - National
    - Regional (geographical groupings, trade unions etc.)
    - World culture
- Theoretical foundation of the cultural level (ontological traits of culture)
  - Traditional assumptions
    - Culture as cognition
    - Culture as bounded
    - Culture as immutable
    - Culture as coherent and unified
  - Competing logics
    - Culture as cognitive & non-cognitive
    - Culture as unbounded
    - Culture as labile
    - Culture as interminate fragmented

4.1 Research Strategies – Paradigmatic Positioning of Cross-Cultural Research

The paradigmatic positioning of studies refers to the basic set of beliefs that guide researchers through the research process. Denzin and Lincoln (2011; Meredith, 1964) noted that paradigms *"deal with first principles, or ultimates. They are human constructions. They define the 'worldview of the researcher."* In essence, the paradigmatic positioning of a cross-cultural research study influences research design choices (e.g., the qualitiative versus quantitative approach, instrument design, sampling choices, data analysis etc.). It was thus decided that Chapter 4 should begin with this particular issue as it influences and determines the research steps that follow.

Soon after the publication of the first empirical articles in the 1960s, reviews started analyzing and assessing the research perspectives on cultural phenomena and the approaches chosen by researchers to construct theories, models, concepts, and measurement instruments for cross-cultural research purposes. To facilitate the paradigmatic identification of research articles, Triandis, Malpass and Davidson (1973b) introduced a simplified typology of two research approaches, namely etic and emic views on cultural phenomena. It is important to refer to this initial publication because these two terms dominated the debate on the field's paradigmatic positioning (see Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2). Subsequent reviews continued to use these terms to assess and discuss the perspectives, methodologies and techniques employed to examine the relationship between culture and human behavior. Table 4 provides an overview of the coding scheme developed to capture the debate on the field's approaches to conducting cross-cultural research.

Table 4: Overview of Coding Scheme pertaining to Research Approaches in Cross-Cultural Research

Code (research process issue)	Code definition	Example of assessment
	Textpassages assessing whether empirical articles…	
Etic approach	…studied a phenomenon in order to construct a universal law that can identify commonalities and differences across cultures using equivalent concepts, metrics, or inidcators (comparative research orientation). Assessments described research as employing quantitative, positivist, and universalist research approaches.	*"[…] virtually all of the studies (94%) were comparative and were conductedwith an etic approach." (Schaffer & Riordan, 2003: 173)*
Emic approach	…studied a phenomenon from a culture-specific perspective (uni-cultural research orientation). Assessments described research as employing qualitative, interpretive, and indigenous research approaches.	*"...the etic approach has dominated the field of crosscultural studies and it was not until the 2000's that the emic approach started to gain popularity again." (Taras et al., 2009: 362)*
Pseudo (or imposed) etic approach	…conducted research based on the untested assumption of methodological and theoretical universalism at the cost of paying attention to cultural-specific insights. Assessments described research as employing quantitative, positivist, and universalist research approaches	*"Consumer research is largely made in the in the USA. Concepts and instruments have been developed in the United States and not in the "other" culture of the cross-cultural study. This say introduce "ethnocentrism" in the type of questions we address, the concepts we employ, and the explanations we give of the results." (Raaij, 1978: 693)*
Combined emic-etic approach (or derived etic)	…embodied both etic and emic approaches. First emic knowledge (through observation and/or participation, etc.) about all cultures under study is attained. In a next step, truly etic theoretical assumptions, measures and interpretations are developed by identifying common features of the focal phenomenon. Assessments described research as employing both a quantitative, positivist, and universalist research approaches as well as qualitative, interpretive, and indigenous research approaches.	*"Of the 635 articles that proved codable, 591 (93%) were coded as imposed etic. […] Just 7 studies (1 %) were coded as derived etic. In one of these, a study was made of behavioral decision making in Hong Kong and the United States. This went on to show that the models that had been derived from each set of data were applicable within both locations." (Öngel & Smith, 1994: 362)*

The terms emic and etic were originally used by Pike (1967) to differentiate between two approaches to the study of linguistic sounds, referred to as phonemics and phonetics. The phonetic approach investigates the universal sounds of human language. Hence, when studying phonetic sounds, a researcher does not consider the as-

sociated meaning in a particular language. A phonemic approach on the other hand, corresponds to the study of sounds by examining the meaning-bearing roles that are unique to a specific culture (cf. Berry et al., 1992: 232).

Triandis et al. (1973b) used these two psycholinguistic terms to distinguish culturally specific (emic) and universal (etic) research perspectives in cross-cultural research. An etic research perspective on cultural phenomena usually accompanies a quantitative, positivist, and universalist research approach, whereas an emic view is usually complements a qualitative, interpretive, and indigenous research strategy (Douglas & Craig, 2006; Boehnke et al., 2014; Polsa, 2013; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003). In addition, Davidson, Jaccard, Triandis, Morales and Diaz-Guerrero (1976: 2) distinguished a third approach, described as pseudo etic:

> *Davidson et al. (1976: 2): "According to this approach, emic measures (usually developed in the United States or Canada) are simply assumed to be etic. That is, instruments composed of items reflecting western conditions are translated and used in other cultures with little regard for the reliability or validity of the instrument in the new culture. Mean differences on these instruments are assumed to represent cultural differences with regard to the trait or process that the instrument purports to measure. Rarely, if ever, does this approach yield fruitful results."*

A final approach referred to combined emic-etic studies. This type of approach begins a cross-cultural research project by identifying emic knowledge through observation, participation, and other ethnographic techniques in each of the cultures under study.

The following subsections aim to map assessments with regard to the approaches chosen in empirical research articles to study cultural phenomena during the past sixty years. The aim is to track the development of this particular issue and synthesize the discussion it generated in review publications.

4.1.1   The Dominance of the Etic Paradigm (1960s – to date)

Review publications of the 1960s and 1970s, observed that pioneering studies in cross-cultural marketing, management and organizational psychology followed the research practices of mainstream psychology while conducting cross-cultural analysis. As noted by Nath (1969), the origin of cross-cultural research in these disciplines can be traced back to the discipline of experimental, quantitative psychology. Researchers interested in cross-cultural research were originally trained in psychology, a field of scientific inquiry traditionally based on quantitative methods and techniques for coming to terms with social reality. Nath noted that cross-cultural psychologists aimed to validate psychological research findings outside North American and European contextual settings by comparing data obtained in both these settings with data from other contexts:

> Nath (1968: 47): "In the areas of management, there are some research centers in the United States which conduct […] surveys on a continuing basis, but it is only recently that the survey method has been used in cross-cultural research. Most of this work has been a result of the desire on the part of some United States scholars to test the validity of their results in other cultures."

Commenting on the epistemological perspectives in research on culture and its relationships to behavior, Berrien (1967: 34) differentiated between the psychological, universalist and the anthropological, culture-specifc perspective. He stressed each field's different research purposes, which, in his opinion, required different research strategies:

> Berrien (1967: 34): "[…] the psychologist is interested in the dynamic behavior rather than the artifacts of a culture and from the character of this behavioral interplay, he wishes to infer something about the fundamental "subjective" basis for it. The anthropologist may infer from art, objects or tools something about the nature of those who produced the objects. The psychologist takes behavior, or self-descriptions of behavior, as his datum and attempts to infer the intentions, values or motives of the behavior. While both the ethnographers and the psychologists are interested in making generalizable inferences about the underlying bases of their observations, the latter are perhaps more con-

cerned with discovering not only how one national group differs from another, but also their communalities in terms of the fundamental psychological processes including those which are responses to the social milieu."

Reviews assessing empirical research in the 1970s and 1980s reported that cross-cultural management and organizational psychology literature (Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982: 678; Kraut, 1975: 540) as well as marketing studies (Albaum & Peterson, 1984: 166-167; Boddewyn & Nath, 1970: 62) favoured placing their studies in an etic paradigm. These reviews noted that an increasing number of studies utilized quantitative self-administered surveys to study, explore, and verify constructs or phenomena originally developed in the United States. Adler (1983a: 226) explained this research trend as reflecting the leading position of North American universities in the development of management theory, research, and practice. Sekaran (1983: 66) argued that following the tradition of quantitative psychological research was a sign of progress as, in this way, differences and similarities in management practices and employee behavior across cultures could be identified:

> *Sekaran (1983: 66): "The trend towards increasing collection of quantitative data by researchers who have moved away from impressionistic studies signals great progress for the future."*

Inzerilli (1980: 5) described the primary epistemological orientation of cross-cultural management researchers in the 1970s as *"an empirical, positivistic, intellectual tradition"* which led to *"a universalist and determinist orientation in the analysis of organizations"*. Hence, the majority of published cross-cultural management studies viewed organizational relationships as general and universal laws independent of the social context. This tendency dominates empirical cross-cultural research **to this day**. The approaches to knowledge, including metaphysical assumptions about culture, as well as methodologies and techniques for examining the relationship between culture and human behavior, have been deeply entrenched in universalist research perspectives on phenomena and positivist approaches (see top right square in Figure 6). This state of paradigmatic positioning was consistently documented in reviews examining the

cross-cultural management and organizational psychology literature (Tayeb, 1994: 435; Samiee & Athanassiou, 1998: 81; Taras et al., 2009: 365), as well as marketing publications (Leonidou, Barnes, Spyropoulou & Katsikeas, 2010: 500; Nakata & Huang, 2005: 617; Sin, Cheung & Lee, 1999: 83; Sin et al. 1999: 83; Watkins, 2010: 695).

Figure 6: The Dominance of the Etic Paradigm
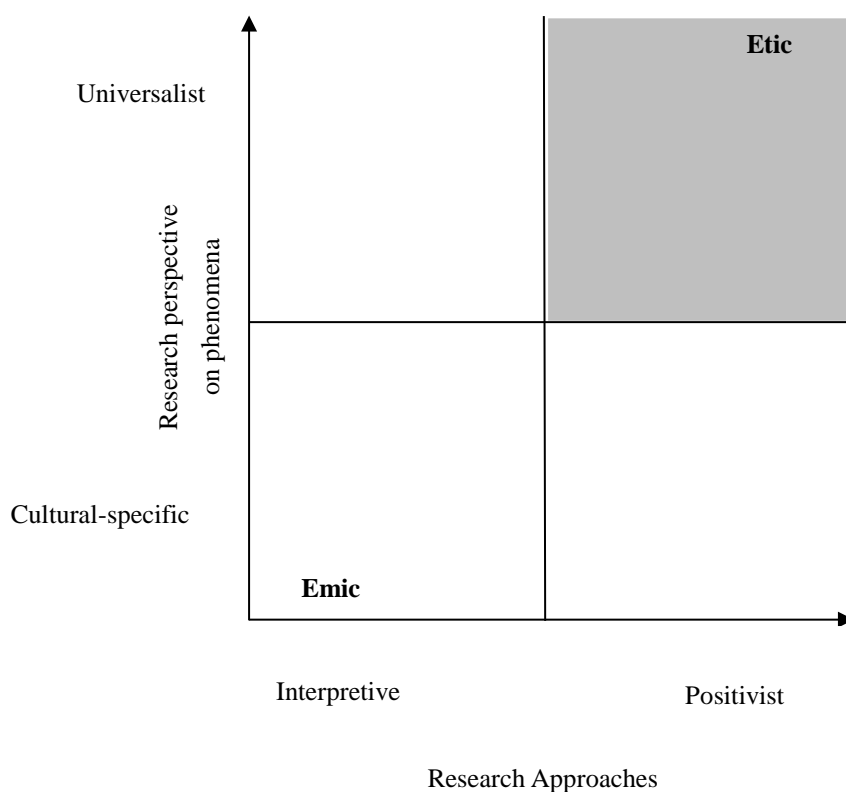
Schaffer & Riordan (2003: 174) reported that, in their review of 210 cross-cultural research studies published between 1995 and 2001, *"virtually all of the studies (94%) were comparative and were conducted with an etic approach […] only 6% were emic in orientation."* In fact, all procedural research steps including theory development, conceptualization of constructs (see Section 4.3), instrument design (see Section 4.4), sampling choices (see Section 4.6), and analytical procedures (see Section 4.7)

were guided by this paradigmatic positioning, which was described by Lowe (2002: 22) as a *"functionalist paradigmatic agenda"*.

The next section discusses the criticism expressed in reponse to the dominance of the etic perspective.

4.1.2   The Persistent Problem of Ethnocentrism (1960 – to date)

The section above showed that cross-cultural research in marketing, management, and organizational psychology was described as being predominantly characterized by an etic research paradigm. However, already **the field's early reviews** denounced the etic research orientation to comparing cultures as being inappropriately used. The criticism referred to the comparison of different cultures by utilizing theories, concepts, constructs, and measures developed in one specific cultural context, and assuming that the salience of anticipated relationships and the meaning of concepts and measures are similarly understood by respondents across cultural settings. As noted by Roberts (1970: 334), the attempt to study other cultures based on such positivist research approaches was deceptive. She pointed out that the pioneering studies of the field were flawed by an ethnocentric approach to the study of other cultures, which compromised the validity, reliability and psychometric quality of the obtained results. Triandis et al.(1973b) referred to these shortcomings as pseudo etic:

> *Triandis et al.(1973b): "A major problem with much cross-cultural psychological work is that it utilizes a pseudo etic approach, i.e. emic measures (usually made in the USA) are assumed to be etic. Instruments based on American theories and items reflecting American conditions are simply translated and used in other cultures."*

In a similar vein, Malpass (1977:1072) and Raaij (1978: 694) deplored the collection of quantitative data through research programs developed mainly in North American or Western European contextual settings. They criticized the fact that researchers overlooked and misinterpreted subtle elements of phenomena investigated in distant, non-Western cultures, and pointed out that replication studies failed to provide an appropri-

ate method for coming to terms with reality but were rather manifestations of ethno-centrism in research.

> *Raaij (1978: 694): "To extract parts from the wholes, compare them (out of context) with parts extracted from other cultures, and then conclude that one has found cross-cultural similarities or differences does gross injustice to social reality."*

> *Malpass (1977:1072): "[…] differences between people are only interpretable against a background of considerable similarity. As a consequence, if differences are great between the subject and the investigator, and if the extent of these differences is unknown, the differences we see in the data will be uninterpretable. Causal attribution of differences may be confounded by many alternative explanations of which we are ignorant and which we therefore fail to seek and observe."*

According to Triandis (1976: 155) the challenge of collecting comparable data and to derive meaningful interpretations, distinguishes cross-cultural research from classic experimental designs in domestic non-comparative research:

> *Triandis (1976: 155): "In our classic methodology we randomly assign subjects to experimental and control groups. We manipulate an independent variable and observe some dependent variable. Here comparison has few problems. However, once we leave this neat design, we enter into areas where research may be methodologically indefensible […]"*

As a remedy, and in order to derive a more nuanced, universally applicable and valid understanding of cross-cultural differences and similarities, review publications unambiguously urged researchers to apply qualitative approaches (see Chapter 5.1 for a discussion of possible directions). For instance, Bhagat and McQuaid (1982: 677), Peng, Peterson, and Shyi (1991: 103), and Sekaran (1983: 65), stressed the need to combine etic and emic perspectives. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was deemed to offer more options to develop a consistent, integrated, and unified theory of culture and its relationship to behavior:

> *Bhagat and McQuaid (1982: 677):"To understand the behavior of people in an unfamiliar cultural setting, the researcher must know the context of the behavior as well as the sociocultural or culture-specific (i.e., emic) antecedents of the behavior."*

> *Peng et al. (1991: 103) "a non-quantitative component would seem to be a tremendous aid to the quantitative methods reflected in most international management re-*

> *search…Procedures […] which recognize the inherent interrelatedness of etic and emic analysis seem to us to be useful."*

> *Sekaran (1983: 65) "…idiographic research (also known as the emic approach) could become a rich potential source for understanding the nomothetic (also referred to as the etic) underpinnings in cross-cultural research – that is, formulating universalistic theories and hypotheses which can be tested."*

The leading scholars in the field therefore suggested that the positivist approach, with its emphasis on rigorous quantitative methods, measurement, precision, and internal and external validity could benefit from qualitative approaches to accommodate biases. Recognizing and acknowledging the potential of a combination of etic and emic approaches (derived etic), Adler (1983: 231) argued that changing the paradigmatic positioning of cross-cultural research was more than timely. However, by referring to Kuhn (1962), she anticipated that such a change in the paradigmatic positioning of cross-cultural research would be an extremely difficult endeavor:

> *Adler (1983: 231): "Kuhn (1962) suggested that it is very difficult for the scientific community to give up a cherished paradigm. Growing internationalism demands that a narrow domestic paradigm be replaced with one that can encompass the diversity of a global perspective."*

Despite the clearly addressed criticism and suggestions for deriving etic approaches, the research community was not responsive to the flaws discussed or the unequivocal pleas to change research strategies. As foreseen by Adler, subsequent **reviews examining the literature in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s** found no evidence of renunciation of the cherished positivist paradigm and saw that the application of qualitative methods to cross-cultural research was a neglected topic (Douglas & Craig, 2006: 3; Douglas, Morrin & Craig, 1994: 292; Peng et al., 1991: 98; Redding, 1994: 326; Samiee & Jeong, 1994: 212; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003: 172; Tsui et al., 2007: 466; Watkins, 2010: 701). For example, Öngel and Smith (1994: 48) showed that researchers chose between etic and emic approaches but did not use both paradigms in an integrated way:

> *Öngel and Smith (1994: 48): "Of the 635 articles […] 591 (93%) were coded as imposed etic. [or pseudo etic]. Another 37 studies (6%) were coded as emic. […] Just 7 studies (1*

%) were coded as derived etic. […] The scarcity of studies coded as derived etic suggests that such methods have yet to find their place in cross-cultural psychology."

The above citation exemplifies the two epistemological and methodological camps, which did not engage in combined research efforts. Instead, research studies on culture followed a quantitative, positivist, universalist, etic approach. In fact, reviewers identified an almost insurmountable controversy between etic research strategies, as the cherished paradigm, and an emic positioning. Interpretive and indigenous approaches to studying the role of culture in management decision-making styles and in employee and consumer behavior were mostly neglected, as empirical researchers viewed emic and etic approaches as rigid extremes on a continuum, ignoring any possibility of using them as complementary approaches (Boehnke et al., 2014; Romani, Primecz and Topcu, 2011). In this sense, Bartholomew and Brown (2012: 178) noted *"when push comes to shove, psychologists are often uneasy to depart from the traditional empirical world."* Lowe (2002: 23) described the dominance of the etic paradigm best in his metaphorical review of "Cultural Shadows of Cross-Cultural Research":

> *Lowe (2002: 23): "Cross-cultural study appears to be imprisoned by its own self-produced Plato's cave. Cross-cultural researchers are shackled to the walls of a psychic prison by their methodological, epistemological and ontological assumption. Their interpretation of the shadows on the wall of their cave dwelling reflects a Western philosophical inheritance of Enlightenment, rationalism and logical empiricism. They are trapped in this prison that is formed from a Western cultural and philosophical inheritance."*

In summary, over the last 50 years, review publications repeatedly criticized the dominance of the "pseudo etic" approach to cross-cultural research. They consistently deplored the fact that theories, conceptual frameworks, measurement instruments, and research methods were applied in diverse cultural settings without appropriate validation (see Figure 7). Thus, cross-cultural research was censured as measuring and comparing behavior out of context. Researchers assumed methodological and theoretical

universalism without appropriate validation, while simultaneously neglecting specific cultural elements.

Figure 7: Pseudo Etic Research Approaches

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │              Culture A                    │
                    │                                           │
                    │ Researcher developes research design and │
                    │      transfers it to other cultures       │
                    │      for comparative research purposes.   │
                    └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
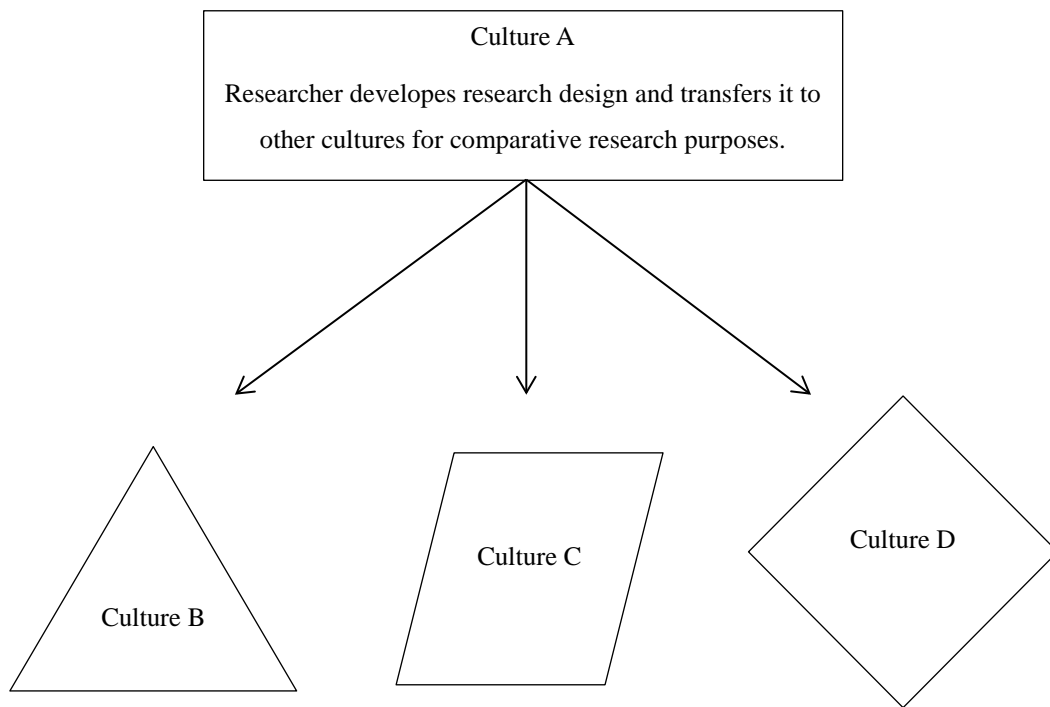
The following sections discuss, among other issues, the direct consequences of pseudo etic approaches, evoking problems in organizing the research process (see Section 4.2), theorizing (see Section 4.3), conceptualizing and operationalizing culture (see Section 4.4), as well as bias in the applied measurement instruments (see Section 4.5), sampling choices made (see Section 4.6), and in data analysis (see Section 4.7).

4.2 Structure of the Research Team – Ignoring the Benefits of Cross-Cultural Research Collaboration (1960 – to date)

The previous sections outlined the dominance of pseudo etic approaches in cross-cultural research during the past six decades. Rather than developing truly universal research designs, the preponderance of researchers replicated previous research projects in other cultures. Consequently, review publications have repeatedly criticized the many ethnocentric and value-laden cultural biases and assumptions characteristic of published cross-cultural studies. This section focuses on a related issue, which concerns how a cross-cultural research project is organized. The content analysis identified several text passages assessing, whether cross-cultural researchers centralized (e.g. researchers of one culture dominate the decisions made during the research process) or decentralized (e.g., the research design is developed through a cross-cultural collaboration among researchers) the design of their studies.

Accordingly, this section aims to track developments with regard to the extent and role of collaborative research teams in cross-cultural research studies. Table 5 provides an overview of the codes developed to structure and synthesize this particular issue.

Table 5: Overview of the Coding Scheme pertaining to the Use of Research Teams

Code (research process issue)	Code definition	Example of assessment
	Text passages assessing whether...	
Monocultural research teams or cross-cultural collaboration used to facilitate data collection	… empirical studies were designed and conducted by scholars originating from only one culture. Assessments assigned to this code also referred to observations describing the use of cross-cultural teams to collect data, while the design of the research project is centralized.	*"...there is a lack of a network of indigenous scholars from other cultures who could systematically investigate and convincingly demonstrate culturally unique findings. In this model, U.S. scholars tend to recruit foreign scholars mainly for data collection purposes" Maheswaran & Shavitt (2000, 59)*
Cross-cultural research teams (decentralized organization and design of the research project)	...empirical studies were designed and conducted by scholars from the cultures under investigation.	*"Against the background of Hofstede's criticism that the GLOBE work represents a US-centric approach, though this claim seems somewhat untenable given the decentering and multiparty assessments undertaken by the GLOBE team, I am aware of no other study having achieved this level of collaboration across researchers and regions." Early (2009: 31)*

Since the field's early years, reviews have repeatedly lamented the strong dominance of US-and Europe-based researchers working mostly in single-country teams when conducting cross-cultural research (Albaum & Peterson, 1984: 171; Boddewyn & Nath, 1970: 7; Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982: 679; Malpass, 1977: 1073; Roberts & Boyacigiller, 1984: 428-429). Reviewers responded to the prevailing ethnocentrism in cross-cultural research by urging researchers to decentralize the research design by setting up cross-cultural research teams. Such teams were deemed an important coping mechanism that would help to increase cultural sensitivity when formulating theoretical assumptions and deciding on focal constructs and measurement instruments, and to combat hidden bias in the interpretations of cross-cultural similarities and differences (Boddewyn & Nath, 1970: 7; Malpass, 1977: 1073; Nath, 1969: 544). Collaboration among researchers who are native to the cultures under investigation was recommended as one additional way to handle the emic-etic dilemma. The rationale is that scholars are cultural experts who may be helpful in modifying theoretical frameworks and

scales, and in fostering interpretations from an indigenous point of view. Thus, collaboration between researchers from different cultures helps in taking cultural-context-specific features into consideration (Section 5.2 outlines possible directions).

In the 1980s and 1990s, Adler, 1984: 45), Cheng (1994: 167), and Maheswaran (2000: 59) did not report any progress in promoting more collaborative research efforts. In fact, they vehemently censored the extensive use and the actual role of research teams. They bemoaned that the few collaboratively conducted research studies were set up mainly to facilitate data collection across cultures, rather than enlisting the help of local researchers to *(a) define and operationalize culture, (b) determine whether a studied phenomenon is culturally specific or universal, (c) ensure that the outsider perspective of researchers does not introduce cultural bias in designing and conducting a study, (d) decide whether aspects of a study can be standardized across cultures or need to be adapted, and (e) identify cultural factors that potentially influence research variables and the interpretation of results.*

In the 2000s, the employment of collaborative cross-cultural research teams remained the exception rather than the rule (Engelen & Brettel, 2011: 497; Nakata & Huang, 2005: 614; Leonidou et al., 2010: 497). In consequence, these scholars bemoaned that the number of articles published by collaborative, cross-cultural teams was still too low, given the obvious and frequently highlighted benefits of collaboration. Single-country authorship was still the predominant mode:

> *Nakata (2005: 614): "[…] single-country authorship was the predominant mode, with almost four fifths (78%) of all articles written by researchers affiliated to institutions in one country."*

> *Leonidou et al. (2010: 497): "The vast majority (78.0 percent) of articles were written by authors situated in one country, while another fifth (19.0 percent) involved two countries. The participation of researchers from more than two countries was rare (about 3.0 percent of the total), although recently there has been some increase in the number of articles by authors from multiple countries. These findings are somewhat paradoxical, because one would expect more cross-national collaboration owing to the global perspective of the issues addressed."*

Engelen and Brettel, 2011: 517): "Single-country teams have written about two-thirds of all published articles, and multi-country teams have not changed significantly over the last two decades."

In summary, collaborative research efforts were uncommon. The dominance of researchers born, raised, and educated in Western countries introduced ethnocentrism and inhibited the acquisition of internal perspectives on the role, manifestation, and interpretation of phenomena in more distant cultures. Thus, ethnocentric tendencies and value-laden cultural biases were reported to be present in many of the published studies.

4.3 Theoretical Foundation – From Theoretical Infancy to Adolescence

In the course of the coding procedure, assessments of the theoretical approaches used to hypothesize the relationship between culture and behavior were identified. These assessments fall into five thematic groupings. The first group of assessments refers to the theoretical foundation of culture as an explanatory variable. The second group of assesments focuses on the theoretical foundation of the substantive level. This goup referred to text passages examining whether empirical research studies followed a descriptive research orientation or tested empirical relationships in phenomena of consumer behavior, employee behavior, and management decision styles. The third group of assessments is concerned with the theoretical foundation of the proclaimed interrelationship of culture and behavioral outcomes. The fourth group contains assessments examining the levels at which researchers theorized cultural effects on substantive phenomena. The last thematic group refers to text passages assessing whether empirical studies considered alternatives to culture as an explanatory variable. Table 6 provides an overview of the coding scheme, developed to structure and synthesize the debate on the field's theoretical foundation.

For reasons of conceptual clarity, it is important to define the term 'theory' before discussing the field's theoretical development in detail. Scholars have ascribed different meanings to the term, and no general agreement has been reached among researchers in behavioral sciences (e.g. Suddaby, 2014; Wright, 2015). Among the existing definitions, the one developed by Sutton and Staw (1995: 378) ´best matches the identified assessments of the field's theoretical development. Based on a synthesis of various scholarly attempts to circumscribe theory in social research, Sutton and Staw developed the following brief and useful definition of theory.

> *Sutton & Staw (1995: 378):"[…] theory is the answer to queries of why. Theory is about the connections among phenomena, a story about why acts, events, structure, and thoughts occur. Theory emphasizes the nature of causal relationships, identifying what comes first as well as the timing of such events."*

Table 6: Overview of Coding Scheme pertaining to Theoretical Issues in Cross-Cultural Research

Code (research process issue)	Code definition	Example of assessment
	Textpassages assessing whether empirical articles…	
Theoretical foundation of the cultural level	…used a theory-driven approach to conceptualize culture.	*"For theoretical grounding, marketing and advertising research has traditionally turned to the fields of psychology, sociology, and anthropology. We summarized the major cultural theories that have dominated cross-cultural advertising research to date, including Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions." Okazaki & Mueller (2007:514)*
Theoretical foundation of the substantive level	…investigated incidents and distributions of variables between cultures or examined and interpreted antecedent relationships in the light of established hypothesis.	*"In recent years an increasing percentage of the empirical studies in international business and comparative management are essentially descriptive studies with a rather narrow scope." Schöllhammer (1973: 24)*
Linkage between the cultural and substantive level	…formulated cultural explantions for observed differences or similarities post hoc or included explicit a priori predictions about the relationship between culture and behavioral outcomes.	*"Unfortunately, the majority of studies are characterized by their atheoretical nature and post hoc cultural interpretations." Aycan (2000: 116)*
Level of theorizing	…paid attention to the multi-level nature of the relationship between culture and behavior.	*"Among the 93 studies, 5 are analyzed at the group level, 7 are at the national level, and 4 are cross-level with culture as the higher level and employee responses as the lower level construct. In other words, 96% of the studies are at the single level—individual, group, or nation." Tsui et al. (2007: 456)*
Attention to alternative explanantions	…paid attention to alternative explanations for observed differences or similarities.	*"Apart from an assumed cultural homogeneity within these countries, there is the issue that between these societies, differences exist in many respects: economical, sociological, and political, to mention just a few. Alternative explanations are often not explored." van de Vijver & Leung (2000: 37)*

In the following subsections, the evolutionary development of the theoretical issues described above is examined.

4.3.1 Absence of Theory in Cross-Cultural Research (1960s – late 1980s)

Reviews noted that the preponderance of cross-cultural-research conducted **during the 1960s and 1970s** followed a descriptive research tradition (Albaum & Peterson, 1984: 64; Boddewyn, 1981: 64; Boddewyn & Nath, 1970: 7; Roberts, 1970: 330-331; Schöllhammer, 1973: 24). The researchers' main aim was to examine incidents and distributions of variables between countries rather than to understand the relationship of culture and human behavior. Results were typically reported and discussed in terms of the mean scores (i.e., differences and similarities in behavioral variables of interest) in the countries investigated. As noted by Boddewyn and Nath, *"a great deal of the published research is based on brief impressions rather than on materials collected and evaluated in terms of definite hypotheses and theories"*. In a similar vein, Roberts (1970) lamented the absence of a theoretical conceptualization and operationalization of cultural variables and argued that interpretations of findings were problematic and not generalizable to other countries.

> *Roberts (1970)"Without some theoretical notions explaining culture and predicting its effect on other variables, we cannot make sense of cross-cultural comparisons. The problem is to explain the effects of culture on behavior, not to make inferences about behavior in spite of culture."*

Evan (1975: 106) provided a characteristic example of a typical cross-cultural-management study of the 1960s by referring to Haire, Ghiselli and Porter's (1966) book. The authors compared attitudes underlying management practices, the managerial role, and needs satisfaction across 14 countries, by collecting data from 3,641 managers. Although the authors neither conceptualized and measured culture nor formulated hypotheses about culture and its relationship to management practices *a pri-*

ori, they concluded that cultural factors were responsible for observed differences. Evan criticized the fact that the study's conclusion did not offer a compelling and scientifically rigorous argument:

> *Evan (1975: 106):"Of all the attitude differences observed, 25 percent of the variance was associated with national differences, which, after further analysis, prompted the authors to infer that the cultural influence is present and substantial. It is not overwhelming" (Haire, Ghiselli, and Porter, 1966: 9). However, they did not directly measure cultural values nor did they inquire into any organizational system consequences of the national differences'of managers' attitudes."*

Evan (101) also explained the lack of instruments in the early period (1960-1980) by the fact that the concept of culture originated in anthropology which unlike research in psychology, sociology, and other social sciences, relied primarily on participant observation and intensive interviewing of informants. As a consequence, the literature lacked adequate instruments for measuring culture:

> *Evan (1975: 101):"[…] there are few research instruments that purport to measure the normative aspects of culture and that can be adapted to cross-cultural research […]."*

In the 1980s, review publications reiterated the criticism that empirical research was designed neither to reveal underlying constructs, nor to establish explanations for behavioral patterns (cf. Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982: 654, 666; 104; Douglas et al., 1994: 299, Inzerilli, 1980: 3, 11; Sekaran, 1983: 65, 67; Roberts & Boyacigiller, 1984: 426, 460). Reviews repeated the criticism that descriptive studies too often evoked cultural factors *post hoc*, in a cavalier and careless way, as an explanation of the patterns observed in human conduct and cognitive processes. Reviews also lamented the fact that cultural explanations based on assumptions and educated guesses rather than rigorous scientific explanations dominated the field. For instance, Albaum and Peterson (I984: 161, 162) deplored the fact that scholarly work in the discipline of cross-cultural marketing was frequently marked by a simple and speculative attribution of cultural explanations for observed differences in consumer behavior:

Albaum and Peterson (I984: 161, 162): "[…] existing research on international market-ing issues is fragmentary, generally atheoretic, and not sufficiently programmatic to offer anything other than simplistic and incomplete insights into the underlying phenomena of interest."

In seeking an explanation for the prevailing lack of theory-driven research, Adler (1983: 231), Boddewyn (1981: 63-64), Nasif, Al-Daeaj, Ebrahimi and Thibodeaux. (1991: 80), Roberts and Boyacigiller (1984 : 426), and Sekaran (1983: 65, 69) argued that the field of cross-cultural research was still in its "infancy" and was therefore not yet in a position to develop hypotheses on the relationship between culture and human behavior. Boddewyn (1981, 63-64) and Sekaran (1983: 69) argued that researchers should be encouraged to explore and discover cultural antecedents to behavior rather than discouraged from conducting research in this field at all:

Boddewyn (1981, 63-64): "I believe that the common deprecation of descriptive or posi-tive studies ignores the usefulness of reliable facts as a basis for further investigation and as a guide to action-at least in a field as young as comparative marketing where some critical mass of data must be obtained before conceptualization and theorizing can take place."

Sekaran (1983: 69): "We do not as yet know enough about the differences in the values, attitudes and, and perceptions of people in different cultures to test hypotheses based on even known differences. […] Several studies which include micro and macros organiza-tional factors and their impact on various organizational outcomes are currently in pro-gress. The fruits of these endeavours will be seen in the future, and we need to be patient to witness further progress in this area."

In summary, as depicted Figure 8 observed differences were often arbitrarily at-tributed to cultural differences, rather than explained on the basis of a theory. The ab-sence of theory **during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s** matched the implicit, unspeci-fied, and unsophisticated treatment of culture as a construct (see Section 4.3 for a deeper discussion of this isssue).

Figure 8: Post Hoc Explanations for Descriptive Means

Figure 8 adapted from Holzmüller, H. H. (1995). Konzeptionelle und methodische Probleme in der interkulturellen Management-und Marketingforschung (67). Schäffer-Poeschel.

4.3.2 Emergence of Theoretical Progress at the Substantive Level (late 1980s – 2000s)

In the late 1980s and 1990s, theoretical progress at the substantive level appeared in the cross-cultural marketing literature as reported by Aulakh and Kotabe (1993: 23). Their review of 720 empirical articles on international marketing issues evidenced a significant increase of theory-driven studies as compared to the descriptive research orientation of earlier periods:

> *Aulakh and Kotabe (1993: 23): "The increase in theory-based empirical studies has shown an even more dramatic jump, from 22.5 percent in 1980-82 to 59.1 percent in 1989-90 ($x^2 = 19.9$, $p < .001$). One conclusion that can be drawn from these results is that international marketing research has become more theory-oriented. The increase in theory orientation constitutes a tremendous improvement from a decade ago when less than a quarter of the articles identified were based on conceptual foundations."*

A similar assessment published in the cross-cultural management literature was made by Samiee and Athanassiou (1998: 81), who observed a significant trend during the late eighties and nineties towards unfolding data, revealing underlying constructs, and

establishing associations and causality. Despite the progress made in examining and interpreting empirical relationships in the light of established hypotheses, Aycan (2000: 111), Cheng (1994: 164), and Maheswaran and Shavitt (2000: 63) bemoaned the fact that cross-cultural marketing and management research in the late 1980s and 1990s was primarily conducted to test US-centric frameworks of substantive phenomena in other nations. Researchers in both marketing and management disciplines did not consider culture-specific insights when testing theoretical frameworks in more distant cultures. They rather assumed a universal character of "Western" theoretical assumptions (i.e., predominantly developed in the US; see also section 4.1.2). Observed differences and similarities were usually attributed to cultural differences post hoc (see also Figure 9). Boyacigiller and Adler (1991: 278) summarized this theoretical state of affairs best:

> *Boyacigiller & Adler (1991: 278): "The current body of knowledge and processes for creating that knowledge are bounded and limiting. They lack sufficient breadth and depth to explain the very phenomena that we purport to study. Organizational science has become trapped, that is, trapped within geographical, cultural, temporal, and conceptual parochialism."*
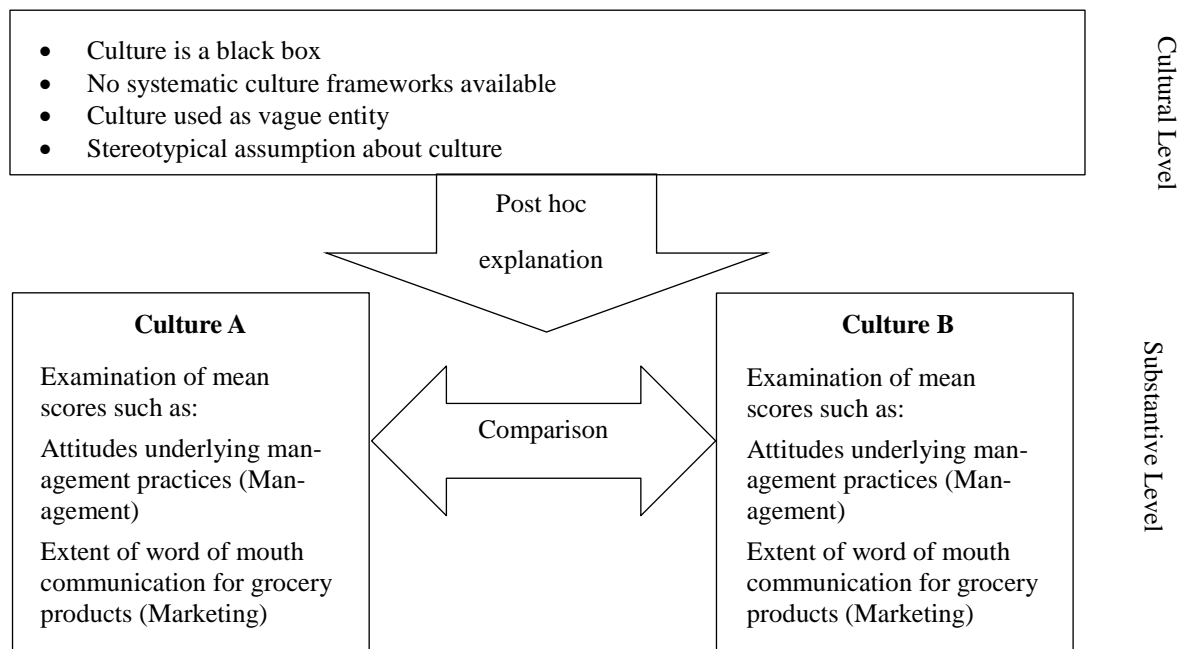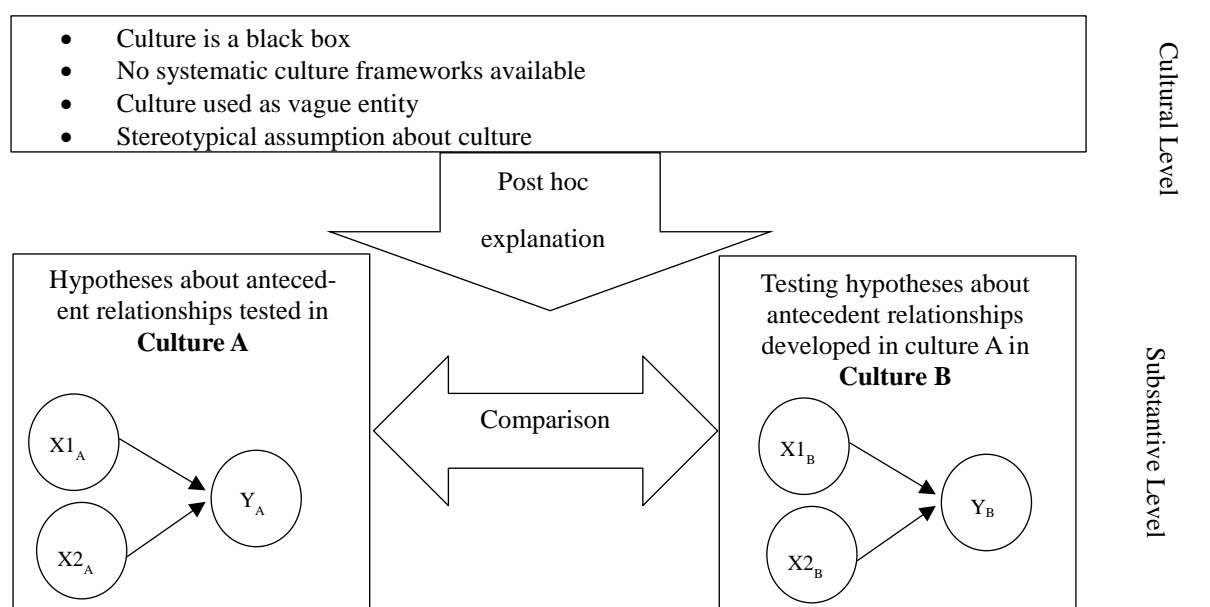
Figure 9: Post Hoc Explanations for Descriptive Means

Figure 9 adapted from Holzmüller, H. H. (1995). Konzeptionelle und methodische Probleme in der interkulturellen Management-und Marketingforschung (67). Schäffer-Poeschel.

4.3.3 Proliferation of the National Value Frameworks (late 1980s – to date)

Section 4.3.1 noted that cross-cultural studies devoid of any theoretical foundation at the cultural level arbitrarily attributed differences and similarities in behavioral phenomena to culture. For example, Clark characterized the field's findings and conclusions as "*subjective, stereotypical, and even racist.*" (1990: 687).

To spur theorizing about the relationship between culture and behavior, reviewers had long been calling for the development of instruments to measure culture (cf. Bhagat & McQuaid; Child & Tayeb; 1982; Inzerilli, 1981; Roberts, 1970). These leading scholars argued that measurement instruments and an applicable theoretical foundation of the construct would help the field to move forward to a state of affairs in which theory-driven hypotheses about the relationship of culture with human behavior and cognition could be posited.

The first frameworks aimed at conceptualizing different facets of culture were developed in the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s by scholars such as England (1975), Haire et al. (1966), Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961), Kuhn & McPartland, Rokeach (1973). However, substantial progress on this front first appeared **in 1980**, when Hofstede (1980) published his revolutionary study *"Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values"* (see also Section 4.4 for an indepth discussion on specifying culture as a construct for psychometric measurement).

Reviewers of management literature welcomed Hofstede's work as a major theoretical breakthrough. His large-scale index of national value orientations made it possible to explain differences in both management and marketing phenomena, as nation and culture were interpreted as commensurate. For example, Sekaran (1983: 69) characterized Hofstede's conceptualization of culture and the accompanying national value indices as a starting point for more theory-driven research. Sekaran concluded that Hofstede translated the vague entity of culture into a parsimonious conceptualization of culture with high utility for empirical research purposes. In addition, Triandis (1994:

129) noted that Hofstede's dimensions allowed for a more theory-driven interpretation of obtained results. He urged empirical researchers to utilize Hofstede's dimensions as independent variables predicting and explaining phenomena of organizational behavior (e.g. preferred forms of compensation, leadership styles, organizational decision-making processes):

> *Triandis (1994: 129): "Numerous empirical studies begin to make sense when the Hofstede framework is utilized. For example, the findings in Bass and Burger (1979) can now be interpreted. When we see that 33 percent of the Latin American and 20 percent of the Indian managers rank prestige as most important, while only 2 percent of the Japanese and 3 percent of the Scandinavian managers do so, we can explain these observations by reference to the differences on the power-distance dimension. When we see that 45 percent of the Japanese consider duty a top value while only 7 percent of the Germans do, or that 2 percent of the Japanese and 3 percent of the British managers emphasize pleasure, we can look at the differences in individualism in the countries for an explanation."*

In fact, due to its promising characteristics, a growing number of cross-cultural-management researchers began **in the late 1980s throughout the early 2000s** to incorporate Hofstede's culture dimensions into their theoretical frameworks and embraced the understanding that culture is demarcated by national boundaries (Triandis, 1990: 129; Søndergaard, 1994: 449). The same enthusiasm with regard to the concept of national character was expressed in reviews within the marketing discipline. For instance, Clark (1990: 71) argued that Hofstede's framework made it possible to develop hypotheses helping the theoretical explanation of systematic cross-cultural differences in substantive phenomena.

> *Clark (1990: 71) "The national character concept is important to research in international marketing because it offers a mechanism for explaining national differences in marketing phenomena. It also promises a framework for the integration of individual cross-cultural studies"*

In the decades that followed, the scale of acceptance and adoption of Hofstede's framework in empirical cross-cultural research was enormous. **In the 1990s and early 2000s**, reviewers observed a rapid and excessive proliferation of Hofstede's value indices (Lonner & Adamopoulos, 1997: 67; Taras et al., 2009: 41; Steenkamp, 2001: 3;

Okazaki & Mueller, 2007: 505). For instance, Sin et al. (1999: 81, 89) reviewing 53 cross-cultural marketing studies published between 1991 and 1996, found that 84.9% of them relied on Hoftstede's measures. Schaffer & Riordan (2003: 176), when examining the cross-cultural organizational literature between 1995-2001, reported that 44 out of 83 studies in their review operationalized culture by imposing Hofstede's (1980; 2001) cultural value dimensions to countries. So instead of measuring respondents' value orientations directly, researchers used Hofstede's ranking of countries as a proxy (see Section 4.4). Taras et al. (2009: 41) noted that Hofstede's culture theory had the highest impact on the field and thus, stimulated the majority of empirical research efforts:

> *Taras et al. (2009: 41): "The effect of Hofstede's (1980) Culture's Consequences on the field of cross-cultural studies has been tremendous. By and large, all subsequent research in the area has been based on a Hofstedean approach to studying culture."*

Alternative culture frameworks were likewise developed by Hall (1976), Schwartz (1992, 1994), and GLOBE (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman & Gupta, 2001). Four review publications contained concise statistical overviews depicting the frequency of culture frameworks used to conceptualize and operationalize culture. Table 7, illustrates that, despite the availability of alternative culture theories, Hofstede's approach dominated the field. Alternative culture theories were reported to be utilized less frequently. Percentages refer to the number of studies integrating cultural dimensions from the available frameworks listed in the left column. Because only the most widely used frameworks are included in the table, the percentages do not add up to 100%.

Table 7: Frequency of Culture Frameworks included in Empirical Cross-Cultural Research Studies

Culture frameworks developed by	Review publication, disciplinary focus, period under review			
	• Schaffer and Riordan (2003) • Cross-cultural organizational research • 1995-2001	• Nakata and Huang (2005) • Cross-cultural marketing • 1990-2000	• Zhang et al. (2008) • Cross-cultural marketing • 1996-2006	• Engelen and Brettel (2011) • Cross-cultural marketing • 1990-2008
Hofstdede (1980)	41 %	68 %	69 %	60 %
Schwarz (1992, 1994)			1 %	6 %
Globe (2004)				1 %
Hall (1976)		14 %	6 %	14 %

As noted by Steenkamp (2001: 31) the above quoted frameworks spurred theoretical development and intensified theory-driven research efforts:

> *Steenkamp (2001: 31): "These frameworks can be used by the international marketing researcher for cross-national theorizing and for designing studies. They serve as the point of departure for understanding different layers of culture, for starting to understand and test antecedents of national culture, and for assessing cultural stability, among others."*

On the same point, Nakata (2009: 209) came to the conclusion that *"…culture is becoming a, perhaps the, leading theory in international marketing. Culture has been used to explain and predict everything […]."* Figure 10 summarizes the use of culture frameworks as mechanisms for explaining similarities and differences in substantive phenomena. Through tractable indices of cultural value dimensions researchers were able to identify the respective value profile of countries (e.g., Does a country score high or low on Hofstede's value dimenions?), which helped to explain behavioral outcomes at the substantive level.

Figure 10:   Use of Culture Frameworks to explain Antecedent Relatioships at the Substantive Level
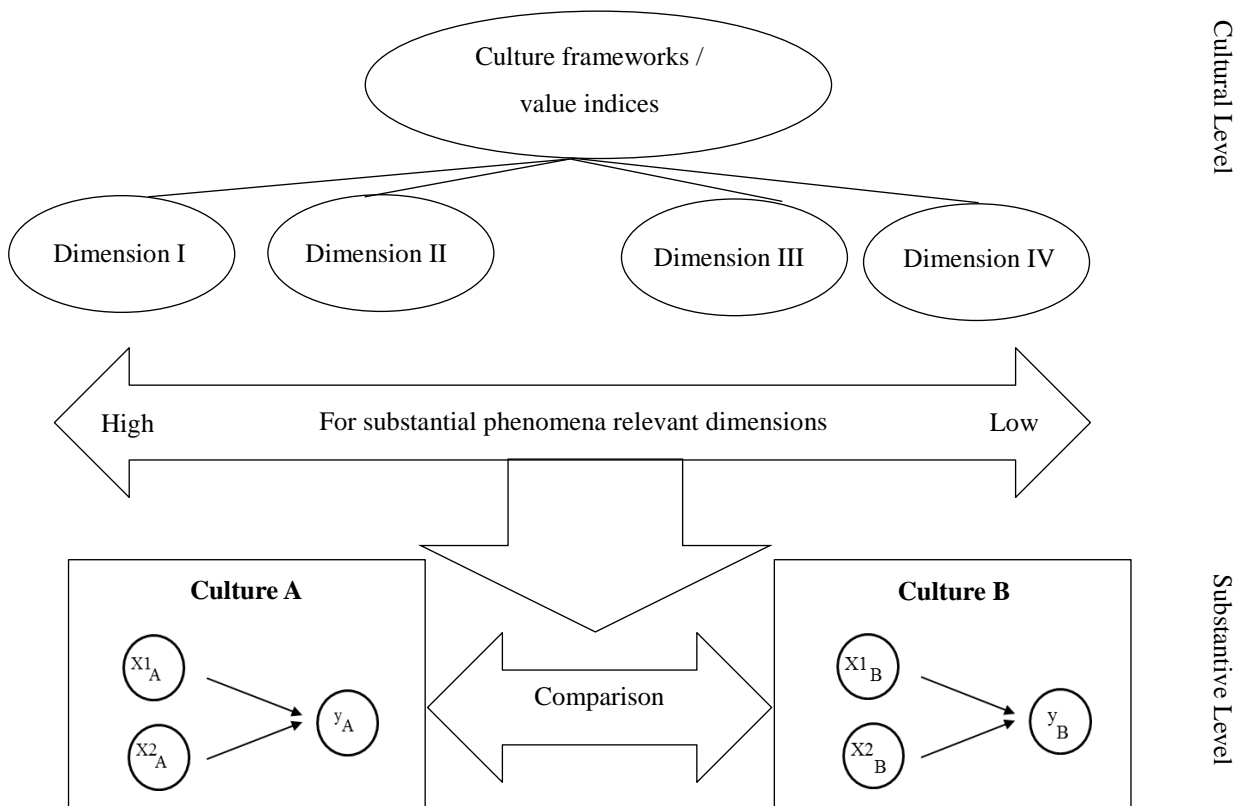
Figure 10 adapted from Holzmüller, H. H. (1995). Konzeptionelle und methodische Probleme in der interkulturellen Management-und Marketingforschung (67). Schäffer-Poeschel.

4.3.4 Revisiting the Paradigm of National Value Frameworks (early 2000s – to date)

Despite the progress introduced by the developments described above, **reviews in the early 2000s** began to view the field's theoretical state more critically. A growing number of concerns with regard to the dominance of the value-based paradigm were raised (Lowe, 2002: 24; Leung, Bhagat, Buchan & Erez, M. G., Cristina B., 2005: 367; Tsui et al., 2007: 461; Taras et al. , 2009: 359). The dominance of the leading culture frameworks, and specifically of Hofstede's work, was increasingly deplored. For instance, reviews, such as those of Nakata and Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 72, 73) and Taras and Steel (2009: 55), questioned whether Hofstede's culture framework on

its own, considering its enormous proliferation in empirical research, has allowed the field to develop the desired and anticipated knowledge about the relationship between culture and behavioral/cognitive processes:

> *Nakata and Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 71, 72): "[…] this situation raises the question of whether the paradigm's dominance is entirely positive or healthy for knowledge production."*

> *Taras & Steel (2009: 55): "The taboos imposed by this dominant paradigm greatly obstruct progress in cross-cultural research by limiting the scope of data and types of analyses that are "welcomed" in the field."*

This study identified four frequently debated problems associated with the predominant use of Hofstede's value indices. Reviews repeatedly discussed (a) *the eclectic use of culture theories*, (b) *the lack of alternative explanations in the research designs*, (c) *the deterministic role and positioning of culture in theoretical frameworks*, and (d) *the inappropriate theorizing about the multilevel nature of cultural phenomena*. The assessments pointed out that the discussion of theoretical problems on this basis limited the field's contribution to knowledge about the role of culture.

Eclectic Use of Culture Frameworks

To explain the effects of culture on behavior, scholars predominantly made use mainly of Hofstede's approach to conceptualizing and operationalizing culture. On the one hand, this can be seen as a turning point toward a more theory-driven approach to cross-cultural research (see Section 4.2.3). On the other, this particular approach to theorizing about the relationship between culture and business-relevant phenomena did not escape criticism. As early as the mid-1990s, Søndergaard (1994: 453-454) showed that the use of Hofstede's framework exceeded mere citation and was, in fact, utilized as a paradigm outside its original setting of work-related values in organizations. In this way, researchers examining consumer behavior frequently classified and explained the influence of culture on phenomena related not to the work environment but rather to consumption. Samiee and Jeong (1994: 212) noted that explanations of differences

and similarities were not based on a domain-specific culture theory relevant to the substantive phenomenon under study. In a similar vein, Holden (2004: 564, 565), and Singelis (2000: 82) criticized the eclectic use of available cultural value indices within the discipline of cross-cultural marketing:

> *Holden (2004: 564, 565): "No one raised then the rather obvious point that [Hofstede] was not viewing other cultures from a marketing point of view. Marketers simply devoured Hofstede without realising that their uncritical across-cultural acceptance of his models and characterisations had an intellectually numbing effect on the treatment of culture and international marketing."*
>
> *Singelis (2000: 82): "All too often, the behaviors have been compared across cultures without measuring the psychological difference that is purported to be responsible. In other words, researchers have accepted cultural characterizations from previous research as accounting for observed differences in current work."*

Echoing these concerns, Sun et al. (2014: 342-343) lamented the widespread but rather eclectic use of Hofstede's dimensions of individualism and collectivism in examining consumer behavior. The study by Steenkamp, Hofstede & Wedel (1999) provides a good empirical example of such research efforts. This study used Hofstede's cultural dimensions, which had been developed to measure work values, to conceptualize and integrate the construct of culture into their study of consumer innovativeness. They then linked the cultural level (Hofstede's value scores) to a substantive model of consumer innovativeness consisting of personal values and consumer context-specific dispositions. The use of Hofstede's value index was criticized not only in marketing but also in the field of management and psychology as being eclectic. Kirkman et al. (2006: 297) assessed and commented on the use of Hofstede`s cultural framework in empirical research articles published in management and psychology journals. They came to the conclusion that Hofstede's theory and value scores were not systematically and explicitly integrated into the respective research designs and phenomena under study:

> *Kirkman et al. (2006: 297): "Much work remains to be done to develop or select relevant theories to explain the underlying dynamics of cultural value–outcome linkages. The*

large number of studies that did not include theoretical linkages to explain the connection between values and organizational outcomes […] underscores the lack of attention to these complex underlying dynamics."

The existing alternative culture frameworks were also used rather eclecticly. A recent example can be found in Swoboda, Puchert & Morschett (2016) who examined the moderating role of culture on the link between corporate reputation and consumer loyalty to a multinational corporation. Measurements of cultural values were based on Schwartz' (1994) value indices. Regarding the countries for which no index was available, the authors followed Walsh, Shiu and Hassan's (2014) recommendation to replace the missing cultural value score by that of the nearest available neighboring country. In short, all too often researchers assumed that indices for national culture were both appropriate to describe the cultural profile of the sample under study and relevant for the examination of substantive phenomena in strictly speaking unrelated domains.

Lack of Alternative Explanations in Research Designs

A second point of criticism refers to the overemphasis on cultural explanations with a resulting disregard for alternative explanations. Leading cross-cultural psychologists such as Miller (2002), Oyserman et al. (2002) noted that value orientations do not describe societies as a whole but leave room for rival hypotheses to explain differences and similarities.

Since the 1980s but with stressed emphasis in review publications published in the 2000s, the neglect of alternative explanations for observed cross-cultural differences was criticized (Aycan, 2000: 111; Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982: 677; Engelen & Brettel, 2011: 521; Leung et al. 2005: 374; Roberts & Boyacigiller, 1984: 428; Sekaran, 1983: 67; Tsui et al. 2007: 454; van de Vijver & Leung, 1997: 291). These scholars lamented the dominant role assigned to culture in explaining differences and similarities in behavior. More specifically, reviews criticized the fact that other contextual variables – such as the level of economic development, the political system, and

religious orientation – were usually neglected as variables to exaplain differences in observed behavior. For instance, Aycan (2000: 111) criticized the failure of research on cross-cultural organizational behavior to take the complex nature of organizations and myriad contextual forces into consideration:

> *Aycan (2000: 111): "[…] research is dominated by a reductionist perspective in which behavior is examined in isolation from multiple forces of the environment."*

Tsui et al. (2007: 460) pointed out that only a minority of studies considered other contextual forces, either theoretically as predictors or empirically as controls, to disentangle the contribution of the socio-cultural environment from other internal and external contextual forces. Likewise, Gelfand, Erez and Aycan (2007: 499) critically observed that research efforts aiming to unpackage cultural differences were *"far too narrow, focusing almost exclusively on cultural values […] to explain all differences across cultures"*. They also noted that the literature offers increasing evidence that situational factors on multiple levels exacerbate, reduce, and/or radically change the nature of baseline cultural tendencies. Similarly Kirkman et al. (2006: 313) report that *"the relatively low amount of variance explained by the cultural values in many studies underscores the existence of the many other forces besides culture that determine the behavior and attitudes of individuals in societies."*

In summary, researchers were criticized for overemphasizing the influence of culture, rather than capturing a nuanced set of societal characteristics and perceivingthe importance of other relevant contextual variables in explaining cross-cultural similarities and differences.

Deterministic Role of Culture in Theoretical Frameworks

Leung et al. (2005: 368) Nakata and Huang (2005: 615), and Kirkman et al. (2006: 309) documented that the preponderance of cross-cultural-studies conceptualized culture as an independent variable. These literature assessments further noted that scholars focused primarily on the main effects of culture and limited the relationship

between culture and behavior to a cause-effect correlation, thus inferring causality between the two levels. In a systematic assessment of culture theories in cross-cultural marketing studies, Nakata and Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 70) made the following observation:

> *Nakata & Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 70): "A majority of theories consider culture to be an independent force or variable (55 percent), a minority imagine it as a mediating or moderating influence (6 percent), and none include it as a dependent element (0 percent) ($x^2 = .006, p < .001$). A comparison of the first half of the decade with the second indicates no change in these proportions.*

In other words, culture was assumed to be mainly responsible for shaping patterns of individual-level outcomes. An example would be hypothesizing that culture directly influences the likelihood of consumers evaluating certain forms of advertising as better than others. Thus, consumers from an individualistic culture, favour individualistic advertising over advertsings based on collectivistic content. Reviewers persistently lamented the overemphasis on, or rather the exclusive consideration of culture as an independent, ecological variable (see Figure 11 below).

In a critical response to the **dominance of cause-effect investigations** in cross-cultural-research, Aycan (2000: 114) attacked the inattention to the complex nature and multidirectional effects of culture. They deplored the neglect of the more complex cultural mechanisms that may function in multiple ways and directions, including the mediating and moderating effects of cultural variables. They also observed that theoretical frameworks in cross-cultural research were mainly represented in linear order. Feedback loops or other means of acknowledging the multiple nature and effects of culture were virtually ignored. Thus, the theoretical state of cross-cultural research was characterized by systematic attempts to reduce dynamic cultural processes to static states. Researchers reduced the complexity of cultural effects to simpler, stable chains of events (Sullivan & Weaver, 2000: 274-275).

Figure 11: Example of the Deterministic Role of Culture in Theoretical Frameworks

Type 1: Culture as an
independent variable

Type 2: Culture as a
moderating variable

Type 3: Culture as a
dependent variable
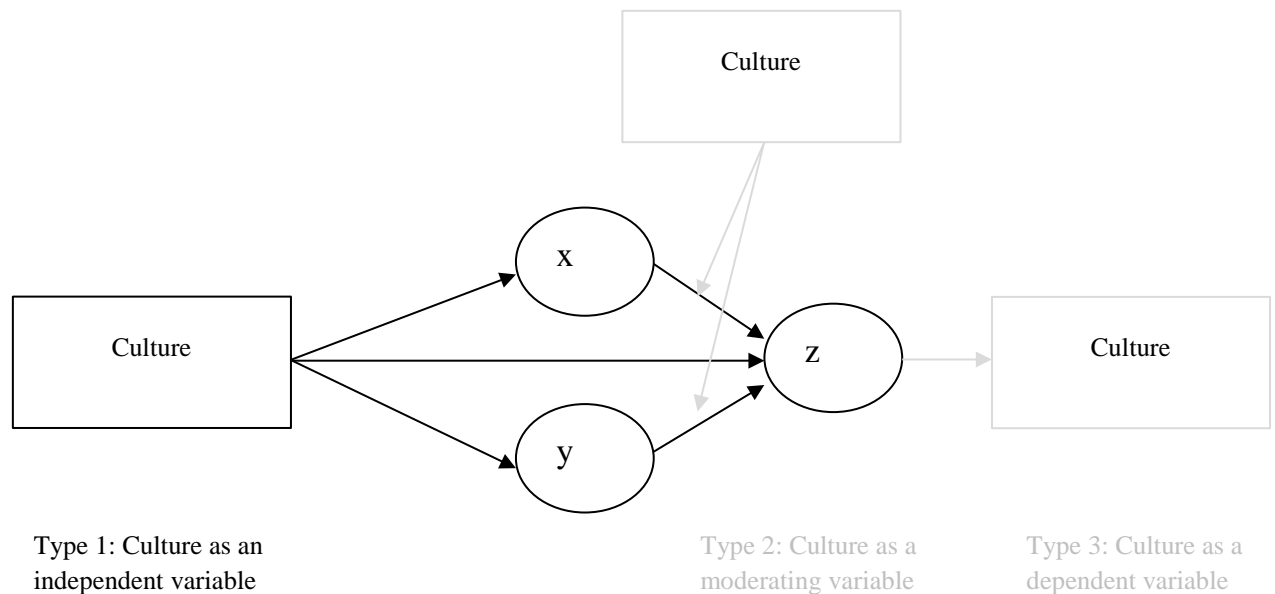
*Black boxes, circles, and arrows indicate the dominant approach to theorize about the effect of culture. Grey boxes, circles and arrows indicate under researched theoretical assumptions and postulated relationships.

McSweeney (2013: 8) criticized this state of affairs as the *"ecological mono-deterministic fallacy."* Nakata (2009: 225) best expressed the strong appreciation of Hofstede's culture theory which suggests that outcomes at lower levels are "culture's consequences" (1980, 2001). She judged critically the common epistemological understanding of culture which*"characterizes people as passive cultural robots pushed around by a monolithic force that tells them how to think, what to do, which way to live […] The superorganic view ignores the intervention of setting characteristics on people and the influence of contextual factors on culture."* In addition to that, Leung et al. (2005: 368) Nakata and Huang (2005: 615), and Kirkman et al. (2006: 309) resolutely complained that empirical researchers neglected to investigate and report how, when, and under what circumstances national culture influences substantive phenomena. For example, Leung et al. (2005: 368) assessed:

> Leung et al. (2005: 368): *"On the one hand, researchers and managers need to understand patterns of individual-level outcomes associated with different national cultures in*

the world. On the other hand, research examining relationships between culture and individual outcomes has not captured enough variance to make the specific recommendations that managers need with confidence. Thus, recently, scholars have argued that, instead of addressing whether or not national culture makes a difference, it is more useful to address the issue of how and when it makes a difference"

It is safe to conclude here that the field of cross-cultural research embraced the idea that culture governs behavior. Progress on this front was noted by Kirkman et al. (2006: 309) and Leung et al. (2005: 309), who reported an increasing number of studies in cross-cultural management that set out to theorize about more complex cultural mechanisms, including the mediating and moderating effects of cultural variables on cross-cultural management research. Kirkman et al. (2006: 309) considered these types of studies as "*an important theoretical advancement*" on which to build theory about the more complex effects of culture.

Inappropriate Theorizing of the Multi-Level Nature of Phenomena

As outlined in Section 4.3.3 above, the publication of Hofstede's (1980, 2001) five-dimensional framework of national culture was followed by a proliferation of empirical research inspired and based on his national value scores to explain individual level behavior or the behavior of sub-national groupings (e.g. consumer or organizational groups). For example, Lonner & Adamopoulos (1997: 68) observed that the dominant approach to cross-cultural research was to sample participants in two or more nations, to measure a set of psychological constructs, and then to extrapolate the national value scores of previous studies (e.g. Hofstede's five-dimensional framework of national culture) for the samples drawn in order to explain observed differences and similarities. In other words, researchers imposed value scores aggregated at a national level to the behavior of individuals without theorizing how the different theoretical levels are related to each other.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, reviews underlined theoretical problems associated with this approach (Adler, 1984: 58; Roberts & Boyacigiller, 1984: 450; Samiee & Jeong, 1994: 210). For instance, Adler pointed out that such a practice can lead to fallacy.

> *Adler (1984: 58): "As identified by Hofstede (1980), a major problem in comparative management research is that cultures are often treated and categorized as if they were individuals. Cultures are not individuals: they are wholes and their internal logic cannot be understood in the terms used for understanding the dynamics of individuals. The ecological fallacy is the confusing of these two levels. It is the confusing of country or cultural level correlations (ecological r2) with individual level correlations (individual r2). The reverse ecological fallacy is the confusing of individual with ecological correlations"*

This particular criticism of generalizing findings across levels of analysis has been intensely discussed and deplored in reviews published in the early 2000s. Providing a descriptive statistic, Tsui et al. (2006: 456) reported that 84% of the studies in their review on cross-cultural organizational behavior research neglected the cross-level nature of the phenomena in developing their conceptual frameworks, underlying hypotheses, and analytical/statistical approaches:

> *Tsui et al. (2006: 456): "Despite the fact that culture is an ecological concept, a majority of the studies (84% of the studies in this review) developed and tested hypotheses at the individual level. The results of studies [...] that tested culture effects (e.g., PD) on average individual experiences (e.g., role stress) at the national level are not interpretable at the individual level. Only four studies [...] in our review used a cross-level design and a statistical test (either HLM or ML wiN) appropriate for cross-level theory and data."*

Likwise, Taras, Kirkmann and Steel (2010: 434), found that multilevel structures were seldom reflected in theoretical frameworks and applied statistical analysis techniques. They concluded that the multilevel analysis remained a substantial challenge for the field:

> *Taras, Kirkmann & Steel (2010: 434): "Regarding issues of multilevel culture research, although culture is an inherently multilevel construct, our review revealed that despite considerable progress in the development of multilevel theories and data analysis techniques, there are no culture studies in our sample that attempted to bridge these levels of analysis."*

In an analysis of 180 cross-cultural management studies, Kirkman et al. (2006:298) showed that the majority of researchers did not discuss the fallacy problem critically in their articles, although they used Hofstede's dimensions to predict behavior at the individual level. Leung et al. (2005: 368) pointed out that cross-cultural research examining relationships between culture and individual outcomes did not capture variance sufficiently to provide meaningful insight and hence practical recommendations for managers. On reason may be that Hofstede's value scores lack reliability and validity when applied to predict individual-level behavior (Sun et al., 2014: 348) (see also Oyserman et al., 2002; Soares, Farhangmehr & Shoham, 2007; Spector et al., 2015 for a discussion of this topic.). Commenting on the lack of rigorous cross-level theorizing in the cross-cultural organizational behavior literature, Gelfand et al. (2007: 496) concluded that the theoretical linkage between different levels of analysis remains a substantial challenge for the field, as researchers continue *"to blindly apply culture-level theory to the individual level and vice versa."* In a comment on the continuing practice of applying cultural dimensions to individuals, Mooij (2015: 254) stated that this particular research practice is a result of culture itself:

> *Mooij (2015: 254):"Because of their strong belief in the uniqueness of individuals, generally, authors from individualist national cultures are in favor of individual-level studies; they feel reluctant to categorize people on the basis of group characteristics and insist that people should be treated, analyzed, and interpreted as individuals, not as group members. In more collectivistic cultures, the opposite bias can be found. Group differences are exaggerated and viewed as absolute. There is a tendency to treat people on the basis of the group that they belong to rather than as individuals."*

4.4 Specification of Culture – Chasing the Elusive Definition and Measurement of Culture

Section 4.3 focused on the evolutionary development of the theoretical approaches used by empirical researchers to understand, test, and explain the relationship between culture and behavioral phenomena. The debate on theoretical issues and challenges is interwoven with the conceptualization and measurement of culture as a construct, which, as previously noted, has been recognized as the principal explanatory variable in cross-cultural research. This section depicts the evolutionary stages of the approaches used to conceptualize and operationalize the concept of culture. Assessments of the ontological and epistemological features of culture are likewise discussed (see Table 3 on page 30 for an overview of the coding scheme pertaining to assessments of the specification of culture.)

4.4.1 Pioneering Research Interest in the Concept of Culture (1960s –1980s)

In the early 1960s, Berrien (1967: 34), Frijda and Jahoda (1966: 110), Nath (1969), and Schöllhammer (1973: 17) noted growing interest in the concept of culture within the disciplines of management, organizational behavior and applied psychology. Based on observations of national differences in managerial practices and employee behavior, researchers became more and more enthusiastic about culture as a social construct that could be used to explain the variance observed between national samples. The field's pioneers assumed that socializing processes within societies and nations have lead to unique interpretations of situations, events and objects. They likewise supposed that culture determines attitudes and behavior. Triandis, Malpass and Davidson (1973a) best expressed this interest in research about culture in the 1960s and 1970s:

> *Triandis et al. (1973: 355): "Culture has been defined by some anthropologists (Herskovits, 1955) as the man-made part of the human environment. Thus, if we are to understand the determinants of behavior, we need to understand how culture influences it."*

Given the field's early stage, this sense of excitement was not met by a rigorous conceptualization and operationalization of culture (see also Section 4.3.1). Examining how the concept of culture was used in cross-cultural management research during the 1960s, Roberts (1970) witnessed a lack of explicit and precise attempts to define and conceptualize culture. The preponderance of empirical studies treated culture as a residual variable. Roberts bemoaned the fact that, despite being in a position to conceptualize and consequently to measure culture, researchers understood and treated it as an independent variable adding to the differences observed in dependent behavioral variables:

> *Roberts (1970: 330):"[Researchers] view culture as a vague entity, cast it as their independent variable, and forget it. Consequently, they do not know what aspects make up the domain culture, how they can be expected to influence anything else, or how various cultural groups in their samples differ. Culture is still a reality to be explained and as such cannot yet explain other realities."*

A review that furthered understanding of the role of culture in the pioneering phase of cross-cultural management research was published by Ajiferuke and Boddewyn (1970: 155). They assessed twenty-two articles that included culture as an independent variable, and reported that only two studies aimed to delineate how culture was understood. The remaining twenty studies lacked an explicit definition of culture and attributed observed differences across nations to cultural differences in a rather arbitrary and speculative way:

> *Ajiferuke and Boddewyn (1970: 155): "Regarding the 22 studies providing a cultural explanation, only 2 venture any kind of definition of culture. The rest simply by-pass the problem, hoping that its meaning will become apparent to the reader in the context of the study. This is unfortunate for two reasons: (1) it leaves the reader to the mercy and vagary of his imagination with regard to the most important term in the study, and (2) more importantly, lack of definition prevents the reader from understanding the logical process leading to the author's conclusion."*

In the 1960s and 1970s, researchers usually employed country names as variables in data analysis and interpretation. The predominant research orientation was comparative as studies reported and discussed how one country differs from or is similar to another country in terms of country mean scores on the variables of interest. Referring to the field's strong tendency to use country names in data analysis, Evan (1975: 91) attacked the lack of an explicit and theoretically rigorous definition of culture and, as a result, the non-existence of a sophisticated measurement instrument. He criticized the use of culture as a residual variable to explain observed differences and similarities in patterns of causation as amateurism in research, and voiced concerns about the value and contribution of cross-cultural research:

> *Evan (1975: 91): "The concept of culture, notwithstanding its ambiguity, is used by laymen and social scientists alike in their efforts to explain behavior. That such explanations are often based on impressions and stereotypes does not deter the layman any more than it does the social scientist from using the concept."*

In a similar vein, Malpass (1977: 1071) noted that culture *"is most unsatisfactory as a specification of an independent variable."*

In an attempt to explain the conceptual flaws prevalent in the 1960s and early 1970s, Evan (1975: 101) and Ajiferuke and Boddewyn (1970: 154) shed light on the disciplinary roots of the concept of culture. They noted that research on culture was originally conducted in the field of anthropology. As early as the 19[th] century, anthropologists argued that culture is a relevant concept in human behavior (cf. Tylor, (18741). Researchers in business-related disciplines borrowed the concept from this particular research tradition. Anthropologists understood culture as a complex and all-embracing system in a society's way of living. For instance, the anthropologist Tylor (1871) described culture as *"that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals , law, custom, and any capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society"* (in Child, 1981: 323).

It was likewise observed that, over the years, anthropologists developed an almost infinite number of controversial definitions that further hampered attempts to

develop definitions and measurement instruments appropriate for the etic research orientation of cross-cultural research. Kroeber & Kluckhohn's review (1952) identified 164 definitions of culture in the anthropology literature. In an effort to synthesize the wide range of its components and facets, they developed the following definition of culture that illustrated the whole range of its facets (i.e., knowledge, values, preferences, habits and customs, traditional practices and behavior, implements and artifacts):

> *Kroeber & Kluckhohn (1952:181):"Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; cultural systems may on the one hand be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action."*

Referring directly to this definition, Child (1981: 324), Adler (1983: 227), and Roberts and Boyacigiller (1984: 428) noted that the construct's anthropological origin led to a confusion of definitions that hindered derivation of a feasible conceptualization of culture for quantitative comparative research purposes. They regarded the anthropological origin of the concept of culture as the main obstacle to using it as an explanatory variable in cross-cultural research. The discipline, rooted in differential psychology, demands a rather rigorous definition and measurement. However, ethnographers and cultural anthropologists never intended to define culture for quantitative research purposes. Child phrased this criticism best:

> *Child (1981: 324): "Equally such an all-embracing approach to the concept does not appear particularly fruitful for identifying those features which may be particularly enlightening with regard to cross-national differences in organization."*

As noted by Evan (1975: 101) and Ajiferuke and Boddewyn (1970: 154), the field was confronted with a major conceptual challenge:

> *Evan (1975: 101): "The real problem lies in the concept of culture itself. Since this concept is the invention of anthropologists, the most logical place to look for its explanation is in the field of anthropology. Unfortunately, there is no definition of culture in anthropology, but there are many different definitions which are analytically useful for a wide variety of purposes."*

> *Ajiferuke and Boddewyn (1970: 154): "[...] there are few research instruments that pur-*
> *port to measure the normative aspects of culture and that can be adapted to cross-*
> *cultural research [...]."*

Despite the criticism and lack of definition, the interest in studying culture increased in the **1970s and 1980s**. For instance, Boddewyn (1981: 73) and Smircich (1983: 339), taking stock of cross-cultural marketing research, observed a general acceptance of culture as a major predictor variable.

> *Smircich (1983: 339): "Culture may be an idea whose time has come; but what exactly*
> *does a cultural perspective on organizations mean?"*

Referring to the discrepancy between interest in culture on the one hand and the illusive nature of the concept culture on the other, review publications censured the continuing unsophisticated and non-theory-driven use of the concept of culture in published studies (Bhagat & McQuaid: 653; Clark, 1990: 74; Negandhi, 1983: 19; Nasif et al., 1991: 82; Tayeb, 1994: 443):

> *Bhagat & McQuaid (1982: 653): "Although culture is an important concept in the social*
> *sciences, it has been defined in so many ways that no consensus has emerged. Along with*
> *this conceptual difficulty, there has been considerable disappointment with progress in*
> *the cross-cultural study of organization. Over the years, no systematic paradigms have*
> *been developed [...]"*
>
> *Neghandi (1983: 19): "It appears that culture, although used as an independent variable*
> *in most cross-cultural management studies, has a most obscure identity and often is used*
> *as a residual variable."*
>
> *Tayeb (1994: 443): "As a concept, which one would imagine to be the central point of in-*
> *quiry in any cross-cultural study, culture has been completely ignored by some so-called*
> *cross-cultural researchers. Of those who do acknowledge the existence and role of culture*
> *in organizations, some consider it as a nuisance, some treat it as a residual factor, some*
> *regard it as one of the major factors, and some view it as the overarching factor influenc-*
> *ing organizations."*

In summary, **publications between the 1960s and 1980s** lacked a definition of culture, a specification of aspects of culture relevant to management and marketing research, and suitable operationalizations of culture. The section that follows will refer

to the next stage of development, in which significant progress in terms of conceptualizing and measuring the concept culture was reported in review publications.

4.4.2 Turning the Spotlight on Values as the Central Core of Culture (1970s – 1980s)

Given the much-discussed criticism of the lack of any suitable conceptualization of culture, reviews promoted more rigorous approaches designed to seek answers to the fundamental question of how to conceptualize and operationalize culture for etic empirical research purposes (see section 4.1). **In the early 1970s**, promising developments with the potential of translating the vague and elusive concept of culture into a tractable construct were identified and recommended in review publications.

Evan (1975:95), Malpass (1977: 1077) and Bhagat & McQuaid (1982: 654) initiated a stimulating debate focusing on values as the central core of culture. Attention was specifically directed towards Triandis' (1972) concept of '*subjective culture'* (see Figure 12), who argued that culture encompasses a wide range of psychological facets, including belief systems, attitude structures, stereotypes, norms, roles, ideologies, values, and task definitions. He distinguished these subjective criteria clearly from the objective criteria of culture such as economic, geographic, socio-demographic, juridical, political, and technical criteria. An illustrative example of how the subjective culture concept was discussed in review publications and later adapted by empirical researchers is the assessment of Bhagat and McQuaid (1982: 654-655) cited below:

> *Bhagat & McQuaid: (1982: 654-655) "Subjective culture, a more precise term suggested by Triandis et al. (1972), refers to a group's characteristic way of perceiving its social environment and provides a more rigorous basis for the definition and interpretation of similarities and differences among people. Thus, whereas two national groups may be similar in language, climate, or ecology [the objective culture], differences in their subjective cultures would result in differences in their belief systems, attitude structures, stereotype formations, norms, roles, ideologies, values, and task definitions […]. It is the effect of subjective culture, as opposed to objective culture, that is of interest to organizational psychologists[…]. Examination of differences in subjective cultures explores differences*

in belief systems, attitude structures, stereotypes, norms, roles, ideologies, values, and task definitions. When differences on many of these constructs fall into a pattern, we can identify genuine cross-cultural differences, as opposed to cross-national differences. Genuine cross-cultural differences, when interpreted in the light of broad psychological theories and understood relative to principles that have some generality, should aid the researcher in developing pancultural theories of the role of subjective culture in organizational behavior."

Figure 12: Overview of Objective and Subjective Components of Culture

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                    │  Characteristics of Culture │
                    └─────────────────────────────┘
                                   │
                ┌──────────────────┴──────────────────┐
    ┌───────────────────────────┐        ┌───────────────────────────┐
    │ Components of objective    │        │ Components of subjective   │
    │ culture                    │        │ culture                    │
    └───────────────────────────┘        └───────────────────────────┘
```

- Economic criteria
- Geographic criteria
- Juridical criteria
- Political criteria
- Sociodemographic criteria
- Technical criteria

- Attitude structures
- Belief systems
- Ideologies
- Norms
- Roles
- Stereotypes
- Values
- Task definitions
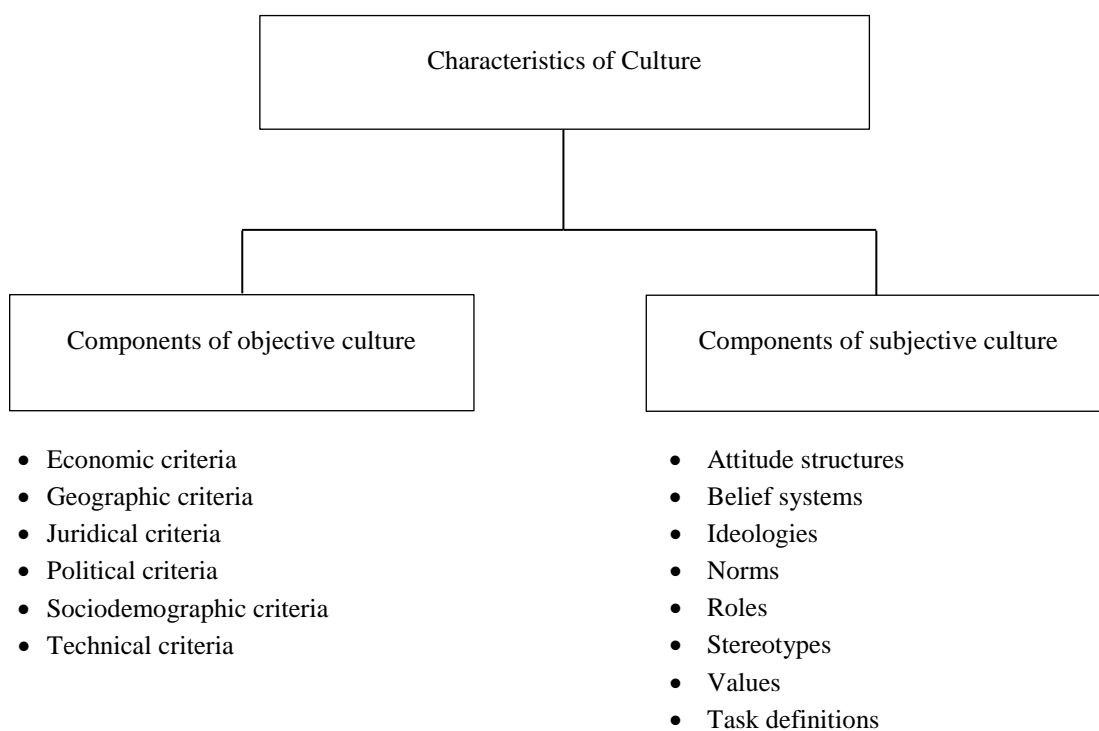
Due to the many studies comparing differences across two or more nations without attempting to explain them in cultural terms, reviewers strongly encouraged empirical researchers to build on Triandis' conceptualization of subjective culture (Cavusgil & Das, 1997: 74; Clark, 1990: 71; Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982: 675; Nasif et al., 1991: 82; Samiee & Jeong, 1994: 214). Triandis' subjective culture concept matched well with the field's etic paradigmatic positioning (see section 4.1). The importance of a psychological perspective on culture was clearly underlined by Negandhi (1983: 18), Roberts & Boyacigiller (1984: 428) and Sekaran (1983:68) who supported the focus

on particular subjective cultural elements. Specifically, they provided guidelines to distinguish the concept of value orientation from the other elements. The conceptualization of culture as a set of values was deemed to be of major importance in explaining patterns of causation in quantitative cross-cultural research:

> Sekaran (1983:68): "As scientists, we should of course be able to define culture operationally [...] lf we can find ways to figure out how different societies pattern the stimuli surrounding them at the workplace, and how these stimuli are perceptually and cognitively organized, then we will begin to know how organizations operate in different cultures. Fortunately, more and more researchers are trying to map these perceptions and cognitions."

> Roberts and Boyacigiller (1984: 428): "A good paradigm will either specify a definition of culture or replace it with a set of measurable variables that might together reflect potentially important setting impacts on organizations."

> Neghandi (1983: 18): "It is necessary to be selective in using the appropriate definition of culture for cross-cultural management studies. One of the more useful definitions may be to rely on the concept of value orientation [...]"

The most important stimulus encouraging empirical research efforts to focus on values, was Geert Hofstede's (1980) landmark study, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work Related Values*. This study, conducted between 1967 and 1973, was based on a survey of the work-related attitudes and values of managers working in the worldwide subsidiaries of IBM. Initially, respondents in thirty-nine nations were surveyed. In the second phase of the survey, a total of 53 countries were covered (Hofstede, 2001). Through post-hoc factor analysis of the survey responses, Hofstede (1980) identified four universal work-related value dimensions. These dimensions were aggregated at the national level and refer to *individualism*, *masculinity*, *power distance*, and *uncertainty avoidance*. He argued that these four value dimensions are the key distinguishing aspects of national culture as different value orientations were observed across nations. Later, Hofstede added a fifth dimension defined as *long-term orientation* (Hoftstede, 1991), and then a sixth dimension, *indulgence vs. restraint* (Minkov, M. Hofstede, G., 2010). The following quote from Hofstede's book

underlines his ontological assumptions about culture in which values are the central tenets of the concept:

> *Hofstede (1980: 11, 25): "Culture's Consequences aims at being specific about the elements of which culture is composed. It identifies four main dimensions along which dominant value systems […] can be ordered and which affect human thinking, organizations and institutions in predictable ways. ln this book I treat culture as t'he collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another."*

He argued that, through socialization processes, humans develop patterns of behavior that are guided by these value orientations. In essence, Hofstede's study on work-related work values, together with Triandis' concept of subjective culture, laid the groundwork for quantifying culture through psychological constructs and treating these constructs or cultural dimensions as experimental variables characterizing nations. This development marked the beginning of a journey that promised to fill the existing vacuum of an easily managed and tractable conceptualization and operationalization of culture.

Reviews published **in the 1980s and early 1990s** regarded Geert Hofstede's culture theory and framework for contrasting cultures as a major improvement in the search for a compelling definition of culture (Inzerilli, 1981: 11; Sekaran, 1983: 69). Enchanted by the novelty of the framework, both Inzerilli and Sekaran strongly recommended empirical researchers to utilize Hofstede's approach to define and operationalize culture:

> *Inzerilli (1981: 11): "The introductory article, by Hofstede, provides an extensive conceptual framework for analyzing culture and its influence on organizations. Culture is a very complex theoretical construct; and Hofstede's first major contribution is that of defining some of the basic concepts that constitute this construct and providing a model that explains the origins, development, and maintenance mechanisms of cultural systems. His second important contribution is suggesting a set of hypotheses on the relationship between culture and organizations."*

> Sekaran (1983: 69): *"It is true that we do not have very many theories on cross-cultural management. In a sense, Hofstede's research might be the beginnings of the foundation that could help scientific theory building in cross-cultural research."*

It was argued that Hofstede translated the vague und unspecific understanding of culture that had dominated the field for more than twenty years into a tractable framework applicable to empirical research (Redding, 1994: 324; Søndergaard, 1994: 449; Triandis, 1994: 129; Tayeb, 1994: 434-435; Earley & Singh, 1995: 328; Roberts & Boyacigiller, 1984: 446):

> *Roberts and Boyacigiller (1984: 446): "According to Hofstede, values are broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others. This, says Hofstede, is a simplification of Kluckhohn's position. Thus, conceptually for Hofstede, values and culture are interlocked and inseparable. Values are non-rational mental programs that are relatively unspecific and are programmed early in a person's life. They have both intensity and direction."*

> *Redding (1994: 324): "[…] the discipline has suffered from the excessive repetition of sterile reporting, from theoretical poverty and from a lack of clear direction. The journal literature suggests that, without the unifying and dominant work of Hofstede (1980, 1991) in tackling the core problem of the definition of culture, it would be even more disparate and undisciplined."*

> *Triandis (1994: 126): "Most of the studies […] used little, but Hofstede's (1980) work has provided a genuine advance […]. [Cross-Cultural Research] is more likely to be productive when it focuses on specific dimensions of cultural variation, such as those uncovered by Hofstede, than when global variables such as ̈culture ̈or ̈country ̈are employed."*

> *Søndergaard (1994: 449): "In addition to the relevance of the framework, Culture's Consequences was based on a rigorous research design, a systematic data collection and a coherent theory to explain national variations. This is precisely what reviewers of cross-cultural comparative research had been asking for."*

To conclude, in the **1980s and early 1990s**, reviews venerated Hofstede's contribution to the field of cross-cultural research. Empirical researchers were also captivated by the apparent comprehensiveness of Hofstede's framework; thus, the interest and application of the above culture frameworks increased dramatically. The next section depicts this development in more detail.

4.4.3 Proliferation of the Hofstedean Paradigm (early 1990s- to date)

With the advent of Hofstede's cultural framework, **from the early 1990s on** reviews documented a fast-growing interest in national values as the central tenets of culture. Following the same school of thought, several alternative frameworks of culture and corresponding instruments were developed in the 1990s and early 2000s to define and quantify culture and to assist in analyzing cultural differences in behavioral outcomes (e.g. the most popular frameworks in terms of scientific impact are those of Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997; Schwartz, 1992, 1994; House et al., 2004). Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner introduced seven dimensions of culture (*universalism vs. particularism*, *individualism vs. communitarianism*, *specific vs. diffuse*, *neutral vs. emotional*, *achievement vs. ascription*, *sequential time vs. synchronous time*, and *internal direction vs. outer direction*). House et al.'s (2004) study on Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) identified nine dimensions (*performance orientation*, *assertiveness*, *future orientation*, *human orientation*, *institutional collectivism*, *in-group collectivism*, *gender egalitarianism*, *power distance*, and *uncertainty avoidance*). In addition, Schwartz (1992, 1994) developed 10 motivational value types that are organized into four categories (*self-transcendence*, *conservation*, *self-enhancement* and *openness to change*).

The common ground of these authors is that they all understand culture as a multidimensional value construct. Daniels and Greguras (2014) further noted that the above taxonomies of cultural values, although labeled differently, greatly overlap with Hofstede's values. Likewise, Taras et al. (2009: 360), examining 121 instruments for quantifying culture in cross-cultural comparative research conducted between 1960 and 2009, came to the conclusion that 97.5% of all reviewed measures were conceptually related to at least one of the dimensions introduced by Hofstede. These culture frameworks triggered a debate that was crucial for progress in the field regarding the identification of dimensions of culture that help to explain similarities and differences

of consumer and employee behavior as well as management decision styles (Maseland & van Hoorn, 2009; Smith, 2006; Venaik & Brewer, 2010; Shenkar, 2001).

Examining the extent to which the available taxonomies of cultural values were applied by empirical studies **during the 1990s**, Sivakumar and Nakata (2001: 556) and Søndergaard (1994: 453, 454) concluded that among all available culture frameworks, Hofstede's model was by far the most influential in marketing, management and psychology. Hofstede's framework was also used as a paradigm outside its original research context (i.e. work environment as work-related values were measured) in more distant domains such as marketing, psychology, political science etc.

> *Sivakumar and Nakata (2001: 556): "The culture framework that arguably has garnered the greatest attention from business scholars in recent years is Hofstede's culture factors.[…] Hofstede's Culture's Consequences has been cited 1,101 times from 1987 to 1997 according to the Social Sciences Citations Index, whereas Edward Hall's Beyond Culture (1976), which presents a rival culture theory, has been referenced 147 times. […]"*

> *Søndergaard (1994: 453, 454): "Researchers on various topics in the field of marketing have also been using Hofstede's dimensions as a paradigm. A vast number of researchers in different fields of psychology have also applied the four dimensions as a paradigm. This is particularly the case in cross-cultural and social psychology where more than 10 percent of the recorded paradigmatic applications are to be found. The interdisciplinary nature of this application of Hofstede's dimensions is unique. […] the four dimensions are used as a paradigm to correlate independent phenomena by developing hypotheses, putting research results into perspective, or initiating discussion."*

The citation and application of Hoftstede's framework continued **throughout the 1990s and 2000s**. In fact, reviews of each of the three examined disciplines documented that Hofstede's culture framework significantly surpassed alternative conceptualizations and operationalizations. As such, Hofstede's inspired work dominated the literature in cross-cultural management (Lowe, 2002: 32; Taras& Steel, 2009: 181; Taras et al. 2010: 405; Tsui et al., 2007: 429), organizational psychology (Kâğitçibaşi, 1994: 52; Lonner & Adamopoulos, 1997: 67; Gelfand et al., 2007: 481; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003: 172), and marketing (Clark, 1990: 71; Holden, 2004: 565-566; Yaprak, 2008:

217; Douglas et al., 1994: 293; Nakata, 2009: 209; Okazaki & Mueller, 2007: 505; Steenkamp 2001: 31).

Several reviews also assessed ways culture was operationalized in cross-cultural research (Clark, 1990:67; Samiee & Jeong, 1994: 208; Tayeb, 1994: 432). The majority of empirical research articles operationalized culture by relying on Hofstede's easily accessible cultural value index. Specifically, researchers applied Hofstede's data regarding national value orientations to the national samples investigated in their studies. In this way, culture was inferred as benchmark-based secondary data, instead of being measured directly. Soares et al.(2007) defined this approach as the **indirect-value inference**. The dominance of this approach to operationalize culture becomes obvious when considering the assessments of Engelen and Brettel (2011: 521) and Zhang et al. (2008: 221):

> *Engelen and Brettel (2011: 521):"The indirect method uses data from existing research and assigns country scores on cultural dimensions to the sample under consideration (indirect value inference). Most of the studies that build upon the dimensions and country classifications of Hofstede (2001) use the indirect method; in fact, 80% of all the cross-cultural marketing studies that are part of the current study assess national culture on the basis of indirect value inference."*

> *Zhang et al. (2008: 221): "Very few studies reviewed here actually measured the culture construct. While few studies used cultural constructs in forming hypotheses, even fewer measured the dimensions at the individual level […]."*

In the cross-cultural management and organizational behavior literature, review publications reported that scholars used Kogut & Singh's approach (1988) on a large scale to operationalize culture (Tsui et al., 2007: 300; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003: 176). Based on Hofstede`s country scores, Kogut and Singh's approach sets out to create cultural distance measures by bundling Hofstede's dimensions of culture into one index value.[2] Kirkman et al.(2006: 287) concluded *"almost all studies used Kogut and Singh's (1988) index, which comprises the differences between a given […] country's*

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[2]The interested reader is referred to Shenkar (2001); Ambos and Håkanson (2014) for a an explanation of the concept of distance in cross-cultural management research.

score on a cultural value and a (home) country's score, with differences summed across Hofstede's cultural values".

The prominence of Hoftsede's national value index directed Taras & Steel (2009: 50) to the conclusion that the most influential information in Hofstede's 300-page book were *"the tables providing the national cultural statistical averages and rankings."* More recently Venaik & Midgley (2015: 1) noted that owing to *"the ease of use of culture dimensions and national scores for research, they have been embraced enthusiastically by the scholarly community across a range of disciplines, as the high level of citations for these studies indicate."* However, as stated by McSweeney (2013: 483) the idea of culture is *"more easily evoked than defined."*

The follwoing subsection refers to the next stage of development in which review publications revisited the way culture was specified in cross-cultural research by challenging the ontological and epistemological assumptions about culture.

4.4.4 Challenging the Ontological and Epistemological Assumptions about Culture (early 2000s – to date)

The previous sections showed that the field progressed significantly with the advent of the culture frameworks developed by Hofstede (1980, 2001), House et al. (2004), and Schwartz (1992, 1994) etc. Cross-cultural research has been dominated by a psychological perspective, and quantifying culture has been considered an appropriate way to measure culture and to examine its relation to managerial, employee and consumer behavior. Based on Hoftstede's (1991: 9) definition of culture, the preponderance of cross-cultural studies embraced the understanding of culture as *"the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another."* Scores obtained through the operationalization and measurement of culture as a psychological construct were used as experimental variables out-

side the person (Lowe, 2002: 25; Taras and Steel, 2009:42; Nakata, 2009: 248; Taras et al., 2009: 359)

Notwithstanding the popularity of these cultural dimensions and national scores, major concerns have appeared in review publications **since the late 1990s**. Reviewers began to see the dominance of the Hofstedean paradigm from an increasingly critical viewpoint. In the course of content analysis, a substantial number of critical assessments of the ontological and epistemological traits of culture were identified. Examining the fundamental traits of the construct culture in cross-cultural marketing research, Nakata (2009: 248), used the definition of ontology as *"the metaphysics of being"*, and epistemology as *"the study of knowledge.* Her study used these two concepts in order to structure the critical notes identified in review publications. Assessments of the ontological traits of culture refer to the core premises and central attributes of culture, whereas assessments of the epistemological structure of culture scrutinized how the concept of culture was operationalized, configured, patterned, and organized in empirical research. The following subsections depict the debate in detail by mapping the fundamental ontological and epistemological themes of criticism. These themes refer to (a) *the problem of the indirect-value inference approach*, (b*) misconceiving culture as geographically bounded*, (c) *misconceiving culture as coherent and unified, (d) misconceiving culture as immutable and stable*, and (e) *misconceiving values as the most important cultural facet.*

The Problem of the Indirect-Value Inference Approach

Section 4.3.3 indicated that the major approach to operationalizing national culture was the indirect value inference, which assigns data from available indices of cultural dimensions to the samples surveyed. Brannen (2009: 83) noted that the Hofstedean paradigm in the study of culture and its relationship to business-relevant phenomena constituted the dominant epistemology, in which causal relationships have been investigated based on binary logic which focuses on differences between cultural

groups ("*us/them logic*"). This logic has provided high utility to the aggregate value-based dimensions offered by Hofstede and other readily available cultural indices.

Aside from its widespread use, the application of the indirect value inference to operationalize culture, which is then used to explain observed cross-cultural differences, was seen as ambivalent. On the one hand, Kirkman et al., (2006: 303, 311), argued that using the same survey format for measuring dependent variables (i.e., behavioral phenomena) and independent variables (i.e., culture) may compromise results (i.e., common method variance). Accordingly, Kirkman et al. (311) noted that the extrapolation of measures of culture stemming from value indices circumvents possible constraints from "*common method variance, retrospective evaluations, and rationalizations that may accompany direct measures*."

On the other hand, Lenartowicz and Roth (1999: 786) and Singelis (2000: 82) warned against the eclectic use of Hofstede's index in cross-cultural marketing studies by simply extrapolating his cultural characterizations to the samples under study:

> *Lenartowicz and Roth (1999: 786): "The concern with this approach is potential measurement error arising from the extrapolation of cultural values from the group assessed by the benchmark study to the sample being surveyed".*
>
> *Singelis (2000: 82): "For example, much work has been done in exploring the effects of individualism and collectivism on a variety of behaviors […]. All too often, the behaviors have been compared across cultures without measuring the psychological difference that is purported to be responsible. In other words, researchers have accepted cultural characterizations from previous research as accounting for observed differences in current work."*

Lowe (2002: 22) noted that the paradigmatic conceptualization of culture is strongly influenced by the "*objectivive assumptions underlying functionalism resulting in an impoverished reductionism and a monocle, myopic, Western world view. The problem is that this dominant 'home' paradigm of Western functionalism is trapped by the favored ways of reductionist thinking which imposes a rationalistic, atomistic 'psychic prison' determined more holistic and less ethnocentric approaches*". Lowe (2002: 32) also lamented the strong reliance on the Hofstedean paradigm, since the framework and index were unable to stimulate new insights into the relationship between culture

and business-relevant phenomena. Instead, the continuing prominence of his approach was hampering the derivation of further knowledge:

> *Lowe (2002: 32):"The seminal study of Hofstede (1980) has dominated culture and management studies but despite its immense influence, the 4-D study is too often adopted uncritically, without adequate reflection employed inappropriately. The narrow empirical operationalization of culture employed by Hofstede places it firmly within functionalism. Hofstede's hope that different approaches would come to explore an 'intersubjective' understanding of culture have not been realized. The domination of Hofstede's model has had the effect of exacerbating paradigmatic warfare. Whereas Hofstede cannot be held responsible for this, the proposition is that his model should now be regarded as a "heavy tool" unsuitable for the prescient need for metaparadigmatic advancement through a paradigmatic 'armistice'."*

Likewise, Nakata and Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 72) and Taras et al. (2009: 55) questioned whether over-reliance on the indirect value inference approach, allowed the field to develop the desired and needed knowledge about how culture and behavioral/cognitive processes are related.

> *Nakata and Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 71, 72): "[…] this situation raises the question of whether the paradigm's dominance is entirely positive or healthy for knowledge production."*

> *Taras and Steel (2009: 55): "The taboos imposed by this dominant paradigm greatly obstruct progress in cross-cultural research by limiting the scope of data and types of analyses that are 'welcomed' in the field."*

Further criticism was addressed to the management literature which mainly used Kogut and Singh's (1988) approach to calculate an arithmetic average of deviations from a focal country along each of Hofstede's four cultural dimensions in each country under investigation from a focal country (see section 4.3.3). Richter, Hauff, Schlaegel, Gudergan, Ringle & Gunkel (2016: 65-66) pointed out that bundling cultural dimensions into one distance construct, does not make it possible to determine the role of and extent to which various dimensions affect cultural differences:

> *Richter et al.: (2016: 65-66) "For instance, is the same value difference for two dimensions equally important in determining an overall measure of distance across a set of dimensions? Is the impact of the difference in one dimension affected by the difference in another dimension? These indices also do not consider possible complex interrelationships between the various cultural dimensions, nor do they serve as a measure to under-*

*stand differences in the impacts of the multidimensional construct of culture on inten-
tions."*

Nakata (2009a: 5) also argued that researchers using the indirect value inference method – "intentionally or unintentionally, implicitly or explicitly" – adapted the same ontological assumptions underlying the definition of culture on which the indices were based. The following subsections elaborate on the consequences of the indirect value-inference approach by discussing the associated ontological and epistemological problems.

Conceiving Culture as Geographically Bounded

A first theme of criticism refers to the ontological assumption that culture is commensurate with national boundaries. Briley, Morris, and Simonson (2000:159) noted that, based on Hofstede's cultural indices*, "[a] wave of comparative studies has been premised on the findings that Western Anglophone nations are proxies for individualistic culture and East Asian nations are proxies for collectivistic culture."* The availability and easy accessibility of cultural value indices, as well as the easy integration of those scores in the analytical procedure, motivated scholars to embrace the idea that culture is commensurate with national borders (Taras & Steel, 2009: 49). Accordingly, researchers extrapolated Hofstede's value index to their sample based on the explicit or implicit agreement that respondents within political, ethnic, and/or geographical boundaries share important cultural traits.

In explaining this unbroken trend of investigating culture on the national level, Douglas and Craig (2009: 130) argued that nations are a convenient unit for analysis because data are available on a country-by-country basis. Furthermore, due to the large body of publications focusing on national cultural similarities and differences, research results can be easily compared to previous findings. Steenkamp (2001: 36) defended the focus on national culture by arguing that environmental forces such as a common

historical background as well as linguistic, political, legal, and educational commu-nalities constitute the mental programming of a nation's citizens. Steenkamp also ad-vocated the notion that there is systematic variation between countries on the national-cultural level by referring to Hofstede's publications (1980; 1991), which successfully differentiated nations on national cultural dimensions. Finally, Steenkamp argued that empirical studies have provided further proof for cultural effects at the national level.

> *Steenkamp, 2002: 36): "If there were no degree of commonality within countries and di-versity between countries, such results would be unlikely to emerge. […] Finally, concep-tual and empirical studies in marketing and other social sciences that examine cultural effects at the country level have yielded many important and interesting insights […]. If there were no degree of within-country commonality and between-country differences in culture, such findings would be hard, if not impossible to achieve."*

However, as critically noted by McSweeney (2002: 107-108), the available culture frameworks and their respective indices delineated culture by national boundaries without providing actual proof of uniform national cultures.

> *McSweeney (2002: 107-108): "[…] the generalizations about national level culture from an analysis of sub-national populations necessarily relies on the unproven and unprova-ble supposition that within each nation there is a uniform national culture and on the widely contested assertion that micro-local data from a section of IBM employees are representative of that supposed national uniformity."*

Tsui et al.(2007: 462) argued that results obtained through the indirect value inference approach are rather difficult to interpret. Due to the aggregate country scores, re-searchers are not in a position to control for any within-nation variation in a cultural value. Likewise, Earley (2006: 924) stated that "*Hofstede's conceptualization of cul-ture as a possession of a nation is unsatisfactory, because various 'value dimensions' suggest that such aggregations are contradictory with the constructs themselves. […] By its axiomatic nature, a collective culture has a number of highly distinctive 'in-groups' that may have very different characteristics from one another.*"

Conceiving Culture as Coherent and Unified

The discussion above has shown that empirical researchers assumed that cultural indices represent a reliable and sophisticated measure for describing the cultural orientations of respondents from a particular nation (Leung et al., 2005: 36; Nakata, (2009b). This approach assumes that nations are homogenous in their cultural profile and hence, all individuals within one nation share the same value orientation. McSweeney (2013: 12) described the assumed traits of coherence and unity best:

> *McSweeney (2013:12): "What the causal national culture schools [e.g. Hofstede, Schwartz, Triandis, Hall] implicitly supposed is that the cultural values of a nation (aka country) are a coherent whole, that is, they contain no contradictory elements. A national culture, it is supposed, is logically consistent, a seamless web. That assumption is necessary to exclude the possibility of individuals constructing incompatible, ambivalent, or contradictory propositions from that culture and thus (given the supposition of cultural determinism) of acting differently."*

Neither large-scale studies such as those of Hofstede and GLOBE, nor the countless empirical studies inferring value indices for their samples, explicitly tested the assumption of coherency and unity. In fact, Kirkman et al. (2006) noted that within-nation heterogeneity on cultural value orientations may be seen as one reason for unsupported hypotheses on the relationships of phenomena. In addition, Taras and Steel (2006: 51), specifically reviewing studies that measured culture directly, noted that most of the studies reported sample means (aggregate data) along cultural dimensions, but lacked information about the dispersion of cultural scores within groups, such as standard deviations and ranges, or by considering skewness or kurtosis. They lamented that mean scores do not leverage a sufficient understanding of culture simply because within-nation variance on cultural values was ignored:

> *Taras and Steel (2006: 51): "Focusing solely on means may create a false perception of cultural homogeneity within a group, obstructing the detection of subcultures. For example, a statistical average provides no meaningful description of scores within groups with bimodal or otherwise non-normal distributions. At the same time, measures of value dispersion and skewness could provide useful information about the cultural composition of the group. After all, cultural diversity may be an important characteristic of a group and perhaps even a facet of culture."*

Several reviews cautioned the field about the existence of subcultures (Engelen & Brettel, 2011: 522; . Kirkman et al., 2006: 313; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003:176; Taras & Steel, 2009: 51; Tsui et al., 2007: 461). For instance, Tsui et al. (2007: 461) noted in their review of cross-cultural studies that by using the indirect value-inference, researchers implicitely or explicitely agree on the assumption that culture is a shared property and mean scores of culture values can be attributed to individuals.

> *Tsui et al. (2006: 461):"[…] there is variation in individual experiences of culture, and […] considerable within-nation variation on many culture dimensions […]. This suggests a configural property. It is curious that culture researchers continue to treat culture as a global property by using nation as a proxy or assume a shared property of culture by using mean scores of culture values. Treating culture as a global construct, especially the use of a proxy for culture, does not provide informative insight into how culture influences employee behaviors in different national contexts."*

Kirkman et al. (2006: 313) challenged this assumption vehemently by reporting that *"the relatively low amount of variance explained by the cultural values in many studies underscores the existence of the many other forces besides culture that determine the behavior and attitudes of individuals in societies."* The criticism is further supported by empirical evidence for within-country cultural diversity. In fact, Kirkman et al. (2006: 305-306) mentioned that within-nation heterogeneity in cultural value orientations may be seen as one reason for unsupported hypothesized relationships between phenomena. This may be the case in particular, when data were obtained from countries with diverse subcultures such as the USA.

> *Kirkman et al. (2006: 305-306): "Perhaps within-culture variation on PD explains why the expected relationship between participative goal-setting and both satisfaction and performance has not been consistently supported in the US."*

Reviews published by Douglas and Craig (2009: 131) and McSweeney (2013: 8-9), referred to several studies that documented diversity in cultural values:

> *Douglas and Craig (2009: 131): "Subcultures, such as ethnic, sociodemographic, or other groupings, exist within countries and often have their own distinctive interests, consumption, and purchasing behavior patterns. Mexican Americans (Peñaloza, 1994) and Indian immigrants to the United States (Mehta & Belk, 1991), for example, have interests in specific product attributes, brands, or product categories and use different distribution outlets. The context for each subculture is the dominant culture that surrounds it, as well*

as the micro-context (e.g., neighborhood, living conditions, urban vs rural) in which they live.”

McSweeney (2013:8-9):“[…] there is a vast body of empirical data depicting considerable behavioral variation within countries (see for example, Lenartowicz, Johnson & White, 2003 […]).”

Based on a meta-analysis of 598 cultural values studies, Steel and Taras (2010: 211) illustrated that *“up to 90% of the variance in cultural values is found to reside within countries, stressing that national averages poorly represent specific individuals.”* In addition, Mooij (2015: 254) referred to Schwartz (1992) who demonstrated that extensions of values from the individual level to the culture level is problematic. Schwartz originally validated ten motivationally distinct types of individual values at individual level but found that the value constructs appropriate for comparing the cultures of societies differ from those appropriate for comparing individuals:

> *Mooij (2015: 254): “Analysis at the societal level, based on sample means obtained by aggregating the individual scores within each society, showed support for only seven cultural value constructs that overlapped with the,individual-level structure, but the match was far from perfect.”*

Conceiving Culture as Immutable and Stable

Another theme of criticism is the assumed immutability and stability of cultural values. Reviewing the management literature, Taras and Steel (2009: 44) critically judged that Hofstede's national value scores were frequently and continuously used to explain and model the current influence of culture on behavior, despite the fact that they were obtained at different points in time:

> *Taras and Steel (2009: 44): “Following publication of Hofstede's (1980) Culture's Consequences, cultures have been traditionally viewed as unchanging. Hofstede's original, decades-old indices, derived using data from the IBM study of 1967–73, are still frequently used in secondary empirical analyses, even in the most recent years.”*

Singelis (2000: 82) and Leung et al.(2005: 361) noted that inferring value scores from indices based on data collected in previous research is only possible, when researchers agree on the assumption that value orientations are stable over time. In fact, this as-

sumption is supported in Hofstede's conceptualization of culture. Viewing culture as having relatively stable characteristics, Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv & Sanders (1990: 312) argued for the formation of cultural values in early childhood which then remain stable during the course of a person's life:

> *Hofstede et al. (1990: 312): "[...] by the time a child is ten, most of her basic values are probably programmed into his or her mind"*

Nakata (2009: 251) noted further that this perspective also constitutes a central part of the alternative frameworks of culture:

> *Nakata (2009: 251): "Hall echoes this perspective, elaborating that ways of thinking and communicating become inculcated after centuries of practice. The result is a pervasive, hidden culture that is "quite stable and long persisting" (Hall, 1976, p. 52). Triandis (2000; Triandis and Suh, 2002) does not directly address the issue of cultural constancy but implies his position in descriptions of culture as generationally transferred. He says societies develop enduring conventions over time to improve their functional effectiveness in certain ecologies."*

Nakata (2009b) questioned the stability of cultural values, behavioral norms, and patterns. She supported her point of view by arguing that cultures are exposed to external influences such as migration, political, economic, educational and other changes over time, which are likely to influence culture and induce cultural change:

> *Nakata (2009c: 252): "A major reason put forth for rejecting the static picture is that no culture is isolated, and without isolation, permanence is impossible. [...] Another reason for rejecting the idea of culture as more or less fixed is that, when time is considered, cultures do change."*

In addition, Taras, Steel, and Kirkman (2011), in their meta-analysis of studies relating to Hofstede's value index published in 1980 on behavioral or cognitive variables, found evidence of the decreasing significance and strength of relationships, that is, the longer the time gap between the extrapolated value scores and the primary collected data of the dependent variables, the less reliable were the results.

Conceiving Values as the Most Important Cultural Facet

The field has developed several value dimensions for studying and comparing different cultures. Although dimensionalization is a convenient way to study cultures across borders, Nakata and Huang (2005: 62) bemoaned the exclusive focus on values as the central tenets of culture. They criticized the general tendency of the field to understand culture in the Hofstedean tradition as "*mental programing*" and "*software of the mind*". Their criticism targeted the simplification of the highly complex concept of culture:

> *Nakata & Huang (2005: 62):"However, [Hofstede's] definition necessarily restricts culture to a mental good, a position that has received significant criticism in the wider social sciences for diminishing the role of traditions, social arrangements, and other group behaviors."*

Moreover, among the five dimensions developed by Hofstede and their respective score indices, the scores of individualism and collectivism dominated empirical research (Maheswaran and Shavitt 2000: 61). Kağitçibaşi (1987: 52) noted that a *"massive amount of work has been carried out in the area of individualism and collectivism since 1980, so much so that the 1980s may be called the decade of I/C in cross-cultural psychology."* Kirkman et al. (2006: 299) explained the frequent use of the dimension of individualism and collectivism by its close theoretical ties to group behavior. However, Briley, Morris & Simonson (2000: 159) lamented that it would be *"[…] a triumph of parsimony if many diverse cultural differences in decision making could be explained in terms of a single cultural disposition, such as individualism collectivism."* In this respect, Tayeb observed that the developed value dimensions applied in cross-cultural research do not help to fully capture the complex interrelationship between culture and behavior. Lowe (2002: 25) and Nakata (2009b) were critical of the treatment of values (mainly the dimensions of individualism and collectivism) as the exclusive and determining force guiding feelings, cognitive processes, and behavior:

Lowe (2002: 25): "Hofstede's central metaphor of mental programs equates culture with mind and mind with the mechanistic model of computers. Culture ends up being computer-like 'software of the mind' (Hofstede, 1990) that involves linear information processing. This computer model of cognition seduces us into accepting a mechanistic worldview."

Nakata (2009b: 255) "Another issue was denying the autonomy of people and their ability to defy culture, that is, their agency. In this epistemology, people are passive cultural robots pushed around by a monolithic force that tells them how to think, what to do, which way to live."

Summing up, the core premises of the concept of culture rely heavily on a positivist ontology that has led to several ontological and epistemological problems. These problems have their roots in the predominant assumptions about culture that circumscribe the construct as commensurate with a set of universal value dimensions by which nations can be distinguished. In addition, value tendencies are believed to be coherent, unified, immutable, and geographically demarcated Nakata(2009b). None of the investigated reviews reported renunciation of these traditional assumptions in empirical research.

Having discussed the development of theorizing the relationship between constructs at the cultural level and substantive levels, as well as the conceptualization and operationalization of culture, the next section focuses on measurement equivalence problems that apply to both levels when comparing research results across cultural boundaries.

4.5 Research Instrument Design – The Thorny Topic of dealing with Measurement Equivalence Problems

This section focuses on the development of ways to cope with the measurement equivalence problems in cross-cultural research. The development of a scheme for coding measurement mechanisms was a daunting task, due to the long and intense debate in review publications. Initially, the coding procedure identified text passages assessing whether and how researchers paid attention to comparability of phenomena and the appropriateness of their respective measurement instruments across cultures. By constantly comparing the identified assessments (see Section 3.4 for an explanation of the coding procedure), it became obvious that the debate on measurement problems is characterized by pluralism in the nomenclature. In a similar vein, Maheswaran (2000: 60) mentioned an inventory of over 50 types of equivalence issues being discussed in the literature. Due to the abundance of different labels and modifiers in the literature, it was decided to use a well-accepted categorization to structure and synthesize the discussion in designing measurement instruments. The thought leaders Craig and Douglas (2005: 188-189) categorized and structured measurement issues into a set of two key equivalence types that refer to construct equivalence and measure equivalence.

This approach may be criticized on the grounds of not considering the total range of equivalence issues discussed in review publications and not following the rules of Grounded Theory (see section 3.4). However, recent review publications (i.e., He, Merz & Alden, 2008; Hult et al., 2008;Yaprak, 2003) also applied the same categorization for the assessments of measurement equivalence issues, that underlines the usefulness and acceptance of Craig and Douglas' categorization. Moreover, the identified assessments in this review of reviews could all be structured within the categorization of Craig and Douglas (2005). Thus, for reasons of comprehensiveness it was dicided to leave the path of strictly following the Grounded Theory approach.

Table 8: Overview of Coding Scheme pertaining to Assessments of Measurement Equivalence Issues

Code (research process issue)	Code definition	Example of assessment
	Textpassages assessing whether empirical articles…	
Construct equivalence	…established construct equivalence (referring to functional, conceptual, and category equivalence).	*"The overall lack of construct equivalence reporting in relation to pre-data collection methods is concerning, as failure to establish functional, conceptual, or category equivalence threatens the validity and credibility of conclusions of IB research."* Hult et al. (2008: 1031)
Measure equivalence	…established measure equivalence (referring to translation, calibration, and metric equivalence).	*"[...] the results indicate that all three aspects of [measure] equivalence are rarely fully reported or established. In part, this may reflect difficulty in the implementation of the procedures to establish calibration, translation, or metric equivalence."* Hult et al. (2008: 1036)

The first type, **construct equivalence**, deals with the question of whether constructs, such as marketing constructs, variety seeking and brand loyalty, are understood by repsondents across cultures in the same way and whether they possess the same saliance. Craig and Douglas further encapsulated the issue of construct equivalence into three elements of concern. These elements refer to **functional equivalence** (i.e., the similarity of objects and goals of behavior with regard to their role or function across cultures); **conceptual** equivalence (i.e., the similarity of respondents' interpretation of marketing stimuli, products, and behavior across cultures); and **category** equivalence (i.e., the similarity of classification schemes used to categorize objects, stimuli, and behaviors). The second type, **measure equivalence**, is closely linked to construct equivalence since the measure is an operational definition of the construct. Hence, Craig and Douglas (2005: 191) distinguished between the equivalence of the focal construct with that of the respective measurement procedure. They likewise divided measure equivalence into three sub-equivalence types: **translation equivalence**

(i.e. the similarity of meaning and ideas of scales and verbal stimuli across culture), **calibration equivalence** (i.e., the similarity of measurement units such as monetary units, measures of weight, distance, volume etc.), and **metric equivalence** (i.e., the similarity of the scale or scoring procedure used to establish the measure and the similarity of response to a given measure across cultures). Table 8 provides an overview of the coding scheme including code definitions and examples of assessments.

4.5.1 Shedding Light on Measurement Equivalence Problems (1960s and 1970s)

In the 1960s and 1970s, review publications assessing the cross-cultural psychology and management literature turned the spotlight on the measurement problems that hampered the field's attempts to draw meaning from its cross-cultural comparisons (Berrien, 1967: 42; Frijda & Jahoda, 1966: 116; Malpass, 1977: 1076; Nath, 1969: 53-54; Elder, 1976: 221; Roberts, 1970: 345). These early review publications noted that measurement problems are a major issue in studies comparing data collected in diverse cultural settings. In contrast to a thermometer that can be used to reliably and validly measure the temperature of the body, regardless of the context, reviewers pointed to the immense problems when measuring and comparing latent psychological constructs across different cultural groups.

Nath (1968: 53,54), examining the state of affairs in cross-cultural management research conducted during the 1960s, deplored the fact that the *"poor quality of most of the cross-cultural research to date is, in large measure, due to failure to ensure cross-cultural and cross-linguistic comparability of research instruments used."* Likewise, Schöllhammer (1973: 29) complained that in cross-cultural management research, concepts, constructs, and the respective operationalisations were not effectively and appropriately selected for the purpose of comparing data across cultures. According to his assessments, researchers did not ensure whether constructs and their operationalisations had the same meaning, salience, and significance in the cultural settings

under investigation. Consequently, the work of scholars might be subject to construct non-equivalence and bias, which constrained the validity and reliability of results:

> *Schöllhammer (1973:29): "Empirical research studies in international business and comparative management -whether they are descriptive, interpretive or normative - frequently reflect substantial methodological deficiencies. [...] Questionnaires are frequently mailed indiscriminately and all the responses are given the same validity although the contextual situation of the respondents and their operating characteristics may be vastly different."*

The same state of affairs hampered research in cross-cultural marketing. Green and White (1976: 82) noted that researchers did not compare purchasing-related phenomena accurately across cultures. The inaccuracy was rooted mainly in the absence of knowledge about the functional equivalence of phenomena and the corresponding measurement instruments across cultures:

> *Green and White (1976: 82): "However, the area of cross-national consumer behavior has probably not reached the point where this type of hypothesis testing is possible, since so little is known about the functional equivalence of purchasing-related phenomena across countries."*

This concern was echoed by van Raaij (1978: 693) and Child (1981: 332), who complained about the ethnocentric tendencies of marketing scholars when designing measurement instruments:

> *van Raaij (1978: 693): "Concepts and instruments have been developed in the United States and not in the "other" culture of the cross-cultural study. This may introduce "ethnocentrism" in the type of questions we address, the concepts we employ, and the explanations we give of the results. For instance, the study of consumer satisfaction is relevant in a western mass-consumption society but not, or in a different way, in a developing country [...]"*

> *Child (1981: 332): "Relying entirely or even primarily upon structured questions in order to isolate cultural characteristics [...] may fall foul of the problem that a standard comparative instrument does not necessarily mean the same to respondents of different nationality precisely because of those cultural variables (values, norms, beliefs, stereotypes) that one is seeking to isolate."*

In consideration of the prevailing measurement problems of the early period, Triandis (1976: 155) elaborated on the problems associated with the design of standard-

ized questionnaire surveys in cross-cultural research. He warned that reactions to the wording of a questionnaire, the task, the response alternatives, and the research setting may differ across cultures. Thus, if researchers do not control for these sources of variances, bias may downgrade the data obtained and make results uninterpretable. However, the field was not yet able to cope with these challenges:

> *Triandis (1976: 155): "In our classic methodology we randomly assign subjects to experimental and control groups. We manipulate an independent variable and observe some dependent variable. Here comparison has few problems. However, once we leave this neat design, we enter into areas where research may be methodologically indefensible [...]. How does one establish the equivalence of measurement [...] across cultures? Suppose we get similar results relating two variables in two groups, can we say that we have discovered a general relationship holding across all such groups? Or, to take the opposite case, suppose we find a difference between two groups, how can we be sure that we have identified the cause of the difference? How do we know that we have controlled for artifacts, confounds, response sets, etc.? How can we know that measurement was equally appropriate for each of the groups under investigation?"*

In summary, cross-cultural research in the 1960s and 1970s was characterized by comparisons of consumer, employee, or manager responses to standardized questionnaires. Measurement instruments and scales were predominantly designed in the United States and then used to survey respondents in other cultures without testing the appropriateness of doing so (see also section 4.2.1 on the field's pseudo etic research orientation). The obtained results were criticized as inappropriately comparative, as the imposed measurements inevitably led to ethnocentric comparisons. Researchers seldom tested whether their measurement instruments measured precisely what they were intended to measure. This state of affairs reflected both the youth of the discipline and the complexity of the challenges inherent in cross-cultural research. The next two sections focus on the development and adoption of the coping mechanisms applied by researchers to establish measurement equivalence both before and after data collection.

4.5.2 Increasing Popularity of the Back-Translation Technique and its over-looked Pitfalls (1970s- to date)

In response to the prevailing lack of attention to the precise and accurate measurement of behavioral phenomena and constructs across cultures, several review publications underlined the need to halt the prevailing deterioration in the psychometric quality of data (Evan, 1975: 102; Green and White, 1976: 83; Boddewyn, 1981: 65). Boddewyn, for example, demanded a change in the contemporary approach to developing measurement instruments:

> *Boddewyn (1981: 65): "From a theoretical viewpoint, mere comparison of consumer responses to questionnaire items in different cultures does not guarantee meaningful and useful information for theoretical purposes and for managerial action. Functional (or conceptual) equivalence of constructs and instruments has to be established in order to guarantee "real" cross-cultural comparison. Plausible rival hypotheses that also explain the obtained differences/ similarities have to be ruled out by using […] functionally equivalent measures and quantification modes."*

The first attempts to solve the inherent measurement problems that hampered the explanatory power of cross-cultural research studies appeared in the 1970s. Adler (1984: 63), Bhagat and McQuaid (1982: 677) and Kraut (1975: 540-541) were the first to report an increasing use of the translation-back-translation technique[3] in cross-cultural management research. This technique was developed and proposed by Brislin, Lonner & Thorndike (1973) as a means to ensure the equivalence of research instruments used in cross-cultural research studies. Sekaran (1983: 62) explained that the back-translation technique provides researchers with a language check and thus helps to ensure the equivalence of constructs between cultures.

The utilization of the back-translation technique increased significantly **between the 1980s and 2000s**. Assessments of the cross-cultural management literature (Peng

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[3] Berry (1980: 10) explained the translation-back-translation technique as "a technique which involves an initial translation to a target language by one bilingual person, and a back translation to the original language by another; discrepancies will often indicate the presence of conceptual non-equivalence."

et al.,1991: 98; Schaffer and Riordan, 2003: 84; Tsui et al., 2007: 457; Hult et al., 2008: 1035) as well as reviews of cross-cultural marketing publications (Douglas et al., 1994: 299, Samiee and Jeong,1994: 213; Malhotra, Agarwal & Peterson, 1996: 24; Sin et al., 1999: 84; Taylor et al., 2011: 161) evidenced a strong acceleration of back-translated research instruments. In fact, the back-translation technique had become the mechanism most frequently used to deal with measurement problems. The findings of Sin et al. (1994: 98) and Taylor et al. (2011: 457) illustrate this dominance:

> *Sin et al. (1999: 84): "As far as translation equivalence is concerned, of the thirty-two studies requiring translation, eighteen (or 56.2%) studies were identified as making use of back translation in the instrument design; while the remaining studies either employed direct translation or did not report what had been done to establish translation equivalence."*

> *Taylor et. al. (2011, 161): "[…] slightly under two-thirds (65%) of studies where data were collected in different languages employed a back-translation, indicative of its status as accepted and normally being necessary practice."*

Despite the popularity of this coping mechanism, persistent notes of criticims cautioned researchers to rely exclusively on back-translations in designing measurement instruments for cross-cultural research purposes. Warnings noted that the spoken and written language forms used in questionnaires and scales could still be flawed by non-equivalence problems, as the back-translation technique alone cannot preserve the same meanings and ideas expressed by the original version (Green & White, 1976: 84; Samiee & Jeong, 1994: 213; Samiee & Athanassiou, 1998: 87; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003: 189, Tsui et al. 2007: 457; Malhorta, 1999: 20; Sin et al. 1999: 84; Okazaki & Mueller, 2007: 510). The belief that back-translated instruments are equally understood by respondents across cultures matched the persistent imposition of Western, often US-based theoretical perspectives and measurement instruments of local phenomena on foreign cultures (see section 4.1.2). The pseudo etic research agenda assumed a universal character of concepts and measurement instruments that can be easi-

ly translated from one language into another (Lonner and Adamopoulos, (1997). Li and Cavusgil articulated this criticism best:

> *Li and Cavusgil (1995: 272): "[…] there is a tendency for consumer/buyer behavior researchers in the United States to assume either implicitly or explicitly that a single model of behavior developed on American consumers and specific products or services is universally applicable to all buying and consumption situations, without testing underlying model assumptions or model linkages."*

As argued by Greenfield (1997: 1), cross-cultural research usually follows the belief that *"with appropriate linguistic translation, administration by a native tester and (less frequently) the provision of familiar content, […] ability tests can go anywhere"*. Directly commenting on this state of affairs, Bhagat and Mc Quaid (1982: 677) and Watkins (2010: 700-701) underlined that language is not a neutral vehicle and thus, respondents' interpretations and associations of survey items are affected by the categories and words available in a population's vocabulary. They argued that the application of the translation-back-translation cannot confidently ensure with any confidence that subtle nuances in the use of language, idioms, and inferences by respondents are equivalent across cultures:

> *Bhagat and Mc Quaid (1982: 677): "Translation remains a problem area in cross-cultural psychology, although there have been some signs of improvement since the Roberts (1970) review, especially in the area of back translation techniques as recommended by Werner and Campbell (1970). […] the problems of achieving proper equivalence in the translation of task instruction and subject responses are still not always addressed (Sechrest et al., 1972). […] Even if back translation is used, equivalence of experience is often ignored or assumed." p. 677*

> *Watkins (2010: 700-701): "It is increasingly understood in values research that there are many cultural concepts which have no linguistic equivalents and that translation does not guarantee conceptual equivalence. All translated instruments are subject to measurement problems, and the validity and reliability of the question items in the various cultures/languages they are translated into are often overlooked"*

In sum, researchers were too optimistic in relying solely on the translation-back-translation technique for designing measurement instruments. As a result, reviewers

advised that this technique be used only as one of many necessary coping mechanisms in the search for equivalent measurement instruments (see Section 5.5 for a discussion on possible directions).

4.5.3 Meandering Adoption of Emic Insights and Qualitative Methodologies to ensure Construct Equivalence a priori (1970s- to date)

Following up on the concerns discussed above regarding translation-back-translation, review publications recommended expanding the repertoire of *a priori* coping mechanisms. Emic perspectives through interviews and observations, as well as pretest and multicultural research teams, were deemed to be helpful in identifying truly universal concepts and measurement items in order to derive equivalent research instruments (Morris, Leung, Ames & Lickel,1999; Peng et al., 1991; Öngel & Smith, 1994; Öngel and Smith, 1994). Such coping mechanisms (see also Section 5.5 for a discussion on possible directions and recommendation) contained the promise of supporting and supplementing the search for equivalent research instruments in order to establish psychometric quality in data collected across cultures.

The first signs of progress on this front emerged **in the 1990s**. Samiee and Athanassiou (1998: 214) and Maheswaran (2000: 60) identified a small number of research articles employing pretests in the cultures under study:

> *Samiee and Athanassiou (1998: 214): "The research instruments were pretested in nine of the 39 field studies and surveys (23%). The remaining studies used instruments that were previously used and apparently validated (Mitchell, 1983, p. 198)."*

> *Maheswaran (2000: 60-61): "[…] current research prototype is an etic experiment that uses instruments developed in the United States to collect data in another country. The questionnaires are translated to address the language issues. […] Although there appears to be a definite bias toward the etic approach, researchers are aware of the need to integrate the emic aspects of the research context. Several studies report pretesting of questionnaires or stimuli in other cultures prior to the administration of materials in those cultures."*

Singelis (2000: 77), Zhang et al. (2008: 217), and Tsui et al. (2007: 454) likewise witnessed a slow but continuing trend towards using qualitative approaches to capture culture-specific meanings in designing equivalent measurement instruments:

> *Singelis (2000: 77): "In addition, quantitative methodology in cross-cultural investigations has progressively become more sophisticated and hence more acceptable to those trained in the scientific tradition of social psychology. At the same time, a greater acceptance of qualitative methods in psychology has given voice to a social constructivist viewpoint that is especially useful in understanding cultural meanings."*

> *Zhang et al (2008: 217):"While the SERVQUAL remains the dominant framework applied in this area of cross-cultural research, some researchers have begun to challenge the SERVQUAL dimensions by both conceptualizing a framework for measuring service quality internationally and by empirically developing a culture-specific service quality measure suitable in non-Western cultures. This resulted in the addition of several dimensions—personalization, formality, and sincerity."*

> *Tsui et al. (2007: 454): "The most commonly used research design is questionnaire surveys (63%), followed by simulation experiments (22%) and scenario-based surveys (20%). […] A few studies use interviews to complement their data collection. […] In a laudable, but not easily replicable, data collection exercise, Gibson & Zellmer-Bruhn (2001) interviewed 107 individuals in four countries. Such interviews enabled them to inductively generate metaphor data from the local interviewees' natural mental processes, thereby reducing the bias that may exist if they were to use an existing model in a deductive approach.*

Compared to the state of affairs in previous decades, the above findings indicate that some leading-edge researchers have begun to be more concerned about emic insights (how a hypothetical construct becomes manifested in actual behavior or attitudes in the respective cultures under study) when designing their research instrument for cross-cultural research purposes. However, approaches aiming to provide emic insights to circumvent the above described pitfalls of back-translated measurement instruments remained an exception.

Criticizing the infrequent use of emic insights, Hult et al. (2008: 1031) and Schaffer and Riordan (2003: 191) clearly stated that the number of studies examining the equivalence of stimuli, concepts, and behavior was too small. They also complained that these stagnant developments made results uninterpretable, which led to

weak explanatory power and put constraints on the validity and reliability of research outcomes:

> *Schaffer and Riordan (2003: 191): "Often, surveys are routinely administered in cross-cultural research without addressing these [equivalence] concerns. Only 25% of the studies in our sample described procedures related to these types of equivalence. Measurement instruments lacking such equivalence can lead to inaccurate conclusions about important relationships as well as to misguided interventions."*

> *Hult et al. (2008:1031): "overall lack of construct equivalence reporting in relation to pre-data collection methods is concerning, as failure to establish functional, conceptual, or category equivalence threatens the validity and credibility of conclusions of IB research."*

In a similar vein, Cavusgil et al. (2005: 12) reported with a note of pessimism that measurement problems abounded in cross-cultural marketing research. Pretests and qualitative approaches for ensuring measurement instrument equivalence were employed by only a minority of researchers, and thus, researchers' ethnocentrism was likely to reduce the psychometric quality of the results.

> *Cavusgil et al. (2005: 12): "[…] equivalency problems have concerned international marketing researchers during the field's rise to adulthood."*

In explaining the infrequent use of emic techniques, van de Vijver (2015: 106) noted that emic approaches identifying culture-specific insights in order to maximize the appropriateness of the item content in each of the investigated cultures is *"theoretically interesting, [but] the approach has hardly ever been used."* In fact, the pure etic orientation of the field (see section 4.1.1) in comparing behavioral phenomena across cultures explains the high tendency of researchers to use back-translated measurement scales in the investigated cultures. The assumed universality of constructs and concepts makes comparison easier at first glance and is symptomatic of the field's predominant positioning within an etic paradigm (Van de Vijver and Leung, 1997: 266; Brislin et al., 1973: 432; Yaprak, 2008: 185) (see also Section 4.1). In this respect, Boehnke et al. (2014: 4) point out that *"it has become customary to […] secure functional and conceptual equivalence (i.e., the requirement that concepts have the same*

meaning) by only utilizing equally worded items in all cultures. Thus, linguistically identical items that produce identical mathematical relations when used in studies in different cultures are often seen as the silver bullet of etic cross-cultural psychology."

The next section, elaborates on the field's development with regard to the statistical approaches used to establish measure equivalence after the data has been collected. These approaches were seen more in line with the field's etic paradigmatic positioning.

4.5.4 Slow and spotty Adoption of Psychometric Coping Mechanisms to ensure Measure Equivalence a posteriori (1970s – to date)

The 1960s and early 1970s were also characterized by a lack of statistical analysis approaches to ensure measure equivalence, which downgraded the psychometric quality of the data reported in cross-cultural research studies. For example, Roberts (1970: 345) and Schöllhammer (1973: 29-30) deplored the field's lack of concern about statistical analysis testing the psychometric properties of the research instruments used in cross-cultural management studies (i.e. unidimensionality, reliability, construct validity). The absence of statistical analysis approaches that would ensure the accuracy of instruments applied to measure the constructs of interest abounded. Due to the virtually non-existent attempts to ensure measure equivalence through statistical methods, the validity and quality of obtained results was subject to criticism:

> *Roberts (1970:345): "We have seen few cross-cultural investigations related to organizations which use a convergent-discriminant validity (Campbell & Fiske, 1959) approach."*
>
> *Schöllhammer (1973: 29-30): "The statistical analysis of many of the empirical studies leaves something to be desired. […]. Rarely are more advanced statistical tools of data analysis - such as factor analysis - used."*

In light of the failure to ensure instrument validity, reliability, and freedom from cultural bias, Triandis et al. (1973b) addressed the limitations with regard to problems of equivalence by demanding standard statistical procedures:

Triandis (1973a: 358): " Guthrie (1971: 82) has shown that much caution is necessary when utilizing the cross-cultural method. While many of the correlations computed by Whiting & Child (1953) were consistent with their derivations from psychoanalytic theory, Guthrie showed that many other equally sizable and theoretically embarrassing correlations exist in the complete matrix of intercorrelations. Rohner & Katz (1970) proposed more elaborate tests of interrater reliability and discriminant validity with such data."

His call, however, was ignored by the preponderance of researchers, **as the literature assessments of the 1980s and 1990s** reiterated the criticism quoted above. For example, Albaum and Peterson (1984: 170), Li and Cavusgil (1995: 272), and Malhotra et al. (1996: 7-8) argued that despite the increasing popularity of cross-cultural research during the 1980s and 1990s, further expansion and progress was significantly hampered by the general failure to ensure measure equivalence a posteriori. The above review publications referred to numerous examples of empirical studies that did not utilize statistical procedures to deal with the reliability and validity issues of the obtained data.

Due to these persistent problems of untested measure equivalence, **review publications of the late 1980s and 1990s** exhorted cross-cultural researchers to apply statistical coping mechanisms to prove the robustness and fidelity of the data and the obtained findings. For example, Adler (1983a: 40), Nasif et al. (1991: 87), Sekaran (1983: 66), and Cavusgil and Das (1997: 83) clearly stated that univariate statistical techniques are generally inappropriate as they do not allow assessment of the psychometric quality of the data. Instead, they suggested several multivariate techniques (e.g., cluster analysis, factor analysis, principal components analysis, tests of internal consistency, multi-dimensional scaling, and latent trait theory) (see also Section 5.7 for a discussion of directions and recommendations offered in the literature).[4] However, as stated by Douglas et al. (1994: 299)*"consistent with the replication character of much*

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[4] Furthermore, a number of publications provided a variety of examples and guidelines for mechanisms to cope with various aspects or measurement non-equivalencc in cross-national research (e.g., Cheung & Rensvold, 1999, 2002; Mullen, 1995; van de Vijver and Leung , 1997; Salzberger, Sinkovics & Schlegelmilch, 1999; Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). In section 5.7, the work of these scholars will be discussed in more detail.

research, relatively few studies make use of [...] confirmatory factor analysis to examine and test [...] the operationalization of constructs in the various national contexts."

In the 1990s, the assessments by Aulakh and Kotabe (1993: 20) and Samiee and Athanassiou (1998: 83) indicated little but at least some progress on this front (especially when compared to the state of affairs in the previous decades). They reported that **between the 1980s and the early 1990s** a small number of leading edge research studies conducted statistical tests to ensure that the used instruments functioned with equal efficiency across cultural contexts. Likewise, Sin et al (1999: 84-85) observed a small portion of cross-cultural marketing publications testing for metric equivalence between 1991 and 1996:

> *Aulakh and Kotabe (1993: 20): "[...] no significant difference was found in the addressing of metric equivalence (X2 = 0.82, p > . 50): in the period period 1980-1984, three (or 13 percent) of the studies, and in 1985-90, eleven (or 22 percent) of the studies reported having used techniques for metric equivalence."*

> *Samiee and Athanassiou (1998: 83): "[...] validity, i.e., discriminant, convergent, predictive, and/ or interrater, was discussed in 11 studies (26%). [...]. Reliability checks, i.e., Cronbach's alpha (Churchill 1979; Peter, 1979) were reported in 12 studies (29%). Presumably, the remainder used single-item measures without reliability checks or did not conduct or report the relevant alpha coefficients."*

> *Sin et al (1999: 84-85): "[...] only six (or 11,3%) studies reported having used techniques to test for metric equivalence."*

However, comparing the above quoted assessments with **review findings a decade later**, it becomes obvious that the progress in dealing with measure equivalence stagnated rather than advanced. For instance, Hult et al. (2008: 1035-36), assessing the cross-cultural management literature between **1995 and 2005**, found that only about one quarter of these studies employed procedures to examine and test the equivalence of the underlying conceptual model and the operationalization of constructs. A similar proportion was observed by He et al. (2008) when taking stock of cross-cultural marketing research between **2000 and 2005**. Both reviews recognized that the field lagged behind significantly in adopting available coping mechanisms:

Hult et al (2008: 1036): "The percentage of articles that conducted post-data collection assessment for metric equivalence decreased slightly over time (28% in 1995–1999; 22% in 2000–2005 (t= - 0.731, p= 0.264)). Further, in terms of the two specific elements of metric equivalence, 33 studies (21%) addressed scoring consistency and 29 (19%) assessed scalar equivalence.

He et al., 2008: 73): "Overall, our review indicates that the majority (72.4%) of cross-national empirical marketing studies between 2000 and 2005 did not report [measure equivalence]".

Due to the continuous lack of approaches to establishing measure equivalence, review publications echoed themes of previous criticism (Watkins, 2010: 702; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003; Yaprak, 2008: 176-177; Tsui et al., 2007). The meandering adoption of several available statistical approaches to ensure measure equivalence was explained by Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1998: 79). They attributed the slow adoption of psychometric approaches to establishing measurement equivalence to a variety of factors: (1) the number of different types of measurement equivalence challenging cross-cultural research; (2) the existence of a large inventory of synonymous terms to refer to these different types of measurement equivalence; (3) the existing unfamiliarity of researchers with the use of measurement models that incorporate latent and observed variable means; (4) the difficulties in testing and assuring measurement equivalence of data; (5) the unresolved debate among scholars in the field regarding the degree to which measures must be equivalent in order to conduct meaningful cross-cultural comparisons; and (6) the scarcity of guiding principles to classify whether or not the obtained data exhibit adequate psychometric quality across cultural boundaries.

In a similar vein, He et al. (2008: 78) found an explanation for the lack of attempts to ensure measure equivalence, by analyzing the responses of 86 cross-cultural empirical marketing scholars regarding their knowledge about, attitudes toward, and use of measure-equivalence testing. Two of the main obstacles to employing statistical procedures referred to scholars' lack of confidence in using the appropriate statistical techniques and the non-required inclusion of such coping mechanisms in the review process of journals. The next section will focus on assessments with regard to sampling choices made in cross-cultural research.

4.6 Sampling – Bonds of Inertia and Progress in Collecting Data across Cultures

In the coding process several fundamental sampling issues were identified as particularly salient in the examined reviews. These sampling issues can be grouped into two levels: **sampling of cultures** and **sampling of respondents**. The first level encapsulates into detailed issues referring to the process of selecting cultures (i.e., convenience sampling, theory-driven sampling, random sampling), and the number of cultures studied. The second level comprises the choice of sampling techniques (i.e., probability vs. non-probability sampling), the sampling objective (within-culture representativeness and between-culture comparability), the nature of the sample (e.g. students, consumers, employees, etc.), and the sample sizes used in cross-cultural research studies. These sampling issues (see also Table 9 for an overview of the coding scheme) will be analyzed in the subsequent sections to reveal progress and persistent problems.

Table 9: Coding Scheme pertaining to Text Passages assessing the Choices made in selecting Cultures and Respondents

Code (research process issue)	Code definition	Example of assessment
	Textpassages assessing …	
Selection of cultures	… whether empirical articles employed a theory-driven selection of culture.	*"Choice of country [...] studied seems to be more a function of convenience than purposeful deliberation."* Albaum & Peterson (1984: 169)
Number of cultures sampled	…the number of cultures studied.	*"The majority of studies (n = 34 or 6l%,) covcrcd only two countries and twelve studies (or 37%) involved more than two countries."* Sin et al. (1999: 80)
Comparability of samples	...to which degree the samples drawn were comparable across the cultures studied.	*"Many of the cross-cultural studies have suffered from not assuring comparability of samples."* Nath (1968: 53)

Representativeness of samples	...to which degree the samples drawn were representative for the single cultures studied.	*"In studies taking data from individuals, often only a single organization in each of several countries is used to represent the country. Using culture and management practice of one organization in a country to reflect the country's culture and typical management practice is problematic."* Peng (1988: 88)
Nature of the sample (e.g., students, employees, managers, consumers etc.)	...the characteristics of the respondents surveyed or other data sources collected across cultures.	*"The most preferred subject in IB studies is managers (e.g., CEOs and VPs) with 49.5% of the empirical articles, followed by individuals (e.g., consumers, citizens, 11.3%), financial and government data (10.3%, respectively), students (3.9%), journal articles (3.2%), product and sales data (2.1%), advertisements (0.8%), and newspaper articles (0.8%)."* Yang et al. (2006: 609)
Sample Size	...the number of respondents or other data sources collected across cultures.	*"[…] nearly 60 percent of the studies involving a commercial population either began with, or concluded with, a sample size greater than 100, while 9 out of 10 of the studies of noncommercial populations had an original or obtained sample size greater than 100."* Albaum & Peterson (1984: 167)

4.6.1 Blatant Problems in Sampling Cultures (1960 – to date)

Since the field's early stage, researchers have been confronted with two fundamental questions about the sampling of cultures: (a) *what are the criteria for choosing the cultures?* and (b) *how many cultures should be studied?*. As argued by Nath (1969) and van de Vijver & Leung (1997: 262), the sampling of cultures in cross-cultural research plays a decisive role in testing the theoretical assumptions about the relationship between culture and behavior. The following subsections track developments with regard to the approaches used to select cultures and the number of cultures selected.

Arbitrary Selection of Cultures

In one of the first reviews of cross-cultural research methodologies, Roberts (1970: 343) commented that, **in the 1960s**, in cross-cultural management, cultures for cross-cultural comparisons were selected for reasons of convenience, rather than following any systematic theory-driven selection process:

> *Roberts (1970: 343): "A systematic approach to sample cultures is rarely done, and although it is a difficult task, it is not impossible.[…]Investigators seem, also, to be choosing cultures because location, not because of their standing on some variable."*

Critical judgement of the unsystematic and non-theory-driven process of selecting cultures was reiterated **in the 1970s and 1980s** by Bhagat & McQuaid (1982: 653); Albaum & Peterson (1984: 169); and Sekaran (1983: 66). For instance, Albaum and Peterson deplored the fact that the *"choice of country and topic studied seems to be more a function of convenience than purposeful deliberation."* Bhagat and McQuaid further complained that differences between cultures were discovered by chance rather than by any theoretically-grounded cultural hypothesis. One explanation for this lack of rigor in selecting cultures was linked to the operationalization of culture in the early period through unspecified proxies such as national boundaries, the language or passport status of respondents etc. (see also Section 4.4.1). The lack of appropriate definitions and operationalizations of culture, as well as the non-existence of studies determining cultural value profiles of nations, regions, groups etc., made it impossible to hypothesize the influence of cultural factors on differences or similarities in substantive phenomena *a priori*. Consequently, cultures were not selected on the basis of a theoretical argument. Such a theory-driven approach is only possible when cultures represent opposites on some focal cultural dimension, which allows for predicting differences or similarities in substantive phenomena based on dimensions of culture as predictor variables.

A decade later, categorizations of national cultures were available (e.g., Hall, 1976 and Hofstede, 1980) (see Sections 4.4.2 and 4.3.3). However, researchers did not use these insights on cultural differences to engage in a theory-driven selection of cul-

tures. Hence, review publications reiterated criticism of the arbitrary and opportunistic selection of cultures. Malhotra et al. (1996: 25), Samiee & Jeong (1994: 209), and van de Vijver & Leung (1997: 262) criticized the tendency of cross-cultural researchers to select cultures either because they themselves were members of a particular culture, had access to a particular culture through colleagues, or because a sabbatical stay as a visiting researcher provided the opportunity to collect data. Cultures with short psychic distances were likewise preferred. This practice was a major obstacle to improving the validity of results. Reviewers argued that a convenience-based selection of cultures does not allow testing of whether cross-cultural differences are attributable to culture or to some other source of variance (see Section 4.3.4 and Section 5.3.4 for a discussion on possible alternative explanations):

> *Malhotra et al. (1996: 25):"[…] the selection of cultures in cross-cultural research has been based primarily on convenience rather than on theoretical considerations[…]*
>
> *Samiee & Jeong (1994: 209): "[…] underlying theory(ies) for selecting cultures studied in the cross-cultural advertising literature is not apparent."*
>
> *Vijver & Leung (1997: 262): "The choice of culture is haphazard, driven by convenience, and not related to the theoretical questions raised. Very often, these studies adopt a "let's look and see" approach and do not develop any a priori predictions about cultural differences. When cultural differences are found, post hoc explanations are often developed to explain the differences."*

And yet, even though critical judgment was repeatedly passed on the convenient and opportunistic selection of cultures, no real progress was made on this front **in the late 1990s and early 2000s**. Brouwers, van Hemert, Breugelmans & van de Vijver (2004: 256), Engelen and Brettel (2011: 52), Samiee and Athanassiou (1998: 88), Sin et al.(1999: 81) and Zhang, Beatty and Walsh (2008: 223) observed that progress on this front remained paralyzed and noted critically that conveniently selected culture impeded progress in obtaining more externally valid results and building or testing theories.

Together with the decision concerning the selection of cultures as sites of investigation, researchers need to decide on how many cultures to include in the survey. This issue is discussed in the next section.

Two-Culture Comparisons impeding generalizable Conclusions

In the 1980s, critical assessments with regard to the number of cultures studied appeared for the first time. Sekaran (1983: 64) noted critically that studies in cross-cultural management research conducted **during the 1970s** drew their samples, in most cases, from just two cultures, a fact that raised methodological concerns regarding the validity of the obtained results. The comparison of two cultures alone does not allow variance to be randomized on unmatched variables or rival hypotheses to be eliminated, and hampers a deeper understanding of how culture and behavior are interlinked.

A decade later, reviews observed that the majority of empirical cross-cultural research studies in management (Nasif et al., 1991: 84) and marketing (Samiee & Jeong, 1994: 209; Sin et al., 1999: 80) continued to be based on data from two cultures alone. For example, Sin et al. reported:

> Sin et al. (1999: 80): "The majority of studies (n=34 or 64%) covered only two countries and twelve studies (or 23%) involved more than two countries. It is also interesting to note that seven studies (or 13%) involved only one country. These studies attempted to compare the consumer behavior of two or more subcultures within a country."

Nasif et al., Samiie and Jeong, and Sin et al. bemoaned the low number of cultures studied and identified a major methodological weakness, as alternative explanations for the observed cross-cultural differences could not be ruled out. The number of cultures studied was not large enough to randomize the variance on non-matched cultural variables and to eliminate rival hypotheses. Hence, researchers were unable to attribute differences in responses to distinct cultural traits without the possibility of rival hypotheses. The above scholars argued that research studies based on a two-culture sample should not be used to generalize findings but rather as pilot studies.

During the 1990s and 2000s, small but noteworthy progress was made in terms of increasing the number of countries studied (although the majority of studies did not deviate from studying a small number of cultures). In a survey of 167 cross-cultural studies in leading international business journals from 1995 through 2005, Hult et al. (2008: 1030) observed that approximately one quarter of the studies (22%) examined 10 or more countries. Almost half of the reviewed studies examined either two countries (30%) or three countries (19%). In cross-cultural organizational behavior research Tsui et al. (2007: 457, 458) and cross-cultural marketing research Engelen and Brettel (2011: 521, 523) made similar observations:

> Tsui et al. (2007: 458): "About half of the studies (49 of 93) compare two countries [...] sixteen studies include 10 or more countries, whereas 28 studies compare 3 to 9 countries."

> Engelen & Brettel (2011: 521): "[...] researchers have based a strong majority of studies (65%) on two national cultures[...]"

Significant progress on this front was observed by Best & Everett (2010: 334) who reviewed research published within the Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology between 2004 and 2009. They noted that the number of studies investigating 10 or more countries has increased compared to a previous review of publications in that journal published by Brouwers et al. (2004). This previous review examined publications within the same journal between 1970 and 2004:

> Best & Everett (2010: 334): "It is interesting that, in the past 6 years, the number of studies with 10 or more countries is more than three times greater (17.8% vs. 5.0%) than reported by Brouwers et al. (2004)."

Another positive sign was provided by Cadogan (2010: 602) commenting on the publication policy of the journal International Marketing Review. Cadogan noted that the journal precludes from publication studies based on a sample of two to three countries that aim to assess *"how nation-level variables of interest (e.g. aspects of national culture such as individualism, collectivism, and so on, or economic factors such as level of economic development) differentially drive certain beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors in customers or individuals/groups in organizations."* The reason for this policy is

that, as mentioned above, a small number of countries does not allow the formulation of generalizations thereby impeding theory testing.

In sum, the tendency to select two cultures alone to conduct cross-cultural research has been the dominant approach in the field. Reviews have repeatedly noted the inability of two-country comparisons to determine with a high level of confidence why observed differences in behavioral phenomena have occurred. Countries also differ on cultural and other contextual variables (e.g. economic and political variables, etc.) which may potentially account for the observed results (see Section 5.3.4 for a discussion on directions and suggestions for theorizing about possible alternative explanations).

4.6.2   Limping Progress in Sampling Individual Respondents (1960 – to date)

This subsection tracks the development of the approaches employed to sample individual respondents. The content analysis of the review publications identified four areas of concern: (a) *the sampling objective (i.e. comparability and sample representativeness)*, (b) *the choice of respondents*, (c) *the sampling methods (i.e. probability sampling techniques and non-probability sampling techniques)*, and (d) *the size of the sample*.

Debating the Comparability of Samples

In the 1960s and 1970s, cross-cultural management and organizational behavior research was criticized for ignoring the comparability of samples. For instance, Nath (1968: 53) and Roberts (1970: 333) reported that the characteristics of samples were often not equivalent. Consequently, empirical research suffered from potential sources of bias emerging from differences in the sample composition, which could have influenced the obtained results:

Nath (1968: 53): "Many of the cross-cultural studies have suffered from not assuring comparability of samples. Particular mention must be made here of studies where data are collected by a United States scholar during a short trip abroad. These scholars are invited usually by the leading universities or corporations."

Roberts (1970: 333): "[…] samples were not comparable in terms of the kinds of organizations studied or the power in position of respondents"

Moving forward in time, reviews assessing the disciplines of management (Nasif et al., 1991: 85; Peng et al., 1991: 88; Cavusgil & Das, 1997: 80) and marketing (Aulakh & Kotabe, 1993: 22; Samiee & Jeong, 1994: 214; Sin et al., 1999: 85, 90, 91) witnessed a continued absence of non-comparable samples **during the 1980s and 1990s.** These reviewers deplored the often untested assumption of sample-frame comparability and warned researchers about rival explanations stemming from the non-equivalent characteristics of samples. As a result, the likelihood of an ambiguous interpretation of the obtained results was high. In other words, researchers failed to ensure that other sample characteristics were not related to the observed cultural differences. Samiee and Jeong, 1994: 214 and Sin et al., 1999 are quoted here to exemplify this criticism:

*Sin et al. (1999: 90): "Sampling equivalence [*sample-frame comparability*] was seldom observed in cross-cultural studies because many of these studies were initiated by an opportunity to collect a sample in a different culture. Thus, cross-cultural differences may be attributed to dissimilar samples"*

Samiee and Jeong (1994: 214): "Cross-cultural differences or similarities can be attributed to differences in characteristics of the samples rather than to "real" cross-cultural differences or similarities. Thus one must remain cognizant that the findings reported in the cross-cultural advertising literature are subject to these limitations."

Slow but significant progress emerged **in the late 1980s and continued throughout the 1990s and 2000s**. In their analysis of cross-cultural marketing research, Aulakh and Kotabe (1993) witnessed a growing trend of including references about the comparability of samples:

> *Aulakh and Kotabe (1993: 20): "A weak but significant increase in the reporting of sampling equivalence was found for the two periods, with 30.4 percent of the studies reporting it in 1980-84 and 52 percent reporting in 1985-90 ($x2 = 2.96$, $p < .10$).*

Further progress was reported by Schaffer and Riordan (2003: 183) and Tsui et al. (2007: .456) who observed that attempts to ensure sample-frame comparability increased within the field of cross-cultural organizational research. Hult et al. (2008: 1040), assessing both cross-cultural management and marketing literature, also evidenced increased efforts to match sample frames:

> *Schaffer and Riordan (2003: 183): "56% used this best practice of matching samples […]. Students across different cultures are often used because it is generally assumed that they are similar along a number of characteristics, especially demographics […]. In our sample, 37% of the studies used this [statistical control for the differences that remain between the samples] best-practice procedure to deal with sample differences"*

> *Tsui et al. (2007: .456): "Few studies use random samples, but many studies make efforts to ensure that samples from different countries were equivalent. In all, 52 studies (56%) discuss sample equivalence issues, out of which 24 studies also conduct statistical tests of sample demographics. Only 10 studies (11%) finally conclude that there is no significant difference between the samples in terms of the demographic characteristics. Because fewer than one third (29%) of all studies include the respondent demographics as control variables, it is unknown whether, and how many of, the differences observed between nations might be confounded by sample differences."*

> *Hult et al. (2008: 1040): "The percentage of studies that matched sampling frames increased from 39% during 1995 to 1999 to 48% during 2000 to 2005 ($t=1.185$, $p=0.238$)."*

The above quotations report that an increasing number of studies engaged in drawing comparable samples in terms of basic socioeconomic, organizational, and other salient characteristics that can affect findings.

The content analysis identified yet another issue that needs to be considered when deciding on the selection of respondents. This additional issue refers to the sample-frame representativeness.

Revisiting the Representativeness of Samples

Going back to the field's infancy, another important issue regarding sample-frame representativeness was intensely debated in reviews. **In the late 1960s and early 1970s**, Nath (1968: 52-53), Roberts (1970: 343), and Schöllhammer (1973: 25), criticized the lack of representativeness of the selected samples, which usually ended up representing only a limited segment of the cultures under study (e.g. student samples). According to Nath, Roberts, and Schöllhammer this lack of sample-frame representativeness limited the generalizability of the obtained results.

During the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, no real progress was reported. Boddewyn (1981: 67), Sin et al. (1999: 85), and Samiee and Jeong (1994: 214) noted that the samples used departed to an unknown degree from being generalizable to the focal population. Specifically, they passed critical judgment on the common practice of over-generalizing findings from sub-samples to broader populations and argued further that the effects observed in the research setting are at high risk of not being apparent in the real world nor representative of the populations in focus. Finally, they bemoaned the fact that journal gatekeepers did not consider this methodological problem rigorously enough in their evaluations of the cross-cultural papers submitted. An extract of Boddewyn's review summarizes this criticism best:

> *Boddewyn(1981: 67): "For instance, what are we to make of a comparison of a convenience sample of, say, 100 U.S. housewives in Peoria with 100 French ones in Nice to test the relationship between anxiety traits and the use of information sources - not to mention that such an article may be titled What Makes French and U.S. Consumers Different?" Since no attempt is made to prove that these two cities are really representative of the United States and France, are we really getting closer to understanding the differences between these two countries-or are we simply going through a futile exercise possibly even less enlightening and more misleading than the old Marketing in Country X studies? It appears that analytical techniques designed for large random samples are too often used with a make-believeness that does not seem to faze journal reviewers and editors although some researchers are more careful and candid than others:"*

These methodological problems related to the representativeness of the samples correspond to the choice of sampling techniques and sampling objectives. Albaum and

Peterson (1984: 167) observed a predominance of non-probability sampling techniques (most often convenience sampling) which did not allow a representative sampling frame to be selected. Nevertheless, the use of probability sampling techniques (e.g. simple, random, stratified, cluster) to identify representative samples was often not possible due to the unavailability of demographic profiles, or appropriate sampling-frames of populations (Malhorta et al., 1996: 26; Cavusgil & Das, 1997: 80; Sekaran, 1983: 63). Research efforts were further restricted by small budgets and pressure for publication.

> *Malhorta et al. (1996: 26):"Given the lack of suitable sampling frames, the inaccessibility of certain respondents, such as women in some cultures, and the dominance of personal interviewing, probability sampling techniques, although more appropriate, are uncommon in cross-cultural marketing research. Quota sampling has been used widely in the developed and developing countries both in consumer and in industrial surveys."*

> *Cavusgil & Das (1997: 80):"Sample representativeness may be in question if this happens. Randomization through probability sampling is a luxury afforded to few cross-cultural researchers and non-probabilistic approaches abound (see Douglas and Craig 1983, for an excellent exposition on sampling techniques and issues)."*

> *Sekaran (1983: 63):"Many scholars recognize that the selection of a representative national sample is not easy since researchers have difficulty determining which subjects are representative of the central tendencies of the nation."*

Finally, as argued by Reynolds (2003: 82), due to the comparative nature of cross-cultural research in which differences or similarities between cultures and/or the cross-cultural generalizability of a theory or model is the main research interest, cross-cultural comparability is the main sampling objective. It is less important to draw random a representative sample, as the desired sample attribute is not to estimate sampling error but to draw relatively homogenous samples to control for extraneous factors.

Nevertheless, Sin et al (1999: 85) warned that the "*non-representativeness of the sample may limit the external validity and generalizability of the findings in cross-cultural studies",* especially when results and interpretations are discussed on a national level. Accordingly, they recommended that cross-cultural scholars "*describe their samples in greater detail and justify that their samples are not only comparable,*

but also representative of the cultures" (91). Section 5.6 will elaborate on the need to balance sample-frame representativeness with sample-frame comparability in more detail.

Steady Progress in Surveying Theoretically Relevant Respondents

Assessing the demographic characteristics of the samples drawn in international marketing **between 1976 and 1982**, Albaum and Peterson (1984: 166) reported a predominant use of student samples. **A decade later**, Nasif et al. (1991 p. 84) reviewing the cross-cultural management research and Sin et al (1999: 90-91) assessing marketing related publications reiterated earlier findings by stating that *past studies* focused predominantly on those respondents that can be sampled conveniently such as students, rather than subjects relevant to the actual research purpose. The assessment of Nasif et al. is quoted here as it provides a good example of this state of affairs:

> *Nasif et al. (1991: 84): "In cross-cultural research, the selection of cultures and the subjects of research is generally based on opportunistic availability. Foreign students at American universities are used as subjects, or data is collected during sabbatical leave in another country."*

Ringing a more optimistic chime, Peng et al. (1991: 95) revealed that the choice of subjects in cross-cultural management studies **during the 1980s** relied on students for approximately 20% of respondents. Their review further noticed that studies relying on student samples reduced the problem of external validity to some degree by sampling students possessing substantial business experience.

> *Peng et al. (1995: 95): "Approximately one fifth of both unicultural and comparative articles used students as research subjects. Although some might not view these subjects as 'real people' at the time of research, many had had substantial business experience prior to the time the research was conducted. Therefore, the problem of external validity in application to actual managers is at least reduced as compared to typical social psychological studies of undergraduates"*

The progress on this front continued in cross-cultural management research during the late **1990s and early 2000s**. Yang et al. (2006: 609) and Tsui et al. (2007: 456) observed a positive trend with respect to an increased focus on managers, consumers, etc.:

> *Yang et al., (2006: 609): "The most preferred subject in IB studies is managers (e.g., CEOs and VPs) with 49.5 % of the empirical articles, followed by individuals (e.g., consumers, citizens, 11.3%), financial and government data (10.3%, respectively), students (3.9%), journal articles (3.2%), product and sales data (2.1%), advertisements (0.8%), and newspaper articles (0.8%)."*

> *Tsui et al. (2007: 456): "Of the 93 studies, 71% used working employees or manager samples, 23% used MBA or executive students, and 12% used undergraduate students. Not surprisingly, the undergraduate samples were mostly used in negotiation (e.g., Gelfand et al., 2001), justice (e.g., Chen et al., 1998), and cooperation (Chen & Li, 2005) research. The use of working managers and employees is a major strength of this line of research. Managerial samples dominate, and only about 10% of the studies use undergraduate students."*

More recent reviews (e.g. Engelen & Brettel, 2011; Sun et al., 2014) have not assessed the demographic characteristics of respondents selected for cross-cultural research purposes. In fact, the last review in cross-cultural marketing that elaborated on this specific sampling issue was published by Sin et al. in 1999. The most recent review assessing the selection of respondents in cross-cultural management research was published by Tsui et al. in 2007. This indicates the need for an updated view on the state of affairs in this discipline. However, there is little doubt that, especially the field of cross-cultural management research, substantial progress has been made in the selection of respondents for the focal theoretical dimensions of a study. The next section maps developments regarding the sample size in cross-cultural research.

Dominance of Small Samples

Another area of continued concern is the size of the selected samples of respondents. Several authors, assessing cross-cultural research projects in management during the **1960s and 1970s**, reported that sample sizes were too small, and that this affected the validity and reliability of the measures (Schöllhammer, 1973: 25; Boddewyn, 1981: 67; Albaum & Peterson, 1984: 167). The obtained results based on data collected from 50 to 200 respondents in each culture were criticized as not being representative of the central tendencies of the investigated cultures:

> *Schöllhammer (1973: 25): "Practically all of these studies are based on very small, non-representative samples."*

> *Boddewyn (1981: 67): "Still, I am appalled by the cross cultural mileage given to small convenience samples from one city in two or more countries (50 to 200 respondents per country are common; 1000 to 2000 are rare), carefully massaged by sophisticated statistical manipulations."*

> *Albaum and Peterson 1984: 167): "[…]nearly 60 percent of the studies involving a commercial population either began with, or concluded with, a sample size greater than 100, while 9 out of 10 of the studies of noncommercial populations had an original or obtained sample size greater than 100"*

Assessing cross-cultural research in management **during the 1980s**, Peng et al. (1991: 94-95) echoed similar concerns and spotted evidence of a persistent use of samples that were too small. Similarly, Aulakh and Kotabe (1993: 22) found a majority of cross-cultural studies in marketing, management and international business during the same decade to be based on a small number of respondents. Likewise, concerns about sample sizes were reported by Samiee and Jeong (1994, p. 208) who passed critical judgment on cross-cultural research in advertising between 1980 and 1992 which appeared to be suffering from small sample sizes of advertising content.

Referring to the consistent application of small samples in cross-cultural research, van de Vijver (2000: 36) raised an important critical concern. He argued that small sample sizes were partly responsible for the conflicting results reported in differ-

ent cross-cultural research studies. Van de Vijver explained that this inconsistency resulted from small samples that caused a poor replicability of results and a methodologically poor mapping of constructs. In trying to find an explanation for the continuous publication of studies based on small samples, Malhorta et al. (1996: 27) noted that it was rather difficult for cross-cultural researchers to statistically estimate the correct size of the sample due to the fact that estimates of population variance are either not available or differ from country to country. Therefore, the decision about the sample size was often guided by qualitative considerations (e.g., the importance of the decision, the nature of the research such as explorative versus generalizing research aims, the number of variables, the nature of the analysis, sample sizes used in similar studies, incidence rates, completion rates, and resource constraints).

Proceeding in time, Engelen and Brettel (2011: 521) and Yang et al. (2006: 601) assessed the size of the samples used in cross-cultural marketing and international business studies respectively **during the 1990s and early 2000s** and observed a similar state of affairs. Despite the critical concerns with regard to small samples in previous decades, Engelen and Brettel found no evidence of researchers elaborating on the question of how many respondents are required to obtain valid and representative scores on cultural survey instruments:

> *Engelen & Brettel (2011: 521): "With the direct value inference method, the question of how many respondents are necessary to evaluate cultural properties arises, given that national culture is a group-level, not an individual-level concept (Triandis, 2004). None of the studies used in the current research raise this question […]"*

In summary, the analysis of the selected review publications has concluded, that an appropriate number of respondents constitutes another area of persistent concern.

4.7 Data Analytical Steps – Substantial Progress in Data Analysis

The last procedural step to be discussed in this chapter refers to the use of data analysis techniques. Content analysis identified a group of assessments that evaluated the approaches used to analyze empirical data in cross-cultural research, and criticized the level of sophistication in the data analysis (see Table 10 for an overview of the developed coding scheme). This section examines how the application of analytical techniques has developed over the last six deacdes.

Table 10: Coding Scheme pertaining to the Sophistication of Data Analysis Techniques

Code (research process issue)	Code definition	Example of assessment
	Textpassages assessing …	
Analytical techniques (level of sophistication)	… the sophistication of data analysis approahces.	"The use of multiple techniques in various stages of research shows the advancement in the rigor of research. [...] comparing the techniques ernployed in the period of 199l-1993 and 1994-1996, [...] shows that the usage rates of ANOVA and correlation seems to decrease significantly. on the other hand, the proportion of using MANOVA, MANCOVA, factor analysis and covariance structural analysis seemsto.increase from period 1 to period 2. The increasing usage of complex multivariate techniques is a positive trend in the direction of advancement in empirical analysis in cross-cultural consumer research." Sin et al. (1999: 86)

4.7.1 Focus on Comparison of Means and Bivariate Correlations (1960 – 1980s)

In the 1960s and 1970s, the preponderance of cross-cultural research was characterized by a descriptive research tradition (Albaum & Peterson, 1984: 169; Ajiferuke & Boddewyn, 1970: 160; Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982: 675; Boddewyn, 1981: 64; Roberts, 1970: 330, 331; Schöllhammer, 1973: 24). The main research aim was to examine

incidents and distributions of variables between countries rather than finding statistical evidence for the relationship of culture to human behavior:

> *Schöllhammer (1973: 24):"In recent years an increasing percentage of the empirical studies in international business and comparative management are essentially descriptive studies with a rather narrow scope. They tend to report the results of an investigation that focused on a particular question such as the survey by Gaedeke and Lazar on How Multinational Businessmen View Trade Restrictions?"*

> *Bhagat and McQuaid (1982: 675): "Cross-cultural researchers often compare mean group differences without attempting to understand or explain why the cultures should differ on the variables being studied."*

Results were typically reported and discussed in terms of mean scores and bivariate correlations. In response to this state of affairs, review publications bemoaned the scarcity of multivariate techniques such as multiple regressions, cluster analyses, factor analyses, component analyses, and multidimensional scaling. In Adler's (1984:48) view, the relationship between culture and behavioral variables is very complex, and downgrades the feasibility of univariate statistical techniques to acquire knowledge and understanding. Often, however, researchers simply assumed that culture was responsible for observed behavioral similarities and differences between countries. These assumptions were based on national stereotypes or expert knowledge about a country or culture and not on theory-driven and statistically proven hypotheses (see also Section 4.3.1), that made research results subject to criticism. The comment of Ajiferuke and Boddewyn (1970: 160) phrased this criticism concisely:

> *Ajiferuke and Boddewyn (1970: 160): "Since cultures differ more or less from country to country, it is easy to assume that their differences are reflected in any phenomenon found in them—including their managements. Proving it is another matter […]"*

Sekaran (1983: 66) held the non-existence of computer facilities responsible for the lack of more sophisticated data analysis techniques prior to the mid-1960s. With the availability of more advanced statistical analysis software **from the 1980s onwards**, review publications legitimately called for change in analytical rigor. For example, Sekaran referred to a small number of innovative studies advocating

multivariate techniques. These developments held the promise of greater confidence in proving the relationships between culture and behavioral outcomes. Moreover, such approaches would allow to test and ensure the equivalence of measurement instruments to be tested and ensured, thus improving psychometric standards (see also Section 4.4.4):

> *Sekaran (1983: 66): "It is now gratifying to note that cross-cultural data analyses have progressed beyond the stage of merely examining bivariate relationships of variables in different cultures. Sophisticated multiple regression analysis, with proper attention paid for avoiding Type I and Type II errors (through the stipulation of the significance levels for entry and retention of the variables in the regression models), and applications of several multivariate techniques are now common in cross-cultural data analysis. […] Such multivariate analyses offer a better understanding of the phenomena and the network of relationships among the variables studied."*

Furthermore, as argued by Samiee and Jeong (1994: 214) *"univariate analysis may be too general to successfully delineate the nature of cultural differences. Given the state of the art in cross-cultural methodology and the tradition of scholarly work in advertising research, future studies should employ a variety of statistical techniques to capture true and meaningful differences across cultures."*

In sum, the analytical sophistication of cross-cultural research was in its infancy during the **1960s and 1970s**. Univariate statistics (correlation, analysis of variance, multiple regression, X^2, t tests) were the most frequently used approaches to data analysis. The next section captures the adaption process of utilizing such approaches to data analysis in cross-cultural research.

4.7.2   The Movement towards Multivariate Techniques (1980s – to date)

In the early 1980s, several review publications evidenced a renunciation of bivariate analyses and a significant increase in the use of multivariate research techniques (Adler, 1984: 63; Sekaran, 1983: 66; Albaum & Peterson, 1984: 168-169). For instance, Albaum and Peterson (1984: 168-169) pointed out that *"half of the studies pertaining to commercial populations used a multivariate analytical technique whereas*

more than three-fourths of the noncommercial population studies used such a technique." This trend continued in cross-cultural marketing research throughout the decade, leading Aulakh and Kotabe (1993: 17-18) to acknowledge that cross-cultural marketing research *"[…] has shown considerable progress in theory development and subsequent empirical testing of theoretical constructs in the 1980s".* A similar observation was made by Samiee and Jeong (1994: 113-214) who found significant evidence for the application of more comprehensive analytical methods. Equally, reviews of cross-cultural management rang an optimistic chime. For instance, Peng et al. (1991: 87) witnessed *"increasing methodological sensitivity, complexity, and sophistication".*

Examining cross-cultural marketing research **during the 1990s**, Sin et al. (1999: 77-78, 85-86) reported three areas of progress in analytic rigor in cross-cultural marketing research:

> *Sin et al. (1999: 77-78, 85-86): "First, a wide range of statistical techniques has been employed in the studies reviewed. These vary from cross-tabulation to ANOVA to covariance structural analysis. The use of multiple techniques in various stages shows the advancement in the rigor of research. Third, in comparing the techniques employed in the period of 1991-1993 and 1994-1996, […] the usage rates of ANOVA and correlation seems to decrease significantly. On the other hand, the proportion of using MANOVA, MANCOVA, factor analysis and covariance structural analysis seems to increase from period 1 to period 2. The increasing usage of complex multivariate techniques is a positive trend in the direction of advancement in empirical analysis in cross-cultural consumer research."*

In a similar vein, Samiee and Athanassiou (1998: 83) came to the conclusion that cross-cultural management research *"[…] has developed more extensive and sophisticated analyses".*

Not surprisingly, these positive developments set the stage for the appearance of analytical standards in publications of cross-cultural research **in the 2000s**. Best and Everett (2010: 332), Engelen and Brettel (2011: 522), Nakata and Huang (2005: 617), Leonidou et al. (2010: 502), and Tsui et al. (2007: 457) were able to observe an ad-

vanced stage of analytical rigor, as a substantial number of researchers tested the causal relationships of more complex models:

Best & Everett (2010: 332): "[…] the statistical analyses used have continued to improve and become more sophisticated. […] Multivariate statistics (multivariate analysis of variance, factor analysis, path analysis, logistic regression) and modeling techniques (structural equation modeling, cluster analysis, hierarchical linear modeling, multidimensional scaling) have grown and appear in a significant portion of the studies. Reliability and effect size estimates are reported as appropriate."

Engelen & Brettel (2011: 522): "Structural equation modeling is the first choice for many cross-cultural studies, especially because of its potential in measurement equivalence test. [..] The movement toward multivariate techniques is a positive one because structural equation modeling allows the depiction of more complex theoretical frameworks with mediating and moderating effects."

Nakata & Huang (2005: 617): "Multivariate techniques are now far more heavily applied than their simpler counterparts, enabling testing of causal relations and elaborate models approximating the intricacies of international marketing."

Leonidou et al. (2010: 509): "Methodologically, the international marketing articles examined could be described as adequate and, in fact, experiencing systematic improvement over time. This is evident from the powerful quantitative analysis used."

Despite these positive developments, several problems discussed in previous sections were closely related to the statistical analysis of data. Sections 4.3.4 and 4.4.4 shed light on the following four persistent concerns, which are also relevant at the data-analysis stage. These problematic issues refer to (a) *the lack of statistical evidence that countries are homogeneous in terms of cultural orientations*, (b) *the absence of statistical evidence that the obtained data is equivalent across cultures*, (c) *the difficulty in modeling and testing the multilevel nature of cultural phenomena*, and (d) *the neglect of alternative explanations for observed differences and similarities in substantive phenomena*. In light of these problems, Engelen and Brettel (2011: 522) and Tsui et al (2007: 457) highlighted more advanced statistical approaches to deal with these problem areas that were not utilized. Using multivariate analysis procedures allows testing of cultural and alternative explanations for observed differences and similarities in behavioral outcomes, for hierarchical and moderated regressions to be con-

ducted at various levels of analysis simultaously, for different types of variance tests to be applied to ensure the equivalence of data, and for more complex path models to be studied, such as the moderating role of culture, using nation as the group variable (see Section 5.7 for a discussion of directions and recommendations).

4.8 Summary of Advances and Perennial Problems

The critical discussion above presented a content-analysis of review publications assessing the field's development in terms of bringing methodological rigor and meaning to cross-cultural research endeavours. This section aims to summarize briefly the distinct signs of improvement and persistent problem areas with regard to handling the wide range of challenges inherent in cross-cultural research. The following procedural steps of cross-cultural research studies were assessed: the paradigmatic positioning, the organization of research projects (i.e., research collaboration), the theoretical foundation, the conceptualization and operationalization of culture, measurement instrument equivalence, sampling choices, and analytical techniques.

Section 4.1 discussed the dominance of a quantitative, positivist, universalist epistemological and methodological positioning of cross-cultural research. This positioning was labeled a pseudo etic approach, and has dominated the procedural steps employed in publications for six decades. The overarching criticism has been that theories, conceptual frameworks, measurement instruments, and research methods were applied in diverse cultural settings without appropriate validation. Cross-cultural research has been repeatedly censured as measuring and comparing behavior out of context and thus, neglecting specific cultural elements. At present, the reigning approach to cross-cultural research is to back-translate measurement instruments by focusing mainly on similarly worded items in all cultures, assuming that this procedure ensures construct equivalence, functional equivalence, conceptual equivalence, and category equivalence (see section 4.5).

At the same time, emic approaches and cross-cultural research collaborations offering a more interpretive and indigenous perspective on cultural phenomena were mostly neglected as a mechanism to understand whether the focal constructs are truly universal. Instead the North American positivist approach (etic research paradigm), with its emphasis on rigorous quantitative methods, measurement, precision, and in-

ternal and external validity has been cherished deeply by the field in the search for psychometric quality and equivalence. In the 1980s, review publications demanded a comparable factor structure of the items to justify the measurement of a construct in different cultures. As a result, an equal number of factors accompanied by an equal pattern of substantial loadings, was believed to be proof enough to ensure that the focal construct was equally understood and interpreted by respondensts across cultures. More recent review publications pointed to a wide range of statistical techniques that can be applied (see Section 4.6.2). Although there is no standard yet, the development of the field is heading towards equivalence standards that demand equality of loadings and of measurement errors and error correlations to justify a comparison across cultures (Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000).

Section 4.3 and 4.4 mapped discernable progress in terms of theoretical and conceptual rigor applied by researchers to fathom the relationship between culture and behavioral phenomena. Much has been accomplished after the publications of Hofstede's (1980) book "Cultural Consequences: *"International Differences in Work-Related Values"*, which translated the vague entity of culture into a tractable construct and provided a theoretical mechanism to formulate and test hypotheses about the role of culture in human behavior and thinking. Since this breakthrough publication, there has been a substantial number of empirical studies relating to values, attitudes, cognitive styles, work ethics, etc. and to differences in substantive phenomena across cultures. However, the content analysis revealed several problem areas with regard to the conceptual and theoretical foundation of cross-cultural research. As discussed in Section 4.4.4 the specification and treatment of culture has remained imprisoned by the standards of the 1980s, while today's market realities have been overlooked when delineating cultural phenomena. Culture was mainly understood as a construct that is geographically bounded, coherent and unified, immutable and stable, and also conceived as a cognitive trait, despite the evidence of subcultures within nations, cultural change, context-dependent cultural orientations, and alternative aspects that make up

the cultural domain. Moreover, the construct of culture was mainly operationalized using the indirect value-inference approach by relying on Hofstede's decades old cultural value index. This practice was repeatedly criticized, as it assumes that the cultural characteristic of a certain group measured at a specific point in time (here IBM employees in the 1970s and 1990s) can be ascribed to demographically diverse samples drawn at a different point in time.

In Section 4.3.4 it became clear that culture has often been used eclectically in the sense that Hofstede's work-related values were used to explain behavior in other domains such as in consumption contexts. Moreover, the role of culture in explaining differences and similarities across cultures was deterministic as other possible rival explanations were neglected. Finally, the multilevel nature of culture in explaining phenomena both at a group and at the individual level alike were too often neglected.

Further persistent theoretical problems are related to sampling choices in cross-cultural research (see Section 4.6). Most cross-cultural research selected cultures and respondents based on convenience sampling. Hence, the selection of cultures and respondents were not theory-driven which put constraints on the aims of testing theoretical relationships. In addition to that, two culture comparisons and too small samples of respondents limited the generalizability of results, as rival explanations could not be ruled out. Finally, the need to balance sample-frame comparability with sample-frame representativity was too often overlooked.

Section 4.7 shed light on the major shift from univariate and bivariate to multivariate analytical techniques. Accordingly, major progress has been made in the use of statistical techniques. Further developments are likely to occur in the coming years with regard to testing hypotheses, conducting hierarchical and moderated regression, employing various types of variance tests for evaluating group differences, examining the psychometric quality by comparing the equivalence of the structural model between groups, and studying more complex path models such as the moderating role of culture.

In short, the research findings imply that despite six decades of development, further progress is needed to better understand the complex nature of the relationship between culture and behavioral and psychological phenomena. While not disregarding the immense cost, time, and publication pressures researchers willing to conduct cross-cultural research are faced with, key areas of perennial problems that need to be addressed by the field's researchers in future publications. Figure 13 provides an overview of these challenges. The next chapter discusses directions and recommendations that directly address the above outlined problems. These future directions were suggested by the field's most eminent scholars to spur development.

Figure 13: Overview of Perennial Problems of Cross-Cultural Research Practices
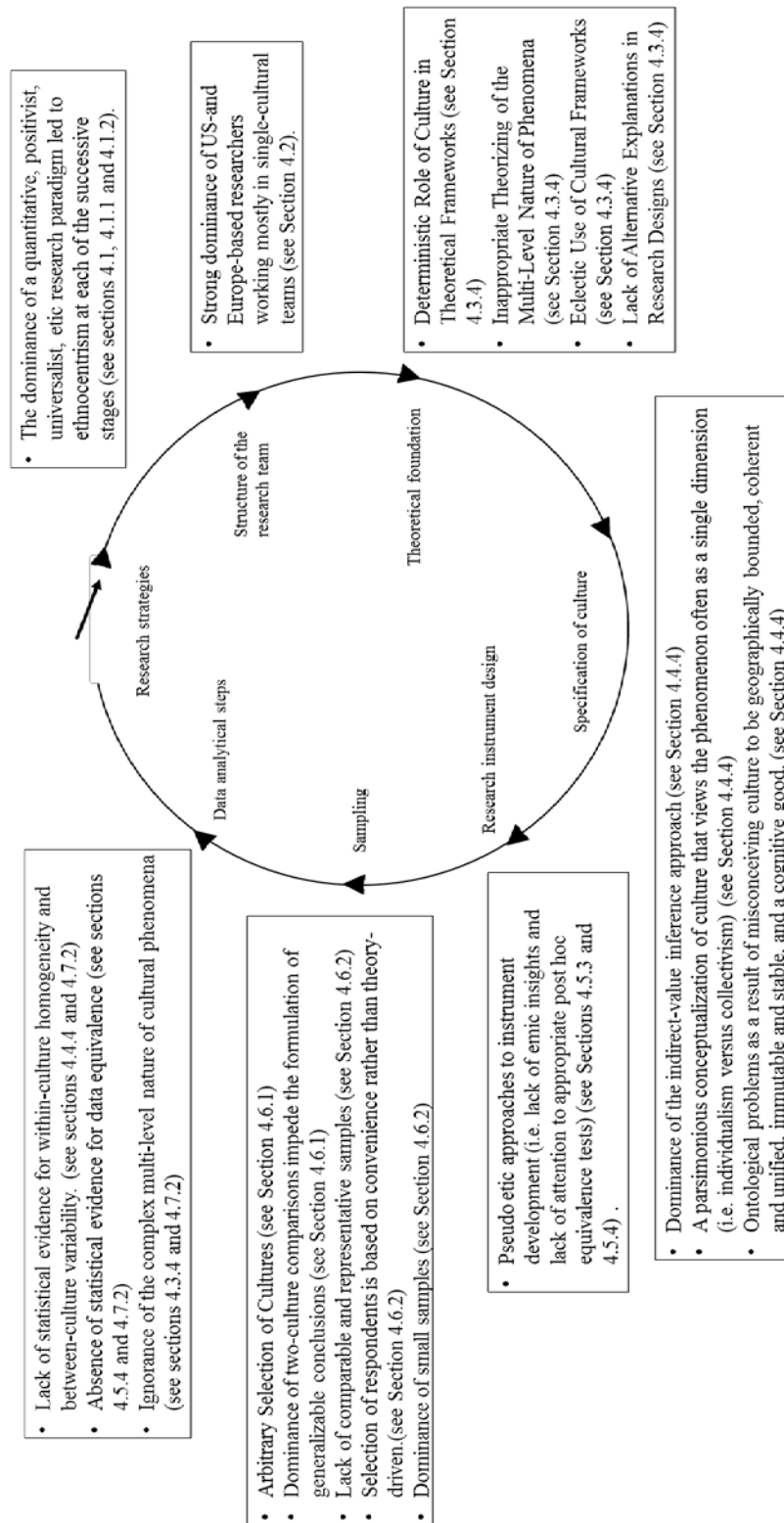
5   In the Literature suggested Directions for more Rigorous Cross-Cultural Research

The previous chapter contained a detailed and critical analysis of cross-cultural research practices from a historical perspective. To address the persistent problems and challenges and to follow up on the identified advances, this chapter outlines future directions and recommendations for more rigorous cross-cultural research. In addition, innovative cross-cultural studies are discussed as good-practice examples. The aim is to provide a comprehensive repertoire of methods and procedures that have been suggested by the field's most authoritative authors to improve the rigor of cross-cultural research. Even though most of these directions are not new thoughts, it is important to discuss these valuable directions and recommendations in a comprehensive way in order to spur development at all phases of the research process. Such an all-encompassing repertoire may help scholars gain an overview of how to cope with the conceptual, theoretical, empirical, and analytical challenges.

Instead of outlining a prescriptive set of methods and procedures, the aim here is to stimulate and spur discussion about the various options available to scholars by integrating scientific discourse on future directions and already available good-practice studies. Such a discussion is important because available approaches and coping mechanisms that can address previously unanswered questions are often ignored in contemporary cross-cultural research (see the perennial problems discussed in Section 4). Another purpose is to discuss the feasibility, suitability, and adequacy of suggested methods and procedures in relation to the diverse purposes and constraints of cross-cultural research projects. This approach is meaningful since every research project needs an approach tailored to the particular characteristics of the research setting and objective.

The directions were identified in the analyzed set of reviews, in recently published comments and perspectives that provided critical insights into methodological and theoretical rigor in cross-cultural research, and in studies that could be identified as good-practice studies, thus adhering to the suggested directions. These additional sources were identified in the field's leading journals (see Section 3.2), while screening these outlets for review publications. While the analysis of Chapter 4 focused on assessments of research process-oriented steps, this chapter analyses text passages including prescriptive comments aiming to suggest future directions with regard to the way cross-cultural research should be conducted. The coding procedure was guided by the same startegies described in Section 3.4.

The procedural steps in a cross-cultural research study are highly interrelated and interdependent. Moreover, the research process itself is not linear, but rather ipsative. In order to structure the preceding discussion, the suggested methods and procedures are divided into the prototypical stages in the cross-cultural research process (see

Figure 5 on page 35). Wherever possible, the interconnectedness of procedures and methods is highlighted and their consequences and implications for steps carried out at earlier or later stages are discussed.

5.1 Research Strategies – Embracing a Paradigm Interplay

Section 4.1 pointed out that in cross-cultural research, emic and etic research strategies were regarded as two opposite ends of a continuum, which are hard to integrate within a single study. Boehnke et al. (2014: 3) noted that cross-cultural research has traditionally been positioned within an ***etic paradigm*** characterized by quantitative methodologies and a positivist understanding of phenomena. Emic methodologies and culture-specific perspective were almost non-existent in published research. Boehnke described this state of affairs as a *"deep rift between a qualitative, interpretive, indigenous, emic, and a quantitative, positivist, universalist, etic approach"*. The latter end of the continuum has fitted the overall aim of cross-cultural research, i.e. to examine what, how, when, why, and under what circumstances cultural variables influence substantive phenomena better. Different cultures have been compared in quasi experimental designs to disentangle the role of culture.

The instruments for measuring culture and the substantive focal phenomenon should ideally be etic, because comparisons of cultures are possible only on the basis of equally relevant and salient constructs and dimensions (see section 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5). However, the high reliance on etic research methodologies has been accompanied by a strong tendency to conducting biased ethnocentric research. In fact, the preponderance of cross-cultural studies transferred the research designs originally developed in one specific domestic setting (most often in the United States) to other cultural contexts, without examining whether the underlying theoretical and conceptual assumptions and the measurement instruments were applicable. Salience and relevance were merely assumed, rather than tested before and after data collection. As repeatedly ar-

gued in reviews, this ethnocentrism in cross-cultural research has hampered the validity and reliability of results, since bias stemming from the researcher's perspective in designing the research is likely to downgrade the comparability of results. This state of affairs was described as *pseudo etic research*. Hence, the reduction of ethnocentric bias in etic cross-cultural research is of paramount importance to spur further knowledge development (van de Vijver & Leung, 2000).

An intensively discussed mechanism for coping with the above problem is a combination of etic and emic research perspectives as well as quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The origin of this idea dates back to the late 1960s, when Berry (1969) suggested that etic and emic approaches be combined, and advocated emic methodologies as one way to raise awareness of cultural biases in the research design. Observation, participation and other ethnographic methods can be used by researchers to familiarize themselves thoroughly with the cultures under study. In addition, combining emic and etic perspectives allows the design of the study to be decentered, in order to restrict the dominance of a cultural perspective stemming from one culture alone. Such insights would help to identify the emic dimensions of the focal constructs in each culture. From a comparison of previously identified culture-specific dimensions, it is possible to identify universal and thus comparable aspects of focal phenomena that occur across cultures and may be influenced by culture in one way or another. Hence, the approach enables the development of universal theoretical assumptions, constructs, and equivalent measurement instruments. Berry (1969) uses the term *derived etic approach* (or combined emic-etic approach) to identify the emic aspects of a focal phenomenon and the integration of these findings into a valid framework for cross-cultural comparison. A derived etic approach, as the core element of cross-cultural research, makes comparisons possible as comparability and equivalence are emphasized.

Since Berry's original publication in 1969, derived etic approaches have been repeatedly recommended in review publications as a means to avoid ethnocentrism in

the research design and biased results (Ajiferuke & Boddewyn, 1970; Albaum & Peterson, 1984; Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982; Child, 1981; Cavusgil & Das, 1997; Craig & Douglas, 2006; Douglas et al., 1994; Peng et al., 1991; Raaij, 1978; Samiee & Jeong, 1994; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003; Tsui et al., 2007; van de Vijver, JR & Leung, 2000; Watkins, 2010). Despite the continuous calls to integrate emic and etic research strategies in research design, the field has made little progress on this front (see Section 4.1.2). Romani et al.(2011) noted that in view of *the difficulty of bi-paradigm studies and the lack of clear methodological examples, few researchers have ventured down this path."* An integration of etic and emic research strategies raises obstacles during the research process. As stated by Bartholomew & Brown (2012) *"conducting mixed methods is not without its challenges. Integrating two data sets can be complicated and prove difficult. Collecting the data sets themselves often requires lengthier, multiple data collection phases. Additionally, psychologists are often not trained in mixed methods or both qualitative and quantitative traditions which could further complicate carrying out mixed methods research."* In addition, Öngel & Smith (1994: 51), made the absence of good-practice examples, the time-intensive, and cost-intensive nature of a derived etic approach, and the difficulty in setting up multicultural collaborative research teams responsible for the modest employment of combined emic-etic approaches:

> *Öngel & Smith (1994: 51): "Why, then, is our field not making more rapid progress toward a cultural decentering and the growth of derived-etic studies? The first answer must be that they are both difficult and time-consuming [...]. High on the list of further impediments toward more derived-etic studies must lie in the difficulty of assembling truly collaborative research teams who are able to contribute equally toward research designs that will have validity in a sufficient number of different cultural settings. The development of such teams takes time, tact, and resources, and publication pressures militate against setting them up. Where some of the collaborating researchers are from high-power distance cultures or are former graduate students of their present research partners, the encouragement to rely on established Western measures and theories is further intensified."*

Polsa (2013) further pointed out that the use of multiple sources of data may result in conflicting results, which makes it challenging to clarify the postulated relationships.

Nevertheless, it is of the utmost importance to discuss directions for combining emic and etic methodologies at all research stages and steps. Because, as noted by Lowe (2002: 26), further progress in the field's production of knowledge can only be achieved if the current predominance of the etic paradigm is revisited and expanded by emic methodologies:

> Lowe (2002: 26): In seeking more pluralistic and less ethnocentric approaches, the ambition is to promote a more 'binocluar vision', providing new depths of insight and exploring possible routes to less restrictive directions for future study.

Bartholomew and Brown (2012: 178) suggested that qualitative methods[5], particularly in-depth interviews and participant observations, should be used to circumvent ethnocentrism in etic-oriented research by encouraging culture-specific insights on the role and salience of constructs, their relationship to other constructs, and their manifestation in specific cultural settings. Moreover, a combination of evidence from emic and etic insights can help to derive more meaningful interpretations of the obtained results:

> *Bartholomew & Brown (2012: 178): "[…] sensitive measures and appropriately adapted or developed methodological procedures can be used to generalize from a sample to the culture of interest. In this way, truth is sought at the cultural level from within local meanings that shape quantitative measurement, rather than favoring the imposition of Western-developed assessments for psychological phenomena."*

Taras et al. (2009: 362) likewise noted that *"emic and etic approaches must be integrated and used simultaneously to truly understand culture."* Therefore the following sections, whenever possible, refer to approaches that combine emic and etic methodologies and perspectives at all research stages.

5.2 Structure of the Research Team – Engaging in Cross-Cultural Research Collaboration

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[5]A discussion of specific qualitative methods applicable to cross-cultural research (such as ethnographic research, case study research, focus groups, in-depth interviews, and observational research) can be found in Marschan-Piekkari and Welch (2004).

According to the content-analyzed reviews, the involvement of local researchers is of paramount importance in accommodating context in cross-cultural research and alleviating ethnocentrism. For instance, as noted by Douglas and Craig (2006: 16) the design of cross-cultural research projects should be decentralized:

> *Douglas & Craig (2006: 16): "A group of researchers, including at least one from each of the contexts being studied, begin by agreeing on the scope of common parameters of the research and the key research questions."*

The benefits of cross-cultural collaborative teams were frequently highlighted (Nasif et al., 1991; Teagarden et al., 1995; Triandis, 1976). For example, Adler (1984: 45) stressed these benefits in detail. She argued that collaborative cross-cultural teams help to overcome some of the fundamental dilemmas of cross-cultural research. The benefits of such teams tap into all aspects of cross-cultural studies and refer to challenges in (a) *defining and operationalizing culture*, (b) *determining whether a studied phenomenon is culturally specific or universal*, (c) *ensuring that the outsider perspective of researchers does not introduce cultural bias in designing and conducting a study*, (d) *deciding whether aspects of a study can be standardized across cultures or need to be adapted*, and (e) *identifying cultural factors that can potentially influence research variables and the interpretation of results*.

In a similar vein, Nakata (2005: 614) advocated the benefits of cross-cultural research teams by stating that due "*to a divergence of research traditions and perspectives, such collaborations offer the potential to enrich the stock of international marketing theories and methodologies more than intraregional arrangements. This pattern bodes well for the field.*" As highlighted by Tsui et al. (2007: 469), an important element of the research process is to create a cross-cultural team in which all members contribute to developing the research design and to interpreting the results in a balanced way:

> *Tsui et al. (2007: 469): "…researchers should make deliberate efforts to actively seek the views, advice, and input of their […] collaborators, including selecting the topic to study, deciding the methods of data collection, and identifying the relevant samples. […] Participants in different nations may have different styles in responding to surveys or inter-*

views. The local collaborator can provide insight into the appropriateness of methods [...]."

Teagarden et al. (1995) and Peterson (2001) likewise referred to the elements necessary for realizing an effective collaboration of researchers across cultures. Above all, a rich and intensive interaction among all the researchers involved needs to be encouraged by equal participation in and control of the research study. Such collaborations may find a combined approach to accommodate culture-specific insights on the one hand and to emphasize rigorous quantitative methods, measurement, precision, and internal and external validity on the other (see also Figure 14). For instance, Teagarden et al. (1995: 1282) describe important characteristics of interaction in which the responsibilities and involvement are equally shared among the members of a cross-cultural research team:

> *Teagarden et al. (1995: 1282): "Rich interaction is the sine qua non of this type of research. There were four types of interactions [...]: (1) theoretical interactions (research design, survey development), (2) pragmatic interactions (translation, back-translation, survey administration), (3) interpersonal interactions (building commitment, sharing learning), and (4) integrative interactions, which are essential for maximizing the synergy of the foregoing. The synergy that can be developed through the integration of theseinteractions is the key to rigorous cross-cultural research."*

Figure 14: Illustration of a Cross-Cultural Reseach Collaboration
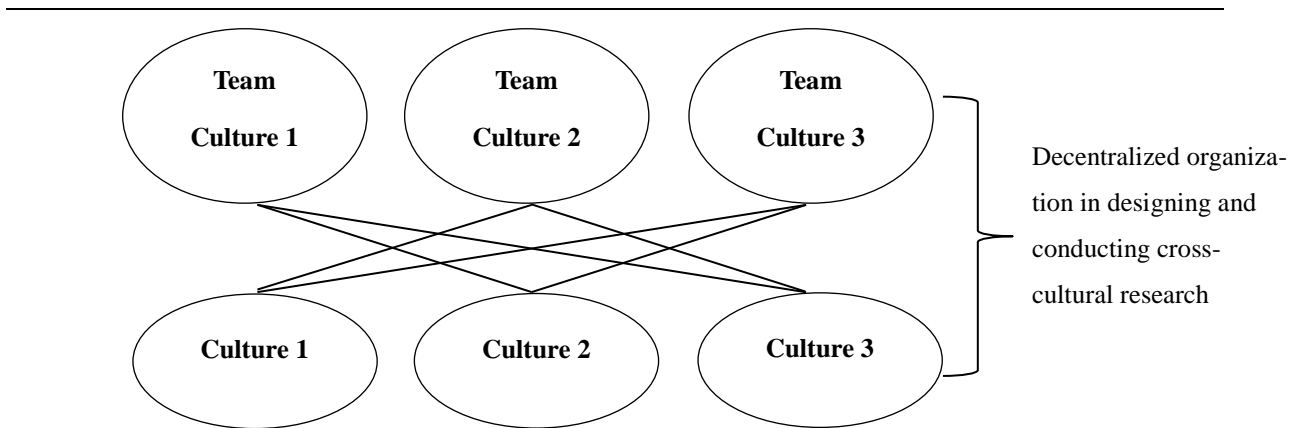
Despite the rich potential of cross-cultural collaborative teams, Section 4.2 revealed a persistent dominance of single-culture teams to carry out all steps in the re-

search process. Review publications complained that researchers from other locations contributed to the research study mainly in the data collection phase, but were not involved in designing the project. The transfer of a research design constructed from a monocultural perspective to other cultural contexts was thus criticized as ethnocentric. Öngel and Smith (1994: 20) discussed possible reasons for this state of affairs by explaining that the process of setting up a cross-cultural research team is often hindered by limitations of time and financial resources as well as publication pressures. In executing a decentralized cross-cultural research project conducted by a multicultural research team, Teagarden et al. (1995) experienced several challenges in the organization of the team work that had to be resolved: First, it was not an easy task for the initiator of the project to identify like-minded researchers willing to contribute to its methodological rigor. Potential collaborators had to share the same vision and research goals. Moreover, they had to be open to change, flexible, and socially compatible with the rest of the team. Secondly, the identified researchers had to agree on the ground rules for their participation, which included authorship and data ownership. Finally, trust and commitment had to be established, which is especially necessary when no previous collaborations had taken place. Hence, building trust between core team members in face-to-face-meetings turned out to be critical.

5.3 Theoretical Foundation – Increasing Theoretical Rigor

This section discusses guidelines on theoretical rigor indentified in the sample of reviews (see appendix 1, page 238) as well as in fronteering papers published recently in the field's top outlets.

5.3.1 Overcoming the Eclectic Use of Cultural Constructs

Section 4.3.4 addressed the eclectic application of value indices in unrelated research domains. Zhang et al.(2008: 219) argued that "*some of the inconclusive or conflicting findings we currently see in the literature may be partly due to the fact that Hofstede's dimensions may not capture some of the rich differences across cultures and ignore some of the other important differences […]."* This section thus argues that, depending on the behavioral phenomenon being examined, researchers should reduce the complex concept of culture to specific dimensions that are relevant and salient for respondents in specific contextual settings.

According to the studied body of reviews, one option is to draw attention to alternative culture frameworks and dimensions beyond Hofstede's disposition of cultural value orientations (e.g., House et al., 2004, Inglehart, 2015; Schwartz, 1994). Recognition of alternative frameworks and additional dimensions can potentially enrich the theoretical contribution of cross-cultural studies by offering deeper insights into the field's understanding of cultural differences and their implications for consumer and employee behavior as well as management decision styles (Engelen and Brettel, 2011; Magnusson, Wilson, Zdravkovic, Xin Zhou & Westjohn, 2008; Yaprak, 2008).

A second option was advocated by Engelen and Brettel (2011), Fischer (2009), Lenartowicz and Roth (1999), Sun et al. (2014), and Zhang et al. (2008), who have suggested that culture be conceptualized and measured directly, thereby limiting the inference of values based on the available culture indices. For example, Lenartowicz

and Roth (795) urged cross-cultural researchers to *"begin developing more explicitly the cultural unit relevant to their particular theoretical perspective, instead of continuing to rely on Hofstede's value index."* Likewise, Griffith, Yalcinkaya and Rubera (2014) suggested to researchers to employ frameworks for measuring culture based on theoretical coherence with the investigated substantive phenomenon. Approaches to defining domain-specific, well-contextualized constructs and variables, in accordance with the study purpose, makes it possible to ensure that the construct of culture and its operationalization are relevant to the specific marketing and management phenomena under study. According to Singelis (2000: 85), it is possible, through direct measurement, to link distinct and relevant elements of the focal phenomena (psychological or behavioral variations) with their specific *"cultural antecedents"*.

Frequently authors of reviews and theoretical papers emphasized the use of anthropological insights that can be used to develop domain-specific conceptualizations and operationalizations. As an example, Douglas and Craig (2006) saw the potential of observations and phenomenological methods in developing well-defined and bounded constructs that better suit the aim of understanding the interaction between culture and consumption. By observing the material culture, rituals, artifacts, institutions and traditions in the context of consumption, researchers derive important insights into context-relevant aspects of culture. Such insights would help researchers embed culture into models of marketing phenomena.

Additionally, Soares et al. (2007), and Lenartowicz & Roth (1999) argued that researchers can also review the literature in sociology, cultural psychology, and/or anthropology for a better understanding of social structures, artefacts and collective behavior. For example, researchers can consult the electronic Human Relations Area Files (eHRAF) (cf. Greenfield, 1997; Miller, 1997). The eHRAF is an electronic database containing ethnographic information about almost 400 cultures, collected since 1949. The database has been made available to the public by Yale University (USA) to encourage and facilitate comparative studies of human cultures and societies through-

out the world.[6] The online database is arranged under more than 100 categories, referring to food, clothing, family, labor, law, etc. and further sub-categories thereof. It is thus possible to identify verbal manifestations of domain-specific cultural variables (Lenartowicz and Roth, 1999). Gelfand et al. (2002) recommended that cross-cultural researchers consult these ethnographic files in the early phase of a research project as a source of information to identify relevant cultural dimensions. The full potential of this ethnographic database is enriched by combining and supplementing its data with insights and information from collaborators, as a cross-cultural research team can help make up for a lack of standardization, and missing or outdated information on a specific culture. Based on such insights, culture can be conceptualized as a psychological construct (e.g. ideas, emotions, norms, values, practices, etc.) for specific research domains and topics.

Steenkamp, however, warned that the field's comparative and quantitative nature demands *"a limited set of dimensions that captures the most prominent differences [...]"* and thick descriptions of cultures need to be narrowed down to serve a quantitative, positivist, universalist, etic approach. The use of qualitative methods such as participant observation, interviews, and content analysis etc. can be very time-consuming and cost-intensive, as well as difficult for researchers usually trained in quantitative psychological research methodologies.

According to Earley (2009: 30-31), House et al.'s (2004) GLOBE project provides a good-practice example for a *"perhaps truly etic glimpse of leadership, and it is the first of its type (i.e., large-scale values study) to generate a universal framework of an organizational behavior theory."* The conceptualization and measurement of culture in the GLOBE study is based on a decentralized approach developed by a large peer network providing culture-specific insights on the relevance of dimensions with regard to leadership across cultures. Hence, the collaboratively obtained framework of

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[6] For more information see http://hraf.yale.edu/cross-cultural-research/.

culture provided analytic links between the constructs of leadership, context, and culture. GLOBE's approach has also been empirically tested across 64 cultures and its relevance and salience was statistically supported.

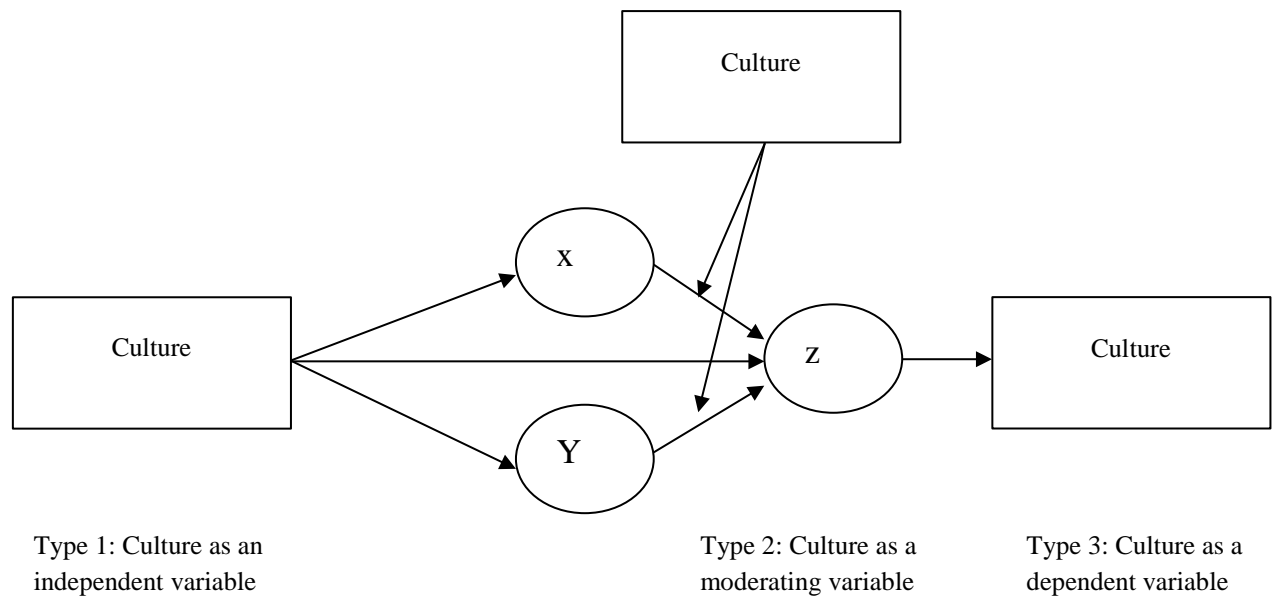### 5.3.2 Examining the Complex Nature and Multi-Directional Effects of Culture

To deal with the inherent complexity of designing a theoretical framework for cross-cultural research, Kirkman et al. (2006) and Leung et al. (2005) argued that it is important to distinguish between substantive theories (i.e., phenomena of consumer/employee behavior or management decision styles) and theories at the societal level. Assumptions about the relationship between these two bodies of theory need to be postulated a priori (Spector et al., 2015).

With regard to investigating the role of culture, Section 4.3.4 illustrated that it has been regarded primarily as a direct causal force. The moderating and mediating effects of culture on substantive mechanisms and the conceptualization of culture as a dependent variable were seldom postulated or examined (see Figure 15 for an overview of possible ways to conceptualize the role of culture). In response, Kirkman et al. (2006), Leung et al. (2005), Redding (1994), Samiee and Jeong (1994) and Sullivan and Weaver (2000) recommended researchers to conceptualize culture as a more complex construct with intervening, interactive, and even recursive effects on behavior and cognition. Leung et al. (2005: 374) and Nakata and Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 69) underlined the importance of recognizing that cultural constructs are unlikely to influence substantive phenomena through independent pathways:

> *Leung et al. (2005: 374):"a more complex conceptualization of culture will necessarily give rise to a more complex view of its effects. Culture can be an antecedent, a moderator or a mediator, and a consequence, and its effects may be domain-specific and are subjected to boundary conditions."*

> *Nakata & Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 69): "[…] culture has more complex ties to other constructs, including its roles as a mediator, moderator, or even dependent construct."*

Figure 15: Example of possible Roles of Culture

Type 1: Culture as an
independent variable

Type 2: Culture as a
moderating variable

Type 3: Culture as a
dependent variable

An empirical study responding to this particular recommendation was conducted by Walsh et al. (2014) who set out to examine the role of country-level environmental factors in cross-cultural advertising, drawing on institutional theory advocated by Scott (2001) to explain cross-national differences in perceptions of advertisements across EU member states. In particular, the authors theorized about and examined the moderating effects of country-level indicators such as the three institutional pillars (regulative, normative/moral, and cultural cognitive) on the mediated associations between three forms of advertising persuasion measures (i.e., message comprehension, attitude toward the campaign, and message elaboration) and behavioral intentions. The authors came to the conclusion that the institutional pillars (including culture) moderated substantive mechanisms between the three forms of advertising persuasion measures and behavioral intentions.

Proclaiming the possibility of culture being a dependent construct determined by the independent constructs of the global media and standardized marketing mixes, Nakata and Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 69) argued that the global range of the media and the

increase of multinational companies selling products worldwide via standardized marketing mixes, *"increase[s] the homogeneity of cultures worldwide, along the thrust of Theodore Levitt's (1983) famed globalization argument."*

To sum up, according to the literature the field is in need of theoretical frameworks that specify more comprehensively specify the role of culture and help to understand when and under what circumstances culture drives consumer and employee behavior as well as management decision styles.

5.3.3   Theorizing about Multilevel Linkages

The findings of Section 4.3.4 showed that the field has persistent difficulties in formulating appropriate multilevel theories. This subsection refers to theoretical and methodological issues are suggested when investigating multilevel relationships.

Gelfand et al. (2007: 499) called for fundamental shifts from *"a dearth of attention to levels-of-analysis issues to the development of multilevel theories and research where the level of theory and measurement is adequately developed."* Leung et al. (2005) and Sun et al. (2014) noted that culture as a multilevel construct can be conceptualized at the national, organizational, group, and personal level. All levels are embedded in the minds of individuals (Leung et al., 2005), thus the measures of substantive phenomena are usually conceptualized at the individual level. Theorizing about the link between these different levels requires a great deal of attention and needs to be linked to the research purpose. However, the field is characterized by a long ongoing dispute as shown in Section 4.3.4). For instance, de Mooij (2015: 254) noted that the level of analysis depends on the purpose of the research study. When the aim is to describe the national culture *"it is perfectly okay to refer to characteristics of individuals that in such a culture are relatively more frequent or more likely."* Referring to the example of a jigsaw puzzle they argued that the unique pieces when seen together *"produce a meaningful national picture."* McSweeney (2013: 485), however, cau-

tioned researchers to apply aggregated measures to predict individual behavioral out-
comes. He argued that while the completed jigsaw is a rectangle, the single jigsaw
pieces have irregular shapes. Hence, it is important to capture these irregular shapes
when analyzing inidvidual behavior or outcomes of national subgroups:

> *McSweeney (2013: 485): "In short, the fallacy invalidly relies on a false assumption: that*
> *if a population (or other ecology) has, or is believed to have, or is calculated to have, a*
> *certain characteristic each of the members of that population, or its sub-popularions, al-*
> *so have that characteristic."*

Accordingly, it is important to be aware that variables at the individual, group,
organizational or consumer group, and societal level are not necessarily linked in a
straightforward fashion to behavioral phenomena at the individual level (Bond et al.
2004; Cheung, Leung & Au, 2006; Erez & Gati, 2004; Klein & Kozlowski, 2000,
Leung et al., 2005; Tung & Verbeke, 2010). Kirkman et al. (2006: 309) and Steenkamp
(2001: 41) stressed the need to develop more thoughtful and theory-driven ways of
linking different theoretical levels:

> *Kirkman et al. (2006: 309): "We urge researchers to formulate theoretical rationales for*
> *the effects of cultural values across levels. Perhaps there are instances in which homolo-*
> *gy across levels is more likely than others. Researchers need to continue to explore rela-*
> *tionships across levels in order to generate a complete nomological network for cultural*
> *values at multiple levels. We view as particularly promising carefully constructed and*
> *theoretically sound multi-level research programs informed by multi-level theory."*

> *Steenkamp (2001: 41): "Future research should also develop and test multi-layered theo-*
> *ries and models, specifying meta, national-, and micro-cultural and individual-level ef-*
> *fects and their interrelations (Steenkamp et al., 1999). Such models would lead to a better*
> *understanding of the role of culture in attitudes and behavior."*

Klein and Kozlowski (2000) offered a concise overview of the key phases of multile-
vel theory-building and theory-testing. They referred to fundamental multilevel theo-
retical concerns and the alignment of these theoretical concerns with (a) *construct and
measurement choices*, (b) *model choices*, and (c) *data analysis choices*. In order to
specify the necessary levels, constructs and processes within a theoretical framework,
they (214-219) recommended that a research project begin by identifying, describing

and elaborating on the dependent variables. After identifying the dependent variables, independent variables should be determined. The authors further recommended that the level of each construct be carefully defined, justified and explicated (see also Section 5.4 for a discussion on measuring culture directly). Next, the theoretical links between constructs at different levels should be specified. In short, researchers need to formulate both multilevel theories and a single-level theory and then to connect these theories for a deeper understanding of cultural phenomena (see also Section 5.7.3 for a discussion on analyzing multilevel relationships).

In a similar vein, Schaffer & Riordan (2003: 176) and Singelis (2000: 85) highlighted the importance of specifying the unit of theorizing and called for more theory-driven macro-micro linkages in cross-cultural research. They also emphasized that understanding the different levels in a cross-cultural-research context is an important prerequisite for analyzing and reporting results. Cross-cultural scholars should therefore discuss how variables pertaining to higher levels (i.e., group, organization, or society) are theoretically linked to lower levels (e.g., individual consumer/employee). In addition, the relationship between variables and constructs at different levels needs to be communicated in the form of hypotheses and depicted in plausible multilevel theoretical models. In other words, the level on which data are analyzed to test hypotheses needs to be aligned with the level of theory for the constructs employed.

De Mooij (2015: 649) referred to Steenkamp et al. (1999) as an example of how multilevel research can be conducted. The latter investigated how society-level variables affect individuals' characteristics. They differentiated between personal values and values at the national level. They further theorized about how the two levels are related to each other and how the relationship between them can be expected to influence the focal construct of consumer innovativeness. In a further step, they tested their assumption by applying a hierarchical linear modeling technique. The study provided evidence that national culture moderated the effects of individual-level variables on

innovativeness, which confirmed that individual dispositions are affected by the national cultural environment.

To spur future development in multilevel research in cross-cultural advertising research, House, Quigley & Luque (2010: 129) posed the following two central questions:

> *What are the cross-level linkages between societal culture, organizational advertising practices and perceptions of global advertising effectiveness at the individual level?*

> *Would the fit/match between advertising methods, societal expectations regarding communication and societal culture be an important predictor of advertising effectiveness?*

In response to these questions and to better understand the processes by which societal culture as measured in the GLOBE study influences responses to advertising, Quigley and Sully de Luque (2012: 78-81) propose three possible theoretical approaches to link culture to substantive phenomena.

The first model conceptualizes cross-level mediated effects (see Figure 16), in which societal culture drives the evaluation of advertising and the intention to purchase through mediating effects. The mediator is conceptualized at the individual level. Quigley et al. (78) argue that the *"societal culture has certain scores on the nine GLOBE dimensions, and these scores will influence how individuals within that culture perceive the culture. It is important to first spell out this cross-level connection , as we cannot make the assumption that all individuals within a given culture perceive the characteristic dimensions of that culture the same way."* The second model refers to a cross-level fit model (see Figure 17). Quigley et al. (79) theorize that an individual's perceptions of an advertisement are independent of the effects of societal culture. Instead, they argue that *"an individual's perception of the advertising message must be consistent with (i.e. must "fit") their perceptions of their societal culture in order for the perceptions of the advertising message to result in a positive evaluation."* The third model, named the cross-level complex fit model model (see

Figure **18**), examines how GLOBE's implicit leadership theory[7] can be applied in an advertising context. Quigley et al. (81) provided the following example:

> *Quigley et al. (2012: 81): "[…] societal cultures may have very different implicit theories about sex. These implicit theories may be related to the dimensions of societal culture, but they are distinguishable from these dimensions, and may have a separate cultural influence on individual perceptions of a given ad."*

This model includes two variables based on implicit leadership theory: the culturally endorsed theory of the advertising message's subject matter and individual-level perceptions of this culturally endorsed theory.

Figure 16: Cross-Level Mediated Effects

Figure 16 taken from Quigley, N., & Sully de Luque, M. & House, R.J. 2012. Project GLOBE and cross-cultural advertising research: Developing a theory-driven approach. In S. Okazaki (Ed), Handbook of Research on International Advertising: 79. Cheltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar.

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[7]The implicit leadership theory suggests that "individuals have certain implicit beliefs, convictions, and assumptions concerning attributes and behaviors that distinguish leaders from followers, effective leaders from ineffective leaders, and moral leaders from evil leaders" (House & Javidan, 2004:16).

Figure 17: Cross-Level Fit Model

Figure 17 taken from Quigley, N., & Sully de Luque, M. & House, R.J. 2012. Project GLOBE and cross-cultural advertising research: Developing a theory-driven approach. In S. Okazaki (Ed), Handbook of Research on International Advertising: 80. Cheltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar.

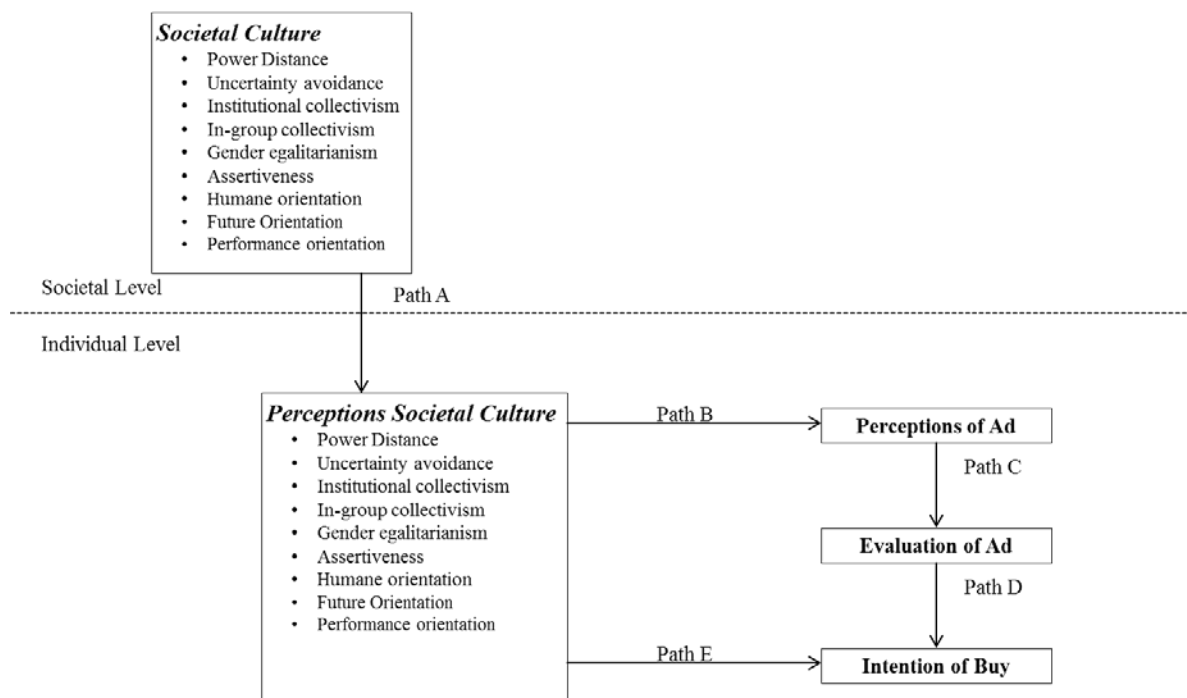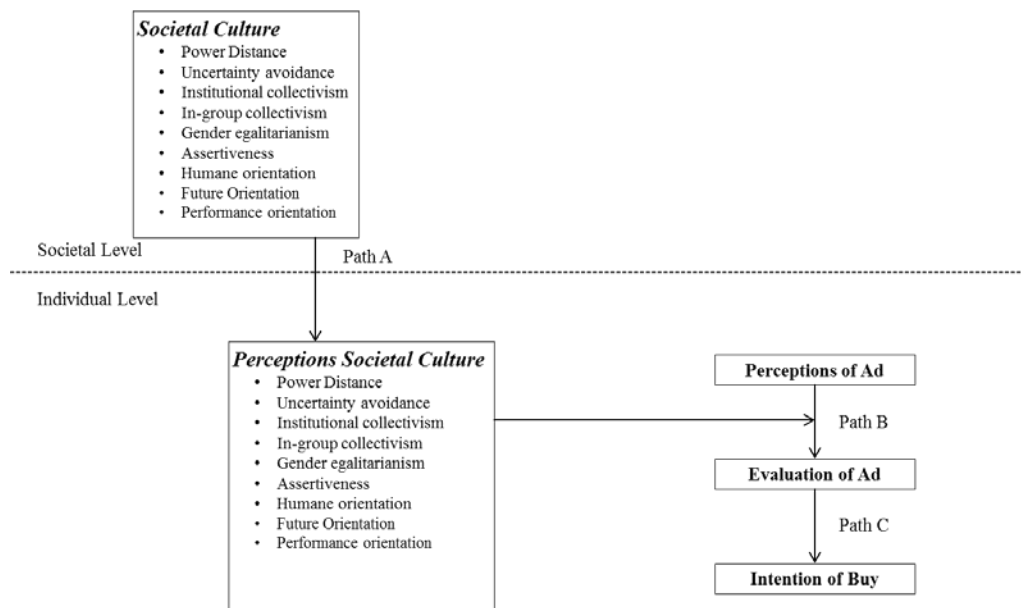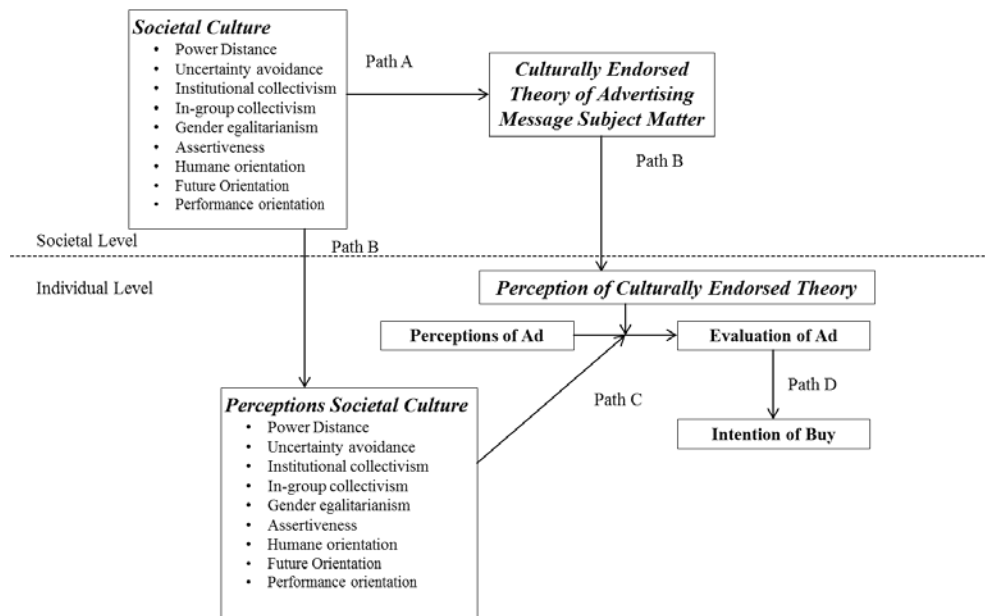Figure 18: Cross-Level Complex Fit Model

Figure 18 taken from Quigley, N., & Sully de Luque, M. & House, R.J. 2012. Project GLOBE and cross-cultural advertising research: Developing a theory-driven approach. In S. Okazaki (Ed), Handbook of Research on International Advertising: 81. Cheltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar.

5.3.4 Linking Domain-Specific Cultural Constructs and Substantive Phenomena

Another persistent problem discussed in Section 4.3.4. refers to the eclectic use of culture frameworks to examine substantive phenomena. The critique refers to the application of Hofstede's index measuring work-related value perceptions to explain differences and similarities in relationships in unrelated domains such as advertising. Hofstede's index was often found to be used eclectically to explain, for instance, the relationship between the perception and evaluation of advertisements. This might explain why past research in cross-cultural advertising has produced contradictory results. For example, on the one hand Han and Shavitt (1994), Cho, Kwon, Gentry, Jun and Kropp (1999), Choi and Miracle (2004), Nelson and Paek (2008), and Hatzithomas, Zotos and Boutsouki (2011), found evidence that advertisements matching the central cultural value tendencies of a nation (measured for example by the cultural framework of Hofstede or GLOBE) are perceived and evaluated more positively than advertisements that are incongruent with the national cultural profile of the country in question. On the other hand, several studies could not confirm that a congruency between national cultural values and advertising content led to a positive evaluation (Alden & Martin, 1996; Cheng & Schweitzer, 1996; Paek, Nelson & McLeod, 2004). Therefore, it is still unclear whether ads should match the cultural values prevalent in the given country. The call has thus been made to develop more domain-specific conceptualizations of culture. Section 5.4.2 elaborates on directions and suggestions to employ more domain-specific cultural frameworks.

5.3.5 Consideration and Modeling of Alternative Explanations

This section focuses on the modelling of rival hypotheses. Section 4.3.4. showed that reviews persistently lamented the neglect of alternative explanations or rival hypotheses for obtained results. Differences between nations are usually reduced to and explained by differences in national cultural profiles. In fact, countries are distinct

from each other on a large number of diverse characteristics. Therefore, an important recommendation is to abandon any overemphasis on culture to explain differences in substantive phenomena across cultures.

As already argued in the 1970s by Malpass (1977: 1071) the most important driver to identify relevant alternative explanations is *"a reasonably complex background of theory that guides the selection of confounding variables to measure, differences to investigate, or patterns of relationships to study."* Singelis (2000: 83) emphasized that it is of fundamental importance to determine the extent to which a specific cultural or contextual variable accounts for an observed difference in behavior. In specific, the process of determining the degree to which the measured cultural differences across cultures account for variance in dependent variables was described as *"unpackaging the effects of culture"* (for an in-depth discussion of this issue see Bond, 1998; Poortinga, van de Vijver, Joe & van de Koppel, 1987; and van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). A simultaneous consideration of cultural and other theoretically relevant contextual variables, helps to explain more precisely the effect of culture on differences and similarities in human behavior and cognition (van de Vijver & Leung, 2000; Sin et al., 1999). Hence, researchers should pay attention to the large number of additional factors that can potentially influence human behavior and cognitive processes (Aycan, 2000).

The ultimate goal should be to derive a more precise and valid picture of differences and similarities in diverse cultural settings. In response to the lack of such a consideration, Douglas and Craig (2009: 132) argued that numerous contextual variables, such as economic, financial, political, administrative, demographic, and educational factors coexist with and influence culture and hence may play a role in shaping behavioral patterns and cognitive processes:

> *Douglas and Craig (2009: 132): "Culture may be viewed as the causal factor, but underlying contextual variables such as the affluence of a society or cultural grouping, level of education, degree of urbanization, the topographical or climatic context, or even the political system may be at least partially responsible for the observed differences or con-*

found the impact of cultural influences […] Failure to take such contextual factors into consideration in cross-cultural research can result in mistaken inferences. Even if contextual effects are subtle, they still may alter observations and relationships."

In the view of Cheng, Birkinshaw, Lessard and Thomas (2014: 644), the antecedents and consequences of behavioral outcomes *"can only be understood properly through multiple lenses and levels of observation, and they are often embedded in multifaceted contexts with economic, cultural, legal and political elements."* Therefore, researchers are urged to recognize that cultural knowledge is neither maintained in isolation nor is it the paramount force in shaping individual cognition and action. In other words, the objective should be to identify what additional contextual variables may influence the focal construct and to integrate them into the theoretical framework.

Douglas and Craig (2009) outline four ways for researchers to account for the effect of context on culture and the dependent variable(s). First, context may be incorporated directly into the research design as a factor in experimental designs. A second option is to examine the effect of context by including covariates in an analysis of variance or by considering country-level control variables in multiple regression analyses. A third alternative is to compare the pattern of relationships within countries (including comparisons of e.g., consumer groupings within countries). It is especially relevant for researchers to ensure that between-culture variance is larger than within-culture variance (see Section 5.7.1 for an in-depth discussion of testing within-culture agreement and between-culture variability). Finally, researchers should analyze data by hierarchical linear regression analysis. This technique makes it possible to examine multilevel contextual effects combining both individual and country-level variables in the same analysis (see Section 5.7.4 for a deeper discussion on this issue).

A good practice for examining country-level variables can be found in the publication of Swoboda et al.(2016). The authors based contextual factors potentially influencing human behavior on Berry et al.'s (2010) set of dimensions of cross-national distance measures, including economic, financial, political, administrative, cultural,

demographic, knowledge, and global connectedness as well as geographic distance (see Table 11 for an overview of Berry's dimensions of cross-national distance). Swoboda et al. decided to base the cultural dimensions (i.e. embeddedness, [intellectual] autonomy, hierarchy, egalitarianism, mastery, harmony) on Schwartz's culture index (1994, 1999). Data on demographics (i.e. population above 65, life expectancy, household size in each country) and economic variables (income, household consumption, international trade) were obtained from the World Development Indicator Database (WDI) provided by the World Bank[8]. Data on global connectedness (i.e., internet users, mobile phones) and knowledge (i.e., literacy rate, higher education, scientific articles) were based on the WDI and the Central Intelligence Agency Factbook[9]. Data on political variables (i.e., policy-making uncertainty, democratic character, corruption) were based on the Political Constraint Index Dataset[10], Freedom House[11], and Transparency International[12].

The discussion above has illustrated the influence of alternative contextual factors as an important issue reflecting the development of the theoretical framework. Closely related to theoretical issues are the conceptualization and operationalization of culture. Recommendations and future directions are discussed in the next section.

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[8] See http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators for further information.
[9] See https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ for further information.
[10] See http://www.nsd.uib.no/macrodataguide/set.html?id=29&sub=1 for further information.
[11] See https://freedomhouse.org/ for further information.
[12] See https://www.transparency.org/ for further information.

Table 11: Dimensions of cross-national distance advocated by Berry et al. (2010)

Dimension of distance	Definition	Theoretical sources in the institutional literature	Examples of empirical studies in the international business literature
Economic	Differences in economic development and macro-economic characteristics	Whitley (1992); Caves (1996)	Campa and Guille´n (1999); Iyer (1997); Yeung (1997); Zaheer and Zaheer (1997)
Financial	Differences in financial sector development	Whitley (1992); La Porta et al. (1998)	Rueda-Sabater (2000); Capron and Guille´n (2009)
Political	Differences in political stability, democracy, and trade bloc membership	Whitley (1992); Henisz (2000); Henisz and Williamson (1999)	Gastanaga, Jeffrey, Nugent, and Pashamova (1998); Delios and Henisz (2000, 2003); Henisz and Delios (2001); Garcı´a-Canal and Guille´n (2008)
Administrative	Differences in colonial ties, language, religion, and legal system	Whitley (1992); Henisz (2000); Ghemawat (2001); La Porta et al. (1998)	Lubatkin, Calori, Very, and Veiga (1998); Guler and Guille´n (2010)
Cultural	Differences in attitudes toward authority, trust, individuality, and importance of work and family	Whitley (1992); Hofstede (1980); Inglehart (2004)	Johanson and Vahlne (1977); Kogut and Singh (1988); Barkema et al. (1996); Hennart and Larimo (1998)
Demographic	Differences in demographic characteristics	Whitley (1992)	Huynh, Mallik, and Hettihewa (2006)
Knowledge	Differences in patents and scientific production	Nelson and Rosenberg (1993); Furman et al. (2002)	Anand and Kogut (1997); Shaver and Flyer (2000); Berry (2006); Nachum, Zaheer, and Gross (2008); Guler and Guille´n (2010)
Connectedness	Differences in tourism and Internet use	Nelson and Rosenberg (1993); Guille´n and Sua´rez (2005)	Oxley and Yeung (2001)
Geographic	Great circle distance between geographic center of countries	Anderson (1979); Deadorff (1998)	Wolf and Weinschrott (1973); Hamilton and Winters (1992); Fratianni and Oh (2009)

Table 11 taken from: Berry, H., Guillén, M. F., & Zhou, N. 2010. An institutional approach to cross-national distance. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41(9): 1464.

5.4 Specification of Culture – Utilizing Alternative Approaches to Define and Measure Culture

This section discusses alternative approaches to conceptualizing and operationalizing culture in empirical cross-cultural research. Earley (2009: 31) bemoaned the dominance of the contemporary paradigm, which does not contribute to developing new knowledge about culture:

> *Earley (2009: 31): "We have enough of these values-based, large-scale surveys, and it just isn't terribly useful to have more of them. [...] I would now suggest that scholars refocus their attention away from any more of these values surveys and focus on developing theories and frameworks for understanding the linkages between culture, perceptions, actions, organizations, structures, and so forth. [...] Finding that Japanese are more "risk averse" (higher in uncertainty avoidance) and less innovative than Americans doesn't help us understand and explain why the number of patents per scientist is higher in Japan than in the United States. (Nor would it explain had the correlation run in the anticipated direction, for that matter.) Associations are exactly that, associations and not causal explanations."*

To develop new insights into culture, its multi-faceted and multi-dimensional nature should be reflected in attempts to make this knowledge more specific (Engelen and Brettel, 2011; Fischer, 2009; Sun et al., 2014; and Zhang et al., 2008). To this end, more empirical studies are encouraged to measure culture directly, in close relation to the study purpose instead of relying on decades-old value indices that are often unrelated to the focal phenomena (see Section 4.3.4.). Leung et al. (2005: 374) argued that the direct measurement of culture goes hand in hand with new theoretical and conceptual directions pointing to a redefined approach to conceptualizing the construct of culture:

> *Leung et al. (2005:374): "The several new perspectives on culture reviewed in this paper all point to multi-layer, multi-facet, contextual, and systems views of culture. These views converge to suggest that culture entails much more than cultural dimensions, and culture manifests itself in many levels and domains. Some cultural elements are stable, whereas others are dynamic and changing. Sweeping statements about cultures are useful to the extent that they provide an abstract framework for organizing more situated description of the effects of cultures. A major challenge for the field is to develop mid-range, dynamic frameworks of culture that are sensitive to their nuances in different contexts."*

Likewise Taylor (2005: 13) pointed out that measuring culture directly *"is especially important in an area when many believe that at least some level of cultural convergence is taking place."* Moreover, the collection of data on cultural variables helps to measure more accurately the cultural profile of the sample surveyed compared to extrapolation of value scores stemming from decade-old available indices.

This section elaborates on the following fundamental questions with regard to specifying and measuring the construct of culture in empirical research (see also Fischer, 2009):

1. *How should researchers conceptualize and operationalize items to measure culture across specific marketing and management domains?*

2. *How can researchers conceptualize and measure cultural variables as collective constructs at the country level while collecting data from self-administered questionnaires answered by individuals?*

3. *How can researchers utilize cultural variables conceptualized and measured at the group/nation level to explain differences in behavior at the individual level?*

4. *How can researchers employ data derived from individual-level scales to predict behavior or psychological processes at the country level?*

5. *What epistemic and ontological research orientation is appropriate to conduct research in light of the complex and shifting cultural landscape of consumers, employees and managers?*

6. *What conditions need to be satisfied before dimensions can be utilized to measure culture?*

The following subsections discuss new perspectives and promising trends that aim to maneuver the field beyond the conceptual confusion about culture.

5.4.1   Clearing up the Conceptual Confusion about the Level of Analysis

One problematic issue refers to a frequent lack of correspondence between item wording and the intended level of measurement in the analysis (see also Section 4.3.4 and 4.4.4.). Taras et al. (2009) criticized the fact that Hofstede focused on national culture, even though his data were based on self-referenced ratings (defined as items fo-

cusing on wording at the individual rather than the national level). Hofstede's respondents were asked to state their individual preferences and experiences. He then used these self-referenced ratings to capture the value orientation of a nation as a whole through ecological factor analysis (creating mathematical averages). Fischer (2009: 30) bemoaned that these mathematical averages of self-referenced ratings cannot be used to capture the value orientation of a society because *"the nature and function (and therefore the interpretation) of these constructs remain at the individual level."* Hofstede's collected data are actually based on the perception of individuals with regard to their individual values in their daily work environment. Earley (2009: 27-28) noted that these responses reflect personal unique experiences, biases, etc. and hence, cannot be indicative of collective culture, especially because Hofstede offers no explanation for why items converge at a national level. Therefore, it is likely that culture-level structures differ from those at the individual level, and the meaning of a value may differ between the individual level and the culture level:

> *Earley (2009: 27-28): "As one example, take the three items Hofstede cites for measuring power distance in his original work: (a) the preference for one style of decision making by one's boss over other styles, (b) the perception of the boss' actual decision making style, and (c) (for non-managerial employees only) the feeling that employees were afraid to disagree with their manager (Hofstede, 1980: 82). As Hofstede points out, these items are unrelated at an individual level (unsurprisingly—(a) reflects a valence, (b) reflects a practice, and (c) reflects a subjective reaction to an implied practice. These are measures assessing three very different features of psychological perception, but Hofstede argues that they are related at an "eco-logic level," that is, at a country-level grouping. It is not clear why Hofstede would expect these three different psychological constructs to be related at an aggregate level."*

Despite these concerns, Section 4.3.4 showed that the majority of researchers adopted Hofstede's dimensions for use at the individual level, while keeping silent about the problems discussed above. Fischer and Poortinga (2012) and Fischer (2009) warned that failure to acknowledge this fallacy may result in inappropriate interpretations and conclusions. Accordingly, De Mooij (2015), reiterated that the practice of assigning country scores, based on Hofstede's work, to individuals should be avoided.

In order to address the problems associated with the level of measurement and the intended use of the construct, Leung et al. (2005) underlined the importance of recognizing that culture is a multilevel construct consisting of global culture, national cultures, organizational cultures, group cultures and personal cultures. All these different levels are embedded in the minds of consumers, employees and managers and may thus play a role in guiding and driving individuals' behavior. In this vein, Oyserman et al. (2002) noted that the choice of the level of the construct of culture should be theoretically linked to the focal phenomena. The more accurate, salient and relevant the level of conceptualization and operationalization of culture is for the investigated phenomenon, the higher the likelihood that hypothesized theoretical links will predict substantive phenomena. Sun et al. (2014: 374) made a clear statement regarding the interrelationship between substantive phenomena and the level of measurement:

> *Sun et al. (2014: 374): "More differentiated treatment of cultural dimensions is needed. When studying acts of consumption, the key distinction is whether social behaviors are determined by personal preferences or social norms. When studying service issues, the key distinction is whether people value interpersonal relationships beyond personal benefits."*

House et al.'s (2004) GLOBE study contributed to resolving this persistent problem by offering two approaches to measure culture. They argued that culture can be measured via self-perceptions (self-referenced) or as perceptions of others in one's society (group-referenced). A self-referenced value scale could be phrased *"I prefer to do..."* whereas a group-referenced one could be worded *"People in my group should do…"*. Fischer (2009) argued that the consideration of this aspect is crucial in the early stage of a research project when developing the theoretical framework and conceptualizing and operationalizing culture. Researchers to date have usually handled the level of analysis problem *a posteriori* when analyzing the data statistically. Sun et al. (352) proposed the use of group-referenced approaches when investigating phenomena of social behavior (e.g. consumption), as these types of approaches have proven better predictors of such phenomena:

> *Sun et al. (2014: 352): "[…] group-referenced scales better predict behaviors that are norm-governed (Fischer, 2006). Consumption is a social behavior and is affected by normative influences (Bearden, Netemeyer & Teel, 1989; Rook & Fisher, 1995), especially in collectivist cultures (Bagozzi, 2000; Bagozzi et al., 2000; Lee & Kacen, 2008). Thus, a group-referenced approach to investigating cultural differences may be useful to consumer researchers"*

They likewise pointed out (354) that the feasibility of both self-referenced and group-referenced scales needs to be carefully evaluated and as previously mentioned linked to the focal phenomenon:[13]

> *Sun et al. (2014: 354): "[…] consumer researchers need to consider the implications when measuring culture with self- vs group-referenced, and value vs practice scales. No scale will be better than the others in all circumstances, and each dimension should be looked at separately in terms of its definition and the research context. As Moorman and Blakely (1995), Shteynberg et al. (2009) and Fischer et al. (2009) have done in their respective areas, studies that compare the utility of these different approaches in predicting consumer emotions, attitudes and behaviors will provide insight into which type of measure is better in which circumstances."*

In addition, Tsui et al. (2007) found evidence that values measured at the individual level predicted behavioral phenomena in the workplace better. In support of this finding, Ralston et al. (2014: 287) argued that the recent management literature provides increasing evidence for the higher explanatory power of individual-level constructs on individual behavior phenomena. Contrary to the above arguments, Taras et al. (2009: 367) questioned *"the ability of individuals to provide valid assessments of group-level phenomena, be it their own society or organization or others, and point out that such responses will be largely stereotypical and affected by the respondent's subjective point of reference."*

It becomes evident from the discussion above that the literature is controversial rather than providing clear recommendations regarding the appropriate level of culture. Hence, researchers are encouraged to elaborate further on this issue.

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[13] The interested reader is referred to Klein & Kozlowski (2000) for a more indepth discussion of this topic.

5.4.2 Conceptualizing Culture as a Multifaceted Construct

A further area of development concerns the notion that culture cannot be reduced to a set of value dimensions, since evidence from other disciplines points to the more complex nature of culture. Taras et al. (2009: 359) highlighted the importance of defining specific variables and constructs that capture different facets of culture (e.g. values, practices, communication styles, cultural looseness–tightness, artifactual elements of culture, etc.) relevant to the substantive phenomenon under study. New ways to conceptualize and operationalize culture would allow the field to frame new theories and generate new knowledge:

> *Taras et al. (2009: 359): "A single model cannot comprise all aspects of such a highly complex, multidimensional and multi-layered phenomenon as culture. A single numeric index or a few dimension scores cannot provide a comprehensive description of culture. The nature of the relationship between different elements of culture is still to be determined and one must be very cautious about drawing parallels and generalizing findings across culture facets (e.g., language, values, practices) and levels (e.g., individual, national). Thus, it is very important to specifically define which elements of culture are the focus of a model and avoid unjustified generalizations of the findings to facets of culture that are not directly measured in the study."*

In agreement with the above direction, Adair, Buchan and Chen (2009: 146) stated that it is time to move beyond studying national cultural values to predicting and explaining differences and similarities of behavioral outcomes. They argued that other facets of culture (e.g., culture as an organized set of rules or standards, culture as a symbolic discourse, etc.) may also offer important insights, which would advance the current understanding about cultural mechanisms and contribute to advances in theoretical knowledge about culture:

> *Adair, Buchan and Chen (2009: 146): "Despite our tendency to focus on culture as values, many definitions of culture go beyond this conceptualization. For example, Parsons & Shils (1951) note that culture includes an organized set of rules or standards to which an individual is committed. D'Andrade (1984) sees culture as not only shared meaning but also as symbolic discourse. And Herskovits (1955) defines culture even more broadly as the human-made part of the environment. However, in management and marketing, researchers have not taken advantage of many of these alternative conceptualizations of culture."*

A debate spreading the focus beyond value dimensions as the core of culture was initiated by House et al.'s (2004) GLOBE study. They differentiated between two cultural facets, namely values and practices. They argued that culture can be measured in the form of values (as things should be, the desired state) as well as in the form of practices (as things are, the actual state).

Theoretical and empirical support for a distinction between values and practices was, also published in cross-cultural marketing research. Bagozzi (2000) and Kacen and Lee (2002) observed that in collectivist societies the discrepancy between attitude and actual consumption behavior is greater than in individualist ones. In a collectivist culture, the reason for differences between an individual's desired values and his or her actual consumption practices may be explained by the high pressure stemming from the society to conform. De Mooij (2015: 256) noted that this paradoxical aspect of values explains *"why answers to questions about what people actually do and what they think should be done usually are negatively related."* Accordingly, Sun et al. (2014: 353) postulated that *"values are more suitable for predicting consumer emotions and attitudes, whereas practices correspond to actual behaviors, especially when targeting social-oriented consumer behaviors in collectivistic societies where an individual's behavior is highly regulated by social norms, duties and obligations."* Okazaki and Mueller (2007: 514) recognized the GLOBE study as *"fruitful for international marketing and advertising researchers."* For example, Lin and Wang (2010) investigated the effect of Chinese culture on consumption. They underlined that due to the high score on collectivism, research on Chinese consumers should operationalize culture via practices rather than values.

These comments point to the importance of understanding how much and when values, practices, or other facets influence behavioral outcomes. Further conceptual papers, meta-analyses, and empirical research on this topic, are needed to advance the field to a stage in which culture can be more effectively conceptualized and operationalized to predict and explain behavioral differences (see also Taras et al., 2010).

5.4.3 Conceptualizing Culture as a Configural Construct Beyond National Borders

A further theme of criticism discussed in Section 4.4.4 referred to the dominant usage of single-culture dimensions in cross-cultural marketing (most often Hofstede's dimension of individualism versus collectivism) to examine how culture influences substantive phenomena of interest.

It has frequently been pointed out that culture is a multi-dimensional construct rather than a parsimonious phenomenon that can be explained by a single dimension, such as individualism versus collectivism. In light of the persistent simplistic attempts to conceptualize culture, Tsui et al. (2007) urged researchers to understand culture as an integrated set of multiple, potentially interrelated, cultural dimensions. Tsui et al. (462) referring to Lytle, Brett, Barsness, Tinsley and Janssens (1995: 170) argued that the field needs to *"reexamine the construct of culture at its core. Culture is a latent, a hypothetical construct, and most definitions refer to culture as a pattern. It is not a list of independent dimensions but is the integrated, complex set of interrelated and potentially interactive patterns characteristic of a group of people"*.

In response, Richter et al.'s (2016) study on *"Using Cultural Archetypes in Cross-cultural Management Studies"* and Venaik and Midgley's (2015) paper on *"Mindscapes across landscapes: Archetypes of transnational and subnational culture"* paved the way for conceptualizing culture as a multidimensional construct characterized by complex interrelationships between various cultural dimensions. Richter et al. and Venaik & Midgley advocated an approach to identifying configurations of values, defined as archetypes, in cross-cultural survey data. This approach allows heterogeneity to be recognized in cultural values within and across countries through configurations of shared values. This new approach makes it possible to study the existence of transnational and subnational archetypes thereby recognizing culture as a *"combination of universal – etic – as well as unique – emic – characteristics"* (Venaik&Midgley, 2015: 1). Due to the novelty of cultural archetypes in cross-cultural

research, the definitions of Richter et al. (2016: 66) and Venaik & Midgley (2015: 5) are quoted below:

> *Richter et al. (2016: 66):"Cultural archetypes are certain configurations (Roth, 1992) of multiple cultural dimensions and are thus defined by the magnitude of as well as the interrelationships between cultural dimensions. This is consistent with Meyer et al., who see configurations as "any multidimensional constellation of conceptually distinct characteristics that commonly occur together"(Meyer, Tsui & Hinings, 1993: 1175). Accordingly, cultural archetypes provide a gestalt perspective of culture (Earley, 2006) as Venkatraman (1989: 432) defines a gestalt as the "degree of internal coherence among a set of theoretical attributes." Rather than assuming linear associations between attributes, such as cultural dimensions, attributes in a gestalt form a holistic pattern that reflects an archetype (Miller & Friesen, 197)."*
>
> *Venaik & Midgley (2015: 5): "[…]we define a culture archetype as: a configuration of the fundamental values shared by a group of people and represented by a hypothetical individual who perfectly embodies these values."*

Venaik and Midgley employed an archetypal perspective on cultural values. In contrast to the more traditional approaches of cluster analysis or latent class analysis that build classifications with a more internal and subgroup focus, Venaik and Midgley aimed to identify culture archetypes through the topology of all the data, based on the World Values Survey 2005 and Schwartz's model of culture. They found evidence of individuals sharing similar values within and across nations, which offset the traditional national culture perspective. Their results proved the existence of four culture archetypes in Japan, USA and China, and six in India. They highlighted that the identification of archetypes shared by respondents within and across countries helps to acknowledge the growing pressure of cultural convergence and divergence alike (see also Leung et al., 2005 and Rohlfer & Zhang, 2016). In addition, longitudinal archetypal analysis could help capture the dynamics of cultural exchange across national borders.

Richter et al. (2016) demonstrated the archetype approach by using the cultural values scale (CVSCALE) suggested by Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz (2011) for measuring Hofstede's (2001) five cultural dimensions. Other measurement instruments

can also be used with this approach but the authors decided to demonstrate the archetype-approach with the most frequently used dimensions of culture. Surveying respondents across ten countries, they identified six cultural archetypes that characterized respondents in all the investigated countries. This finding thus underlined the benefits of the archetype approach in determining whether respondents within and across countries share certain configurations of multiple cultural dimensions. Based on this insight, they urged researchers and practitioners to acknowledge that cultural configurations transcend national borders. Hence, efficient management practices are not necessarily shaped by the culture of a country. The identified cultural archetypes capture interrelationships between different cultural dimensions and hence offer a more comprehensive picture of a cultural entity. The comprehensive picture can more accurately predict the effects of culture on behavior as potentially reinforcing or countervailing effects are included in the archetype approach.

5.4.4 Expanding the Range of the Ontological and Epistemological Properties of Culture

By inferring values indirectly from available indices, researchers have implicitly or explicitly agreed with the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the underlying culture frameworks. Section 4.4.4 discussed several ontological and epistemological problems rooted in the predominant assumptions about culture that circumscribe the construct as commensurate with a set of universal value dimensions by which nations can be distinguished. In addition, value tendencies are believed to be coherent, unified, immutable, and geographically demarcated (Nakata, 2009: 253). Hong (2009: 3) summarized the dominant paradigm in an eloquent way and emphasized the need to move beyond the ontological and epistemological bonds of inertia:

> Hong (2009: 3): "This type of research focused on the differences or similarities between national and radical/ ethnic groups belonging to those cultures. According to this approach, as long as a given group possesses certain characteristics, its members should

inevitably display the corresponding patterns of responses. Unfortunately, these early assumptions seldom provided an understanding of the processes through which culture influences affect, cognition, and behaviors."

Likewise, Nakata and Izberk-Bilgin (2009: 71-72) argued that the paradigmatic approach was important in spurring interest in cross-cultural research endeavors and in facilitating these efforts. However, this approach does not help answer calls for learning more about culture in marketing, management, and psychology in today's market realities.

Describing the new market realities, Appadurai (1990) referred to the forces of globalization that shape the cultural profile of individuals and consequently of groups, regions, nations etc. He summarized them in a framework consisting of five forces defining cultural elements across the globe. These five forces refer to the *"ethnoscapes"* a term that describes persons moving around the world as refugees, tourists, foreign students, migrants, etc., *"technoscapes"* referring to a global configuration of technology, *"finanscapes"* referring to the influence of financial markets and money flows, *"ideoscapes"* describing global political ideas and ideologies, and finally *"mediascapes"* that broadcast media content and images around the globe.

In light of the wide range of economic, social, political, and technological developments and changes that have influenced market realities, it is questionable whether the theoretical frameworks of culture developed in the 1980s and 1990s can help to explain phenomena occurring in today's market environment. As argued by Brannen (2009: 82) the feasibility of culture frameworks is minimal *"when individuals with varying preconceptions (thanks to globalization) about each other's multiple cultures (national, regional, sub-organizational, etc.) and contexts (institutional, organizational, occupational, etc.) attempt to transfer, synchronize, learn from and even co-create"* in business exchanges. In a similar vein, Brannen (2009: 87) and Ralston et al. (2014: 14) questioned the traditional approach to measuring culture in the light of present and future market realities that dictate a substantial level of dynamism, change, and heterogeneity as well as the convergence of cultural values and practices:

Brannen (2009: 87): "By 2020 America's largest ethnic group will be culturally mixed. […] This trend is paralleled in Europe given the low birth rates of the established population and the concomitant increase in proportion of non-European born and second-generation immigrants. Such people of mixed ethnicities carry with them not only racial variation but also mixed cultural sensibilities. Whereas the racial demographics are relatively simple to track, account for, and describe, the accompanying mixed cultural sensibilities are less obvious, relatively undocumented, and not understood."

Ralston et al. (2014: 14): "Today, in the context of understanding the values/behaviors of the members of the global workforce, we now must integrate with these inherent individual-level differences the impact of the range of phenomena that are changing the cultural, ethnic and/or religious make-up of a society's membership […] In our view, these inherent differences in conjunction with the increasingly changing face of today's global workforce begs re-examination of the question: Does a societal-level mean score of workplace values truly represent the values of all workers in a particular society? This is the essence of our research question."

Fiske (2002: 84) also bemoaned that the traditional culture frameworks developed by Hofstede (1980) and House et al. in the GLOBE study (2004) are rather an *"abstraction that formalizes our ideological representation of the antithetical other, a cultural vision of the rest of the world characterized in terms of what we imagine we are not."* Accordingly, Holden (2004: 563) stated that the field desperately needs to develop a new approach to conceptualize and measure culture, which recognizes the changed market realities:

Holden (2004: 563): "Marketers are berated for their dependence on Hofstede and his concept of culture which stems from nineteenth century anthropology. […] It is argued that it is no longer satisfactory to associate culture with markets perceived as national aggregates of characteristics."

Craig & Douglas (2006: 322) "Given the rapid pace of change, it becomes increasingly imperative to take into account the dynamic character of culture and to understand the way the composition of culture is being transformed by global forces."

One innovative stream paving the way for moving beyond the predominant paradigm stemmed from an epistemological and philosophical lens that focuses on post-modernism instead of modernism. Nakata (2009d) describes the difference between these two paradigmatic lenses very convincing:

Nakata (2009d): "Contrary to the emphasis in modernism on a single, objective, and external truth, postmodernism sees truth as dependent on the observer and context of observation, resulting in multiple understandings of equal legitimacy with no fixed ontology. Second, postmodernism argues for particularism, looking at the subject in relation to its setting. Thus, variation and exception rather than uniformity and constancy are observed across time and space. What are viewed as global and permanent from a modernist perspective become local and temporary, shifting and reconstituting, in a postmodernist frame. Third, the philosophy focuses on the fragmented, often contradictory, aspects of a phenomenon. Unified grand schemas and narratives are discounted because the human condition is itself juxtapositional and disassembled, a montage of not-altogether coherent experiences and qualities."

This new perspective introduced an optimistic note in the new approaches to conceptualizing culture as being permeable, changeable, indeterminate, and fragmented. The first study following the route of postmodernism, and breaking with the assumption that persons are guided by stable and internally consistent values, mindsets, knowledge structures etc., was published by Hong, Morris, Chiu & Benet-Martinez (2000). Their key article *"Multicultural minds: A dynamic constructivist approach to culture and cognition"* kick-started the debate by providing evidence that culture does not reflect the deep-rooted essence of national groups. Instead they showed that culture is rather dynamic in nature and subject to change, in contrast to the existing knowledge that describes people from collectivist cultures as more likely to attribute the cause of other people's behaviors to external causes such as situational demands (as opposed to internal causes such as personality traits). For example, Hong Kong Chinese are known to be collectivists and thus, are more likely to attribute others' behavior to external factors. Hong et al. (2000) postulated that this attribution is rather dynamic and does not hold true across all contexts and situations. By randomly exposing a sample of Hong Kong Chinese to either American individualistic cues (i.e., American icons such as Superman) or Chinese collectivist cues (i.e., Chinese icons such as the Monkey King) as experimental stimuli, Hong et al. found that respondents primed with American experimental stimuli caused the Chinese participants to act more like Americans in their style by attributing behavior to internal causes (i.e., personality traits). Briley et al.

(2000: 159) described Hong et al.'s epistemological philosophical perspective as a dynamic constructivist approach to studying culture and its relationship to behavior:

> *Briley, Morris, Simonson (2000:159): "A dynamic constructivist approach to culture has been developed recently by social psychologists (Hong et al. 2000), who build on the processing assumptions of Higgins's (1996) knowledge activation theory. A key idea is that possessing a particular cultural construct does not entail relying on it continuously, and that predictable factors determine whether a construct will become operative. This has yielded insights about the boundary conditions affecting cultural influences on social cognition, such as the individual's state of priming (Hong et al. 2000) or state of Need for Closure (Chiu et al. 1999)."*

Publications to date drawing on a dynamic constructivist approach have shown robust support for this approach and the insights from it. For instance, Aaker and Lee (2001), Teng and Laroche (2006), Zhu and Meyers-Levy (2009), Ma, Yang and Mourali (2014) provided empirical evidence for the co-existence of individualist and collectivist cultural value orientations in a person's mind. As discussed previously, the two value orientations or mindsets can be activated by specific situational cues and thus play a dominant role. For instance, Ma et al. examined the impact of both independent and interdependent mindsets on consumer adoption of new products (i.e., the self-perspective effect). In a first study, Ma et al. followed a traditional approach to cross-cultural research by operationalizing culture as national cultural values (collectivist or interdependent cultures versus individualist or independent cultures) and then examined differences in the actual adoption of new products (incrementally new products versus ultimate new products). The authors demonstrated that consumers in a predominantly independent culture (U.S.A) are more willing to adopt ultimate new products, compared to consumers in a predominantly interdependent culture (Japan). The latter respondents were more willing to adopt incrementally new products. The authors hypothesized and explained this effect statistically by arguing that interdependents strive more for assimilation with others than for differentiation from them. The purchase and consumption of incrementally new products, based on earlier versions of the same product being used by the majority of consumers, satisfies interdependents` as-

similation need and their less dominant desire for differentiation from others. On the contrary, independents who value differentiation from others more than assimilation with them, value incrementally new products less as these products do not help them achieve these ends.

However, in a subsequent study, Ma et al. found evidence for dynamic rather than stable and internally consistent self-related distinctiveness needs in a Canadian university setting. The authors discovered that needs for self-related distinctiveness differ according to a person's self-perspective in the presence of social cues. The authors contributed to the literature by showing empirically how situational cues influence consumer decisions to adopt innovation. The experimental study revealed that advertising messages containing cues of independence and autonomy made an independent mindset more accessible. As a consequence, respondents favored an ultimate new product more as it fulfilled their needs for differentiation from others. On the contrary, when advertising messages contained cues of social harmony, the interdependent mindset was more salient. As a result, respondents valued incrementally new products more. Ma et al. (2014: 115) concluded:

> *Ma et al. (2014: 115) : "[...] the use of an independent (vs. interdependent) ad appeal almost tripled the adoption of a [ultimate new product], and the use of an interdependent (vs. independent) appeal almost doubled the adoption of an [incrementally new product]."*

Briley (2009: 189) explained the rationale behind these findings by stating that the situational cues perceived by persons facing a decision can influence the accessibility of knowledge and motives guiding behavior:

> *Briley (2009: 189):"Once knowledge is brought to the fore of the mind for this initial event, this knowledge is likely to remain highly accessible for the subsequent decision task and, therefore, to be applied. This pattern of influence, often called "priming" effects, relies on the spread of activation across related constructs that are associated in the mind."*

Briley, Wyer Jr and Li (2014), Oyserman and Lee (2008), Jahoda (2012), Kashima (2009), and Schwartz (2014) summarized the underlying ontological traits of

the dynamic constructionist approach. First, culture is specified as a set of diverse, domain-specific, and inconsistent knowledge structures. Second, culture is understood as knowledge structures that need to be activated through situational cues to play an active role in guiding behavior. Third, a dynamic constructivist approach assumes that individuals can switch between schemas when cued by the environment. Fourth, culture is conceptualized and theorized as an alternative influencing factor on behavior, which can occur either in company with other mechanisms, can set other mechanisms off, moderate or even mediate them.

In summary, culture as an influencing factor may, in some contexts, matter more than in others and at certain times more than others. Therefore, future research studies need to identify the particular contexts and times in which specific culture orientations matter and influence behavior.

5.5 Research Instrument Design – Implementing Cultural Sensitivity in Measurement Instrument Development

Section 4.5 illustrated that the existing approaches to developing measurement instruments were considered inappropriate to obtain reliable data about behavioral and psychological phenomena across cultures. Van de Vijver (2015) identified three common sources of bias that downgrade the psychometric quality of data collected in different cultural settings. Biases of this type that hamper the comparison of cultural groups refer to (a) *a partial or inadequate overlap in definitions of constructs across cultures*, (b) *incongruous behaviors linked to the construct*, and (c) *the incomplete representation of important and salient features and aspects of the construct in the measurement instrument*. One reason for these persistently occurring biases was the dominance of the pseudo etic research approach. Researchers following this approach identified constructs and developed the respective measurement scales in one specific culture and assumed that the construct and its corresponding scale were also appropriate in other contexts.

To prevent biases of this type and to ensure the equivalence of constructs and measurement scales, it was repeatedly argued that researchers need to be extremely cautious and to consider culture-specific insights. As noted by Schaffer and Riordan (2003: 188) researchers *"must ensure that the measures of a construct developed in one culture can be applied to another culture before they can establish a basis for theoretical comparisons"*.

The debate centers around the the concepts of data comparability and equivalence. Data comparability has been defined by Douglas and Craig (1983: 131-132) as *"data that have, as far as possible, the same meaning, interpretation, and the same level of accuracy, precision of measurement and reliability in all countries and cultures"*. Hence, the comparability of data collected by measurement instruments in diverse cultural settings is of paramount importance to ensure that any differences and similarities found between cultures truly reflect the phenomena of interest and are not

subject to bias (Hult et al., 2008). The rationale is that instrument equivalence makes it possible to confidently determine cultural differences and similarities between cultural groups. The following discussion focuses on the umbrella term measurement equivalence which refers to the degree to which constructs, measurement units, scales, or scores can be compared across cultural groups (van de Vijver, 2002: 548).

To achieve meaningful cross-cultural comparisons, it is important to decenter the research perspective. Decentering is defined as removing the influence of a dominant culture or research perspective from the process of developing and executing a research study across diverse cultural settings (Brislin et al., 1973). In particular, the integration of emic perspectives in the early phase of a research project would help to identify the truly etic dimensions of constructs. In this sense, Buckley and Chapman (1997: 291) noted that taking emic ('native') perspectives into consideration is a *"vital step towards adequate positivist research"*. Culture-specific insights would allow constructs to be developed relative to the socio-cultural contexts under investigation.

The following sections discuss multicultural research collaborations and a combined emic-etic approach as means to establish the equivalence of measurement instruments across cultures. Section 5.7.2 will discuss coping mechanisms that can be employed after the data has been collected.

5.5.1 Qualitative Techniques to Establish Construct Equivalence

Section 5.1 has already discussed the benefits of a combined emic-etic approach when conducting cross-cultural research. In essence, qualitative approaches allow *"researchers to put aside their culture biases and to become familiar with the relevant cultural differences in each setting"* (Schaffer and Riordan, 2003: 174). Comparisons are possible only if constructs include commonalities across cultures. Schaffer and Riordan (2003: 175) described four steps, originally proposed by Triandis (1992), that need to be taken when using a combined emic-etic approach:

1. Develop a theoretical framework and decide what specific constructs should be included in the framework.

2. Decentralize the research design across cultures of interest and collect culture-specific insights into the theoretical assumptions previously made and the constructs to be studied.

3. Derive culture-specific items for all cultures and test their appropriateness by pretests with convenience samples. Identify truly etic dimensions across cultures (e.g. items that are found to have different meanings across cultures are to be dropped from further research).

4. For the determined etic dimensions, which measure the etic construct, emic scales should be constructed in each culture.

A large collaborative project in cross-cultural psychology, which has exemplified the rich potential of combining etic and emic perspectives and qualitative and quantitative approaches to identify truly etic constructs and measurement instruments, was published in a series of papers by Nel et al. (2012), Valchev et al. (2014), and Valchev et al. (2013). This research group disagreed with the generally held assumption that the structure of personality is universal and identical across all cultures, and can thus be studied using identical translated measurement instruments. Personality is often represented in social research by the Five-Factor Model (FFM) (Costa & MacCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1993). This widely examined theory suggests five broad dimensions to be representative of the human personality and psyche. The five factors refer to openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. The above researchers argued that these five dimensions are manifested in different ways across cultures, which in turn require culture-specific operationalizations. This paves the way to emic insights and qualitative research methodologies. As noted by van de Vijver (2015: 137) *"the notion that basic features of psychological functioning are universal (etic) but that manifestations may be more culture-specific (emic) finds a natural methodological partner in a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods."*

Supporting their disagreement with empirical proof, Nel et al. (2012) explored the indigenous personality concepts of speakers of the 11 official languages in South Africa, and employed qualitative methodologies in etic-oriented research. They conducted personal interviews with 1,216 participants from the 11 official language groups within the country. The interviews were conducted with the help of specially trained interviewers who were native speakers of the target languages. Interviewees were asked to describe themselves and various persons they were well acquainted with (e.g., parent, child, grandparent, favorite teacher etc.). After the interviews were conducted, the qualitative data were transcribed and carefully translated into English (the research team's language of discussion). The qualitative analysis involved group discussions and exchanges with local experts in the respective languages and cultures. The personality description terms thus derived were categorized and clustered with regard to their semantic relations. Nel et al. identified a total of 37 subclusters that were part of nine broader clusters referring to conscientiousness, emotional stability, extraversion, facilitation, integrity, intellect, openness, relationship, harmony, and soft-heartedness. This nine-cluster model displayed both similarities and differences with the FFM. In essence, this large study program underlined the need for emic studies to complement etic work. In this respect, van de Vijver (2015: 141) wrote:

> *van de Vijver (2015: 141): "A mature psychology incorporates both components. In the field of personality, this would amount to a description of basic features of personality structure that are shared by most if not all cultures, complemented by a description of culture-specific features and relevant cultural characteristics that give rise to these specifics, such as language characteristics or value preferences in a certain culture."*

However, the continuous calls for emic perspectives and qualitative research methodologies were also accompanied by pessimistic comments. Such procedures are very time- consuming and might not be in line with developing universal measurement instruments that allow comparable data to be obtained. For example, Hui and Triandis (1985: 144) and Peng et al. (1991) argued that the feasibility of identifying culture-specific scales is rather low:

Hui and Triandis (1985: 144): "[…] many researchers may find that they do not have the time or subject pools necessary to operationalize and bring the abstract, universal concepts down to a more concrete level for measurement within specific cultures. Besides, as the items used are not similar across cultures, item equivalence and scalar equivalence are lacking, rendering direct comparison of cultures impossible."

Hence, it is important also to mention alternative mechanisms that can be employed to determine whether the phenomena under investigation are universal and how constructs can be measured equally across cultures. Simultaneously or even as a substitute (especially when monetary and time constraints are tight), researchers can identify suitable constructs and measurement instruments in previously published studies on similar phenomena in the cultures under investigation. When potential etic constructs are identified, the translation-back-translation technique and statistical tests (see Section 5.7.2) can be applied with the aim of developing equivalent measurement instruments (and Cheung & Rensvold, 2002; Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000).

The core benefit of the translation-back-translation technique (one person translates the instrument into the target language and another person translate it back into the original language) is to provide some proof of literal accuracy and to detect inequities (Brislin et al.1973). However, Samiee & Jeong(1994: 213) criticized that translation-back-translations *"[…] fail to transfer the full, symbolic meaning of an advertisement from one language to another. Every translation therefore must be done in the context of the objectives of the study."*As a response to this concern, Watkins(2010) recommended to use more rigorous translation techniques as for example, parallel-blind-translation (several individuals translate the questionnaire independently and compare result after the translation) and the committee approach (several individuals translate the questionnaire independently and compare result during translation).

Pretest and pilot studies may also help raise awareness of cultural differences with regard to the interpretation of measurement instrument stimuli by respondents

across cultures (Douglas & Nijssen, 2003; Hult et al., 2008; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003).

Recent cross-cultural marketing studies published by Swoboda et al. (2016) and Walsh et al. (2014) reported the procedures employed to safeguard their studies from hidden bias. These studies justified their etic approach by carefully reviewing the literature on the scales used in previous studies (most of which were originally developed in Western countries). The identified scales were then translated into the target languages by applying the translation-back-translation method to ensure semantic equivalence. The translated scales were then qualitatively and quantitatively pretested using feedback from local scholars and practitioners to ensure reliability and validity. In a final step, the measurement equivalence of the scales used in the main study were statistically tested according to the procedures outlined by Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1998) (see Section 5.7.2).

5.5.2   Applying Multi-Paradigmatic Lenses to Design Etic Measurement Instruments

While acknowledging that the translation-back-translation procedures (Brislin et al., 1973) and psychometric approaches used to test measurement equivalence in cross-cultural research constitute the most rigorous approaches for safeguarding measurement equivalence, Boehnke et al. (2014: 4) argued that identically worded items and mathematical equivalence do not necessarily guarantee that the psychological content assessed is correctly understood and interpreted across cultures.

> *Boehnke et al. (2014: 4): "[…] linguistically identical items that produce identical mathematical relations when used in studies in different cultures are often seen as the silver bullet of etic cross-cultural psychology. Identical mathematical relations, however, do not in and by themselves prove that identical psychological content is assessed. If covariance matrices are identical across cultures, this solely suggests that numbers and their relationships are equal. It is utterly irrelevant for the math, what the numbers mean. […] In current-day etic quantitative cross-cultural psychology, it is secured by accepting identically formulated items as proof that numbers mean the same thing."*

In support of this argument, the finding of Tsui et al.'s (2007: 457, 467) review appears interesting. They observed that etic studies often ended up deleting items after data was collected.

> *Tsui et al. (2007: 467): "The pseudo etic approach may create an unnecessary barrier to achieving construct equivalence across samples, as illustrated in a recent study by Li-Ping Tang, Chen & Sutarso (2008), who tested the measurement equivalence of a simple nine-item Love-of-Money Scale in 29 geo-polities. Only 17 samples passed the metric equivalence test. More samples may achieve construct equivalence if the researchers have identified emic items for some samples".*

In order to circumvent the likelihood that only those psychological constructs are researched for which linguistic equality and the equivalence of covariances can be established, Boehnke et al. (2014) suggested that cross-cultural research be conducted using a ***"culturally informed quantitative emic comparative approach".*** They developed an approach that integrates qualitative and quantitative evidence, and sets out to identify and measure a latent construct through items containing culture-specific perspectives expressed in the wording of the scales. To achieve this end, qualitative procedures in combination with a decentralized multicultural research team were used. The culture-specific items were then tested for the structural and measurement equivalence of covariance matrices (see Section 5.7.2). In a final step, the obtained measures were validated by testing the equivalence of the relationship between the latent construct operationalized by cultue-specific items across all cultures and a dependent comparison variable. Boehnke et al.'s (2014: 11) core idea is to shift *the obligation to ascertain equivalence away from the instrument itself to the relation of its scores with another measure".* Their approach is used as a good-practice example, since it challenges the contemporary paradigm that assesses phenomena across cultures based on items shown to be linguistically identical by applying the translation-back-translation technique and state-of-the-art approaches in determining measurement equivalence a *posteriori*.

5.6 Sampling – Moving towards more Rigor in Sampling Choices

Sampling has a major impact on the validity of the results obtained (Bello, Leung, Radebaugh, Tung & van Witteloostuijn, 2009). Cross-cultural researchers are required to satisfy the same methodological requirements with regard to sampling as their colleagues who are conducting research in domestic environments. However, according to the debate in review publications (see also Section 4.6), additional sampling issues need to be considered in studies comparing data obtained from two or more cultural groups (Adler, 1983b, Cavusgil & Das, 1997; Nasif et al., 1991; Samiee & Jeong, 1994; Reynolds, Simintiras & Diamantopoulos, 2003). According to Reynolds et al. (2003) because the importance of sampling in cross-cultural research is enormous, without a defensible sampling strategy, the results of the study may be vague, ambiguous, and likely to be misrepresentative (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001).

This section will discuss more rigorous approaches to the sampling of both cultures and respondents by referring to the suggestions identified in the content- analyzed literature. The persistent problems tackled here are related to the lack of theory-driven approaches to selecting cultures, the dominance of two-culture comparisons, the debate over sample-frame comparability versus sample-frame representativeness, the convenience-based selection of respondents, and the prevalence of small samples (see Section 4.6).

5.6.1 Theory-driven Selection of Cultures

To ensure rigorous testing of the role of culture in substantive consumer phenomena, the selected culture should represent a different treatment of the predictor variable (Lonner & Berry, 1986). In a similar vein, Sin et al. (1999) proposed that cultures be selected on the basis of variables relating to their macro-environment, together with psychological and social determinants. A theory-driven approach to selecting cultures was put forward by Sivakumar and Nakata (2001), who provided an algorithm for

clustering national cultures with similar scores on Hofstede's (1980) five-value dimensions. The calculated indices of similarity can then be used as criteria for selecting samples of national cultures at the extremes of the dimension relevant to the research objective. The rigor of cross-culture comparisons and the generalizability of the obtained results can be improved by such theory-driven approaches.

5.6.2 Increasing the Number of Cultures studied

It has repeatedly been suggested that the number of cultures sampled be increased, as the use of no more than two or three data points is insufficient for generalization, and thus inappropriate for testing theory (Engelen & Brettel, 2011; Nasif et al., 1991; Reynolds et al., 2003; Samiee & Jeong, 1994; Sekaran 1983; Sin et al., 1999). Franke and Richey Jr. (2010) argued that comparing *"small numbers of countries will actually often fail to reflect a trend that applies to countries in general, even when the overall trend is strong, and may falsely suggest a positive or negative trend, even when the relationship between variables is weak."* In favor of increasing the number of cultures studied, van de Vijver & Leung (1997: 263) argued that the likelihood of rival hypotheses accounting for the observed differences decreases as the number of cultures included in the research design increases. Consequently, using a large number of cultures would allow for randomization of the variance on non-matched cultural variables and the elimination of rival hypotheses:

> *van de Vijver & Leung (1997: 263): "However, if only two cultures are selected that are highly dissimilar, they are likely to vary in other dimensions as well, and numerous alternative interpretations have to be ruled out. The problem does not arise when more than two cultures are studied; the larger the number of cultures selected, the fewer the alternative interpretations will be possible."*

Some advanced statistical techniques, such as Hierarchical Linear Modeling require that a larger number of cultures be studied (see Section 5.7). Scherbaum and Ferreter (2009) recommended that a multi-level project should ideally comprise 30–50 groups. However, due to time and monetary constraints, such large-scale studies are often not feasible. Franke and Richey (2010) as well as Fischer (2009) argue that at least 7–10

cultures must be chosen to credibly isolate the influence of cultural factors from alternative drivers at the national level, to disentangle individual-level from culture-level effects, and to randomize variance on non-matched variables.

5.6.3   Bridging Representativenes and Comparability of Samples

Reynolds et al. (2003) suggest that the level of importance attributed to sample-frame representativeness and sample-frame comparability should be guided by the type of study and the research objective. For descriptive studies, representativeness is essential. In studies aiming to demonstrate variability and similarity across cultures and to identify the causality between cultural factors and observed behavior, comparability of sample-frames is much more important.

As described in Sections 4.3 and 5.3, the examination of differences or similarities between countries is crucial to theorizing and understanding the influence of culture on behavior and is the main objective of cross-cultural research. In this respect, van de Vijver and Leung (1997: 264) underline the importance of between-sample comparability as a prerequisite for valid cross-cultural comparisons:

> *van de Vijver & Leung(1997: 264): "[…] subjects from different cultural groups must be similar in terms of relevant background characteristics. Otherwise, it is hard to conclude whether the cultural differences observed are due to cultural differences or sample-specific differences."*

In a similar vein, Cavusgil, Deligonul and Yaprak (2005) argued that the sampling objective in cross-cultural research should be to achieve between-sample comparability. To this end, homogenous samples (or matched samples) should be drawn to control for extraneous factors (Reynolds et al., 2003). An adequate approach is to include the demographic variables of the samples as covariates in order to rule out unwanted inter-group differences. The suggestion for partialling out the influence of demographic differences has long and repeatedly been suggested in review publications (Child, 1981; Green & White, 1976; Malhotra et al., 1996; Nath, 1969; Samiee & Jeong, 1994; Raaij, 1978). While many reviews advocated the approach of matched samples, Schaf-

fer and Riordan (2003: 183) cautioned researchers against using this practice as a standard:

> *Schaffer & Riordan (2003: 183): A potential problem in matching samples is that when matching on one set of variables, researchers may at the same time be matching on a related cultural variable, thus restricting samples and masking cultural differences. Consider a situation wherein researchers match samples of top executives across cultures based on gender. If the samples contain a consistent mix of women and men across cultures (say 50-50), the researchers would need to consider how the cultures might differ in terms of how easily women in the general population ascend to top management positions. For instance, there may be key differences between some female top executives in the United States and matched female top executives in Eastern cultures that could be due to societal/cultural differences."*

In essence, researchers need to consider the interrelation between demographic characteristics and other cultural factors.

However, while the matching-samples approach reduces the possible effects of external variables, the generalizability of findings may suffer. But since the results of cross-cultural research studies also claim to be generalizable to the population of interest, the representativeness of a sample for the specific population of interest should not be neglected. As per Yang, Wang & Su (2006: 604)*"a good sample has two properties: representativeness and adequacy."* Researchers must achieve a careful balance between sample-frame representativeness and sample-frame comparability and articulate the trade-offs and decisions made. On this issue Taras et al. (2009: 365) noted:

> *Taras et al. (2009: 365): "While a sample with certain characteristics may perfectly represent one society, a sample with the same characteristics drawn in another country may not be generalizable to its population at all."*

Therefore, the key task of researchers is to judge whether the observed differences or similarities can be generalized reasonably to populations of the cultures being compared (or, more commonly, to whole nations). Clark (1990:77) explains why this is not always an easy task:

> *Clark (1990: 77), Within a target nation, identifying a 'representative' sample may not be so easy. 'Representative' implies taking class, gender, regions, income, ethnicity, and often language into account. The term will also mean different things for consumers than for decision makers. The class of 'general consumer' will approximate the 'nation at*

large', whereas the 'decision-maker group' will be skewed by class, education, and gender in many nations.

To clarify the importance of justifying whether a comparable sample is also representative for the nation, Beerien (1967: 36) stated:

Beerien (1967: 36): "In several comparisons of Japanese and American college students, the latter have been shown to be less self-abasing in the presence of higher status persons. By common agreement, the Japanese and American cultures are contrasting on many features other than abasement. [...] assuming, with some justification, that abasement is not uniquely distributed over college and non-college samples in either Japan or America.

If such justification is not conducted and communicated in the research report, there is a major risk of low validity in interpreting the findings. Accordingly, Boddewyn (1981: 67) noted that when researchers do not explicitly provide arguments for the representativeness of their samples, their research reports should be titled more modestly such as *'Comparison of a Small Convenience Sample of Manhattan and Parisian Middle-Class Women' rather than 'What Makes U.S. and French Consumers Different.'* Likewise, Taras et al.(2009) argued that, especially in studies focusing on the influence of cultural values on a country level, generalizability is a major concern. If the sample-frame representativeness is not documented, then the results obtained are meaningless.

5.6.4 Aligning the Selection of Respondents to Theoretical Considerations

Another direction concerns the selection of a theoretically justified target group of respondents (Adler, 1994; Nasif et al, 1991). Selecting respondents based on theoretical considerations means, for example, to draw up a sample of respondents who comprise a justified target group for the specific product category under research. In addition, Douglas et al. (1994), Malhotra et al. (1996), as well Taras and Steel (2009) recommended that the cross-cultural marketing community rely less on student samples and address the need to sample real consumers, such as housewives or families. The same direction is applicable to cross-cultural management research. Although re-

search publications in this discipline have been reported to rely more on managers than on convenient student samples (see Section 4.6.2), Vanderstraeten & Matthyssens (2008: 240) encouraged cross-cultural management researchers to provide *"information concerning both the sample profile (i.e. explicitly mentioning the response rate, demographic information, organizational level or function, organization size, origin of respondents, headquarters location and industry type) […]."* A description of the nature of the sample helps in judging whether the results of a study are applicable to a particular group or might have broader validity (see also Section 5.6.3 on the importance of sample-frame representativeness).

5.6.5 Determining the Appropriate Size of the Sample

Due to the fact that the number of respondents sampled influences the accuracy of estimation, researchers should be more careful in determining the appropriate sample size. A smaller number of countries could be offset by a large number of individuals per country to efficiently conduct multi-level analysis (Scherbaum & Ferreter, Maas, & Hox; 2005). In addition, Malhotra et al. (1996) and Lenartowicz and Roth (2004) argued that homogeneous cultures may require smaller samples while heterogeneous cultures require larger ones.[14] Yang et al. (2006: 604) argued that researchers must understand that a large sample size can help minimize sampling errors and improve the generalizability of research findings. They further suggested that researchers should consider the following points when deciding on the number of respondents in their survey: (a) *the way respondents are selected (random or convenient)*, (b) *the distribution of population parameters (the variables of interest)*, (c) *the purpose of the research project (exploratory or applied)*, and (d) *data analysis procedures*. However, Boddewyn (1981: 67) argues that *"the usual appeal for large-scale, multi-country,*

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[14]See Lynn, Häder, Gabler & Laaksonen(2007) for an in-depth discussion of effective sample size.

multi-disciplinary and multi-nationality cross-cultural research keeps butting against the frustrating question of: 'Where will the money come from [...]?' " This means that researchers need to identify the optimal balance between the cost and adequacy of a sample size. Figure 19 summarizes the discussed direction.

Figure 19: Overview of Directions to Theory-Driven Sampling Choices

1. Level
Sampling of cultures

Selection of cultures
The selected culture should represent a different treatment of the predictor variable.

Number of cultures
A sufficient number of cultures (at least 7 – 10) to isolate the influence of cultural factors from alternative drivers at the national/societal level.

2. Level
Sampling of individual respondents

Representativeness versus comparability	Nature of the sample
Aligning the choice of sample-frame *representativeness versus sample-frame comparability to the research purpose and to theoretical considerations.*	Aligning the choice of respondents to theoretical considerations and the context of the study.

Sample Size
Determining the appropriate size of the sample drawn on (a*) the way the respondents are selected (random or convenient)*, (b) *the distribution of the population parameters (the variables of interest)*, (c) *the purpose of the research project (exploratory or applied)*, and (d) *data analytic procedures.*

A recently published good-practice approach that considered some of the recommendations discussed above can be found in the study by Rubera, Ordanini and Griffith (2011). The authors examined the role of cultural values in understanding the influence of perceived product creativity on intention to buy. Their sample consisted of 206 Italian and 201 U.S. consumers surveyed using a mall-intercept approach. They selected these two countries based on Schwartz's cultural value framework (1992, 1994). Italy's high-resultant conservatism and low-resultant self-enhancement culture and the value profile of the U.S. (i.e., a low-resultant conservative and high-resultant self-enhancement culture) were considered compelling theoretical criteria for the selection of these countries. Rubera et al. argued that novelty is a more important dimension of product creativity in the U.S. than in Italy. Since their main objective was to examine differences between these two countries, sample-frame comparability was more important than sample-frame representativeness. This trade-off was clearly articulated in their study. To justify sample-frame comparability, the authors argued that Italy and the U.S. are characterized by similar economic and social aspects (i.e., economic development, type of economy, consumer populations, and urban areas). To increase the comparability further Milan (Italy) and Los Angeles (U.S.) were chosen on the basis of their economic and population statistics.

5.7 Data Analytical Steps - Applying More Sophisticated Data Analysis Approaches

In the final step of the research process, the data collected across diverse cultural settings needs to be analyzed. The content analysis presented in Chapter 4 identified four areas of persistent concern that need to be addressed carefully using appropriate data analysis techniques. These problematic issues refer to (a) *the lack of statistical evidence that countries are homogeneous in terms of cultural orientations*, (b) *the absence of statistical evidence that the obtained data is equivalent across cultures*, (c) *the difficulty in modeling and testing the multilevel nature of cultural phenomena*, and (d) *the neglect of alternative explanations for observed differences and similarities in substantive phenomena*. The following subsections synthesize prominent recommendations and directions that help to address these issues.

5.7.1 Ensuring Within-Culture Agreement and Between-Culture Variability of Cultural Profiles

In order to determine how, what, when, and why cultural variables influence substantive phenomena, at least two cultural groups need to be compared in a quasi-experimental design. Section 4.4.4 showed that researchers relying on the indirect value-inference approach (most frequently on Hoftsede's national value index) to operationalize culture have either explicitly or implicitly shared the assumption that nations are characterized by internal homogeneity in terms of the norms, values, beliefs and practices of individuals. Furthermore, contemporary research has assumed that group members internalize these elements through everyday exposure and adaptation to customs, laws and institutions (Sharma, 2010; Soares et al., 2007). As noted by Sun et al. (2014: 341), based *"on this conceptualization, culture can be quantified through psychological constructs and treated like experimental variables outside the*

person." Accordingly, researchers have employed this set of shared norms, values, beliefs and practices to distinguish nations, societies and groups.

Hoffmann and Jones (2004) warned that aggregated scores at the national level represent only the average tendency of individuals within nations rather than a coherent and unified national value orientation. Kirkman et al. (2006: 305-306) mentioned that within-nation heterogeneity on cultural value orientations may be seen as one reason for not supporting hypotheses on the relationships of phenomena.

> *Kirkman et. al. (2006: 305-306): "Perhaps within-culture variation on PD [Power distance] explains why the expected relationship between participative goal-setting and both satisfaction and performance has not been consistently supported in the US."*

Providing evidence for within-culture heterogeneity, Dheer, Lenartowicz, Peterson and Petrescu (2014: 374) identified differences between subcultural regions in terms of the values, attitudes, and behaviors of managers in the United States and Canada. These findings may hence be responsible for the inconsistent findings of cross-cultural studies comparing these two nations to other countries:

> *Dheer et al. (2014: 374): "Our empirical results contribute to discussions about the cultural map of the United States and Canada. The results of individual-level analysis showed significant differences among the nine subcultural regions based on three cultural value dimensions and the three attitude dimensions."*

Finally, Taras and Steel (2009: 51) bemoaned the lack of information on score dispersion within groups (e.g., variance) in the study reports. No statistical evidence was provided that the variance within nations was smaller than the variance between nations:

> *Taras and Steel (2009: 51): "Following Hofstede's path, most of the subsequent research focused on cultural means, be it national or group averages. The mean comparisons, typically using t-tests, have been the main tool for studying and describing cultures. [...] We found no study that analyzed cultural score dispersion within groups at a more advanced level, such as by considering skewness or kurtosis. Although a mean provides important information about the culture of a group, it is certainly not sufficient to understand the phenomenon fully. Focusing solely on means may create a false perception of cultural homogeneity within a group, obstructing the detection of subcultures. For example, a statistical average provides no meaningful description of scores within groups with bimodal or otherwise non-normal distributions. At the same time, measures of value dispersion*

and skewness could provide useful information about the cultural composition of the group. After all, cultural diversity may be an important characteristic of a group and per-haps even a facet of culture."

Hence, contemporary approaches do not prove empirically that the chosen cultural construct is indeed relevant at the country-level of analysis (Adler, 1984; Nasif, 1991; Mc Sweeney, 2002; Kirkman et al. 2006; Kraut, 1975; Samiee & Athanassiou, 1998; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003; van de Vijver & Leung, 2000). A proposed construct of culture is deemed relevant when its focal facets are shared by all members of a nation, society or group (i.e., within-group homogeneity) and when the proposed facets of culture are also relevant in another nation, society or group. Additionally, the focal facets must show variability on for substantial phenomena relevant dimensions.

Considering the above concerns, Fischer (2009), Fischer and Poortinga (2012), and Sun et al. (2014) argue that, for culture to be rigorously integrated as an explanatory construct in cross-cultural research, it must satisfy an aggregation test. Such a testing procedure would provide empirical evidence for the assumption that that a cultural construct truly reflects shared expectations about norms, values, beliefs and practices by individuals within a nation, society or any other defined group. A precondition to such an aggregation test is to conceptualize and measure cultural constructs directly (see also Section 5.4). By obtaining primary data from individuals in the focal cultures under study, evidence for within-culture homogeneity and between-culture variability can be demonstrated.

For testing the assumption that culture reflects shared psychological elements, including norms, beliefs, values and practices, Fischer (2009) recommended that multilevel analysis be applied to distinguish variance in norms, beliefs, values and practices, into variance within and between nations. Fischer and Schwartz (2011:1129) likewise argued that *"the combination of high within-country agreement and substantial between-country variability makes it possible to differentiate coun-*

tries according to their prevailing values." This justification is not possible when empirical researchers rely on available cultural indices instead of measuring culture empirically. Therefore, multilevel analysis, allowing the examination of both between-group and within-group variability alike is a feasible approach (Tung, 2008: 45):

> *Tung (2008: 45):"[…] in the long run, however, studies that compare cross-national differences without capturing intranational diversity and the dynamics of cultural changes are inadequate. In the light of the realities of the world in which we live, where pluralism in all respects has increasingly become the norm, good cross-cultural research must give due consideration to these intra-national differences, or risk the generation of results that mask or confound the phenomena under investigation."*

In a similar vein, Schaffer and Riordan (2003) contended that an indicator of within-group agreement with regard to cultural value ratings *"provides justification for the use of higher level constructs based on consensus at lower levels. This index is calculated by comparing the variance of a group's scores to an expected random variance. Generally speaking, this comparison allows researchers to assess the degree to which individuals within a selected group (or collective) give the same rating or score on a construct."* When an acceptable degree of similarity in terms of value orientations is identified within a nation, society or group, than an aggregation of obtained value scores on the respective level is meaningful and appropriate (De Mooij, 2015). Such an analytical approach can respond to the long demanded justification for the use of culture as a higher-level construct.

5.7.2 Establishing Data Equivalence a posteriori

By extending theories and their associated constructs and measurement instruments, biased data can be collected owing to a wide range of differences in the way research stimuli are perceived and interpreted by respondents. Section 4.5 outlined that cross-cultural research studies were constantly criticized with regard to the psychometric quality of their analyzed data. In order to guarantee the equivalence of measures,

the equivalence of the data collected must also be statistically ensured. This section discusses the statistical analysis procedures that can be employed after data collection in order to examine whether empirical evidence exists for the purported universal nature of the constructs and their defined structure.

To examine the psychometric quality of constructs and the corresponding measurement instruments used in a research project, several tools are available to researchers.[15] Review publications, whose content was analyzed in this study, referred to: multi-group confirmatory factor analysis (Jöreskog, 1971; Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998, Vandenberg & Lance, 2000), item response theory (Raju, Laffitte & Byrne, 2002), and latent class analysis (van de Vijver & Leung, 1997) as techniques for assessing measurement equivalence. These three approaches are based on the latent variable approach: its key aim is to compare empirical relations between the latent variable and indicators across cultural groups to identify whether the measurement instruments are similarly understood by respondents.

It is important to assess and disclose information about whether or not measurement instruments applied across various contextual settings stimulate responses of the same attribute, in order to evaluate the psychometric quality of the data obtained. Measurement equivalence is established when measurement parameters indicate similar relationships. Only by testing the various forms of data equivalence can researchers rule out the influence of systematic biases in survey participants' responses to explain the results obtained.

Van de Vijver and Leung (2000) directed attention to another useful method called item response theory (see also Hambleton, Swaminathan & Rogers, 1991; Hambleton & Swaminathan, 2013). When measurement instruments are back-translated, it is possible for some items to be translated literally, whereas other items need to be adapted to match the manifestation in the particular cultural context. Such a

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[15] For an in-depth discussion of the history of analytical approaches to test the equivalence of research instruments, see Millsap and Meredith (2007).

set of literally and adapted items cannot be be jointly examined by common statistical techniques, such as exploratory factor analysis, t-test, and analysis of variance. Item response theory provides a way to compare such sets of scales in order to test whether all items reflect the same underlying construct. Item response theory estimates item parameters, which are comparable to item means in the conventional analysis approaches stated above. The difference compared to the conventional analysis approaches is that item parameters do not depend on the specific sample of respondents. Thus, the item parameters are independent of the score level of a group. The drawback of item response theory is the requirement of large sample sizes. The minimum requirement is for 250 respondents per cultural group.

As noted by Milfont and Fischer (2010) and Davidov, Meuleman, Cieciuch, Schmidt and Billiet (2014), one of the most authoritative methods of assessing cross-cultural measurement equivalence is that of multi-group confirmatory factor analysis (hereinafter MGCFA). The remainder of this section briefly outlines the main features of the MGCFA method.

MGCFA permits comparison of the theoretical model with the observed data structure in two or more samples. The method is based on Jöreskog and Bollen's (1993) approach to testing the comparability of factor structures. Cheung and Rensvold (1999, 2002), Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1998) and Vandenberg & Lance (2000) describe a sequential testing procedure with increasingly restrictive models of invariance. Restrictions are developed by adding parameter constraints (decreasing number of parameters or increasing degrees of freedom). Thus, testing measurement equivalence is performed by testing increasingly restrictive assumptions on a series of models. These sequential models of invariance levels refer to configural invariance, metric invariance, scalar invariance, factor covariance invariance, factor variance invariance, and error variance invariance. [16]

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[16] A detailed and insightful overview is also provided by Milfont and Fischer (2010).

In a first step, Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1999) and Vandenberg and Lance (2000) suggest testing **configural invariance** in each group or culture by using confirmatory factor analyses. At this stage, no between-group invariance constraints are imposed on estimated parameters. Configural invariance exists if the basic model structure (i.e., the pattern of fixed and non-fixed parameters) is invariant across groups. In other words, this model assesses whether the same pattern of factor loadings exists across different groups or cultures. The first model provides the basis for comparison with the three subsequent models in the invariance hierarchy.

The second model examines **metric equivalence** by following the concept of equal metrics across the surveyed cultural groups. The researcher ensures that the factor pattern coefficients are equal across groups. This constraint ensures that the relationship between observed scores and latent scores is equal across the investigated cultural groups. Only if different cultural groups respond to the scale items in a similar way can scores on the items be justifiably compared across cultures. Observed item differences or similarities can thus be confidently interpreted as differences or similarities in the underlying latent constructs across groups.

The third model examines **scalar invariance** (also known as intercept variance), which is required to compare means across cultural groups. Respondents with the same value score on the latent construct should have equal values on the observed variable, regardless of their cultural membership. Steenkamp and Baumgartner and Vandenberg and Lance cautioned researchers that failure to satisfy this invariance condition may indicate potential measurement bias. The hierarchical testing of configural invariance, metric invariance, and scalar invariance is necessary to compare scores across cultural groups.

The fourth model sets out to compare the extent of **measurement error** for each item between cultural groups. The researcher constrains error variances to be the same across all cultural groups. In addition to assessing the equivalence of the relationships

between measured variables and latent constructs, these same authors recommended that the equivalence of the latent variables be tested.

The fifth model examines whether the range of scores on a latent factor are equivalent across cultural groups. These tests refer to ***factor variance, factor covariance,*** and ***factor mean variance***. Contrary to the models testing aspects of measure equivalence, these models are not hierarchically nested and can thus be tested when theoretically appropriate.

In the sixth model, all ***factor covariances*** are constrained to be equal across cultural groups in order to test whether ***factor relationships*** are stable across the sample of cultures.

In the seventh and last model the ***means across groups*** are constrained in order to examine whether the ***latent factor mean*** is different or similar across groups. When the scale items possess invariant factor loadings and error variances, they are equally reliable across countries (Steenkamp & Baumgartner).

The above sequential testing procedure, however, is not as straightforward as it may seem. Each of the variance testing steps depends on the positive outcome of the previous test, which is why Steenkamp and Baumgartner argue that achieving full measure equivalence is seldom achieved. It is important, therefore, to find a minimum of cross-cultural configural invariance to examine the core meaning and structure of focal constructs. Likewise, a minimum of metric and scalar equivalence is mandatory to conduct mean score comparisons across cultures. Metric invariance is likewise required to connect constructs in a nomological net and hence, to determine the antecedents of behavioral consequences.

For example, Engelen, Gupta, Strenger and Brettel (2015) investigated measurement equivalence in their study of the moderating effect of top management's transformational leadership behavior on the entrepreneurial orientation-performance relationship. They collected data from 790 firms in six countries (i.e., the US., Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Thailand, and, Singapore). Due to the fact that the sample size in

some countries in their sample (e.g., Switzerland and the US) was too small to employ country-level factor analysis, the authors grouped the countries in their survey into Asian and Western countries. They examined measurement equivalence based on this classification. Following the instructions of Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1998), Engelen et al. (2015) employed a configural model in a first step, as the baseline to test for metric equivalence utilizing the x^2 difference test. As they found no significant increase in x^2, full metric equivalence could be ensured. In a second step, they imposed scalar invariance on the measurement models and evidenced a significant increase in x^2 after constraining the intercepts across the two groups. This finding pointed to a variance of intercepts. When the constraints on intercepts were relaxed the significant increase in the x^2 between the baseline model and this model was offset. Hence, the authors could only find support for partial scalar invariance, which was, however, sufficient for the purpose of their study.[17]

The interested reader is referred to the study by Murray, Gao, Kotabe & Zhou (2007) who responded to the numerous calls for assessing cross-cultural measure equivalence by employing MGCFA as described by Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1998). Their study contains a detailed description of how MGCFA was used to assess cross-cultural measurement equivalence for export market orientation and export performance measures.

5.7.3   Handling the Multilevel Nature of Phenomena in Data Analysis

Another persistent problem is related to researchers' disregard of the multilevel nature of phenomena in cross-cultural research. Reviews constantly bemoaned the neglect of the inherent multilevel nature of cultural phenomena in statistical analysis. Section 4.4.4. underlined the dearth of studies acknowledging the multilevel nature of

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[17]The interested reader is referred to Henseler, Ringle & Sarstedt (2016) for a discussion on testing measurement invariance of composites using partial least squares.

the relationship between culture and behavior as a key research challenge. Researchers failed to disentangle variance into the individual-, group-, and country-level effects of latent variables and were thus unable to provide meaningful insights or practical recommendations for managers (Aycan, 2000; Leung et al., 2005; Singelis, 2000; van de Vijver and Leung, 1997). Akdeniz and Talay (2013) noted that when analysis is conducted exclusively at the individual level through the application of ordinary least-squares estimation, results are likely to suffer from biased estimates and extremely small standard errors, because higher-level variables are not considered in the estimation.

In explaining the scarcity of multilevel models and analyses in cross-cultural research, Taras and Steel (2009: 47) referred to the critical notes in reviews, together with Hofstede's repeated warnings (1995, 2001, 2002):

> *Taras and Steel (2009: 47):"[…] his [Hofstede's] repetitive warnings about the pitfalls of cross level generalizations of his specific data set formed a perception that any cross-level analysis would lead to the ecological fallacy. As a result, multilevel models have become taboo in cross-cultural studies, and papers attempting to bridge national and individual cultures still tend to be red-flagged by reviewers."*

Ozkaya et al. (2013: 674) also noted *"the complexity and difficulty of conducting multilevel research and the confusion over the analysis of multilevel data may explain the slow stream of multilevel studies in IB [International Business Research]."*

Despite the difficulty, Kirkman et al. (2006), and Klein and Kozlowski (2000) urged researchers to use multilevel analysis to examine cross-cultural phenomena within a comprehensive and integrative framework. Likewise, Leung et al. (2005) and Tsui et al. (2007) emphasized that cultural phenomena must be conceptualized as well as analyzed at multiple levels. In this respect, Daniels and Greguras (2014), Peterson, Arregle and Martin (2012), and Zhang, Zyphur and Preacher (2009) recommended multilevel modeling as an innovative approach to testing new hypotheses that capture the complexities of culture by combining the advances in multilevel theory introduced by Klein and Kozlowski (2000), with the progress made in analytic techniques (i.e.,

hierarchical linear modeling, hereinafter HLM, see e.g. Muthén, 1994). As noted by Fischer (2009: 40), HLM has *"great potential for demonstrating effects of culture on behavior at the individual level. Differences in individual behavior can be explained or unpackaged using cultural variables at the appropriate level, namely the level of culture."*

Kirkman et al. (2006) noted that HLM was explicitly developed to deal with multilevel data, allowing for estimations conducted simultaneously at multiple levels (e.g. families, consumer groups, work groups, companies, nations, etc.) it provides an opportunity to estimate effects across levels of analysis. Moreover, HLM allows for the simultaneous examination of the effects of individual-level and group-level variables on individual-level outcomes (e.g., phenomena of consumer behavior), while accounting for the non-independence of observations within groups (Hox, Moerbeek & van de Schoot, 2010; Muthén, 1994). HLM also makes it possible to consider the simultaneous and interactive effects of multiple value dimensions, thus offering insight into the relative importance of each one and allowing better estimates of the interaction of cultural variables (e.g. *"Does power distance interact with individualism to predict leader effectiveness?"*, see for a more indepth discussion on this topic see Daniels & Greguras, 2014: 1223).

Considering these options, Spector et al. (2015) noted that HLM approaches can potentially spur theoretical and conceptual contributions to future cross-cultural research studies. Likewise, Peterson et al. (2012:451) claimed that *"[a]dvances in multi-level modeling allow increased precision in quantitative [cross-cultural] research, and open up new methodological and conceptual possibili*ties." Empirical examples of studies employing HLM in their data analysis are provided in the next section.

5.7.4 Testing Alternative Explanations

The last persistent problem that needs to be addressed by the appropriate analytical techniques refers to the recommendations discussed in Section 5.3.4 about modeling alternative explanations in cross-cultural research. To address this recommendation at the stage of data analysis, Kirkman et al. (2006) recommended that HLM be used as described in the section above. Through HLM, it is possible to consider alternative explanations simultaneously. One of the first studies in cross-cultural marketing was published by Steenkamp et al. (1999) who used scales to measure both personal values and national culture. By using the hierarchical linear modeling technique, they showed that although individual variables explain 12.3% of the variance, cultural variables explain 56.2% of the variance in consumer innovativeness.

In studying the link between corporate reputation and consumer loyalty to a multinational corporation, Swoboda et al. (2015) considered cultural, contextual as well as individual variables as an explanation for country differences across 40 countries. The study investigated whether and how institutional country differences (e.g., cultural, demographic, economic, and political differences), as well as variances in respondents' educational backgrounds, moderate the relationship between corporate reputation and consumer loyalty. In their data collected from 13,665 consumer evaluations of a multinational corporation, they found evidence of a hierarchical structure. Specifically, they found that 18.8% [.220/ (.220+.951)] of the differences in loyalty could be attributed to country differences, thus fulfilling the requirements of multilevel modeling. Hence, they employed multilevel structural equation modeling in order to account for the hierarchical data structure and to determine the strengths of the country level and individual level moderators. They were also able to calculate the interactions between variables on both levels (cross-level interactions).

The studies cited above indicate that HLM makes it possible to model and investigate how alternative explanations can be integrated into the research design. Insights

stemming from this research can contribute to cross-cultural research by adding depth, richness and complexity to this field.

6   Conclusion

In conclusion, there is no doubt that the field of cross-cultural research has come a long way since Karlene Robert's review of the cross-cultural literature in 1970. She lamented that the field in the 1960s was characterized by empirical work without theoretical underpinnings, by weak data, and by conclusions about the relationship between culture and behavior that were difficult to understand.

Since then, significant progress has been evidenced in this study. The development of culture frameworks has translated the vague entity of culture into a construct that can be integrated into quantitative cross-cultural research. The progress thus made in conceptualizing culture spurred theory-driven approaches to studying differences and similarities in substantive phenomena across cultures. Progress was likewise made in the availability and application of statistical tools and the major change from univariate and bivariate techniques to multivariate approaches. This allowed the use of advanced multivariate analytical methods and made it possible to respond to calls demanding that relationships between variables be tested in the light of established hypotheses across cultures and to provide better understanding of whether focal concepts and constructs were psychometrically sound enough to be used across cultures.

Cross-cultural research has also been subject to persistent limitations. The field has been repeatedly criticized for lacking adequate approaches to studying the complex relationship between culture and behavior. One reason for this was seen in the eclectic use of the frameworks developed in the 1980s and 1990s, which were often applied without critical evaluation of their relevance to the research context under study. Although culture has been recognized as an important factor influencing behavior, too little is known about when and under what circumstances behavior is influenced by culture. Under the contemporary paradigm, culture has not often been measured directly, but has instead been operationalized through the indirect-value inference

approach. Hence, the majority of studies used decades-old culture indices based on a national level as a surrogate for culture. The possibility that culture might be better conceptualized at levels above or below that of the nation-state has been advocated in the reviews examined, but has not received sufficient attention in empirical research. Repeated calls have been made to better conceptualize and capture the complex nature of culture, but the predominant approach is to specify culture as a set of value expectations. The obvious criticism is whether the rather parsimonious treatment of culture is appropriate under today's market realities. The psychometric properties of focal constructs need to receive more rigorous scrutiny to ensure data equivalence. Some coping mechanisms to minimize bias before data collection (e.g., by employing the translation-back-translation technique, pretests, etc.) have become standard in the field, but qualitative approaches to include more emic insights in cross-cultural research and post-hoc equivalence tests also need to be utilized in empirical articles. Cultures were often selected arbitrarily and two-culture comparisons dominated. There is also a persistent concern regarding sample-frame comparability and sample-frame representativeness, as well as small sample sizes.

These bonds of tradition and inertia were clearly deemed by reviewers to inhibit the creation of all required or desired learning about culture and its relationship to behavior. Although some of the above aspects can be resolved, limitations such as those of cost, time, and accessibility seem continually to inhibit researchers from paying due attention to these problems.

There are, however, promising directions advocated by eminent scholars to overcome the persistent problems. These directions hold the promise of increasing rigor in cross-cultural research and conveying a sense of progress, excitement, and anticipation for the future of cross-cultural research. The following table summarizes these directions by indicating which persistent problems they address. Neither the discussion presented in Chapter 5 nor this table is intended to propose a one-size-fits-all approach, and there should be no hesitation whatsoever in adjusting proposed steps as

needed. Researchers are encouraged to use the outlined direction in ways that do not interfere with their research purpose and constraints.

It should, however, be noted that the key to good-practice cross-cultural research is a well integrated approach using quantitative, positivist, and universalist research strategies together with qualitative, interpretive, and indigenous ones. Furthermore, a detailed and well-developed theory, theory-driven operationalizations, measurement, and sampling approaches, and an appropriate justification for group-level, individual-level and cross-level analysis are needed. Finally, a thoughtful selection of sophisticated statistical approaches to data analysis are deemed necessary. In addition to the rigor required in the conduct of cross-cultural research, the criteria identified are also addressed to journal editors and reviewers who play an important role in raising research standards by refining, augmenting, and even redefining the procedural steps required for publication in top ranked journals.

Table 12: In the Literature suggested directions for dealing with Persistent Problems of Research Process-Oriented Steps

Research Stage	Persistent problems of research process-oriented steps	Suggested directions
Paradigmatic positioning	The dominance of a quantitative, positivist, universalist, etic research paradigm led to ethnocentrism at each of the successive stages. (see sections 4.1, 4.1.1 and 4.1.2)	• It is suggested that using observation, participation and other ethnographic methods to become more familiar with the cultures under study. • Further, a combined emic-etic approach during the research process is suggested to derive truly universal theoretical assumptions and constructs, equivalent measurement instruments, and appropriate interpretations of results by circumventing ethnocentric bias. (see Sections 5.1)
Research organization	Strong dominance of US- and Europe-based researchers working mostly in single-cultural teams. (see Section 4.2)	• Decentering the research design • Multi-cultural collaborations in which researchers are equally involved at all stages of the research process may help to decentralize the research project. (see Sections 5.2)
Theoretical foundation	Deterministic role of culture in theoretical frameworks (see Section 4.3.4)	• Examining direct, moderating and mediating effects of culture on substantive phenomena. • Considering the conceptualization of culture as a dependent variable. (see Section 5.3.1)
	Inappropriate theorizing of	• Communicating the relationship between variables and con-

	the multi-level nature of phenomena (see Section 4.3.4)	structs at different levels in the form of explicit hypotheses and depicting the postulated relationships in plausible multilevel theoretical models. (see Section 5.3.2)
	Eclectic Use of culture Frameworks (see Section 4.3.4)	• Developing domain-specific conceptualiztaions of culture • Linking Domain-Specific Cultural Constructs and Substantive Phenomena (see Section 5.3.3)
	Lack of alternative explanations in Research Designs (see Section 4.3.4)	• Consideration and Modeling of Alternative Explanations stemming from numerous contextual variables, such as economic, financial, political, administrative, demographic, and educational factors. (see Section 5.3.4)
Specifying culture	Dominance of the indirect-value inference approach (see Section 4.4.4)	• Measuring culture directly. • The choice at which level of analysis to operationalize the construct of culture should be theory-driven by considering the construct's link to the substantive phenomenon under study. (see Section 5.4.1)
	A parsimonious conceptualization of culture that views the phenomenon often as a single dimension (i.e. individualism versus collectivism) (see Section 4.4.4)	• The choice of specific variables and constructs that capture different facets of culture (e.g. values, practices, communication styles, cultural looseness–tightness, artifactual elements of culture, etc.) should be relevant to the substantive phenomenon under study. (see Section 5.4.2) • Culture needs to be understood as an integrated set of multiple, potentially interrelated, cultural dimensions. (see Section 5.4.3)
	Ontological problems as a result of misconceiving culture to be geographically bounded, coherent and unified, immutable and stable, and a cognitive good. (see Section 4.4.4)	• Consider a dynamic constructivist approach to culture which offers new approaches to conceptualizing culture as being permeable, changeable, indeterminate, and fragmented. (see Section 5.4.4)
Research instrument development	Pseudo etic approaches to instrument development (see Section 4.5.3)	• Using a combined emic-etic approach to capture culture-specific insights (see Section 5.5.1) • Employing a culturally informed quantitative emic comparative approach by shifting the importance of equivalence away from the instrument itself to the relation of its scores with a construct at the substantive level. This would allow including emic variables in research instruments. (see Section 5.4.2)
Sampling cultures and respondents	Arbitrary Selection of Cultures (see Section 4.6.1)	• The selected of cultures should be theory-driven (i.e., cultures selected should represent a different treatment of the predictor variable) (see Section 5.6)
	Dominance of two-culture comparisons impede the formulation of generalizable conclusions	• At least 7–10 countries should be chosen to credibly isolate the influence of cultural factors from alternative drivers at the national level and to disentangle individual-level from culture-level effects.

	(see Section 4.6.1) Lack of comparable and representative samples (see Section 4.6.2)	(see Section 5.6) • Researchers should achieve a careful balance between sample-frame representativeness and sample-frame comparability and articulate the trade-offs and decisions made. (see Section 5.6)
	Selection of respondents is based on convenience rather than theory-driven. (see Section 4.6.2)	• The surveyed respondents should comprise a justified target group for the substantive phenomenon under study. (see Section 5.6)
	Dominance of small samples (see Section 4.6.2)	• The number of respondents is dependent on (a) the way respondents are selected (random or convenient), (b) the distribution of the population parameters (the variables of interest), (c) the purpose of the research project (exploratory or applied), and (d) data analytic procedures. • Homogeneous cultures require smaller samples while heterogeneous cultures require a larger number of respondents. (see Section 5.6)
Data analytical procedures	Lack of statistical evidence for within-culture homogeneity and between-culture variability. (see sections 4.4.4 and 4.7.2)	• In order to use culture rigorously as an explanatory construct in cross-cultural research, it should satisfy an aggregation test. Such a testing procedure would provide empirical evidence for the assumption that a cultural construct truly reflects shared expectations about norms, values, beliefs and practices by individuals within a nation, society or any other defined group. • A precondition to such an aggregation test is to conceptualize and measure cultural constructs directly (see also Section 5.4). By obtaining primary data from individuals in the focal cultures under study, evidence for within-culture homogeneity and between-culture variability can be demonstrated. (see Section 5.7.1)
	Absence of statistical evidence for data equivalence (see sections 4.5.4 and 4.7.2)	• To examine the psychometric quality of data, several tools are available to researchers such as multi-group confirmatory factor analysis, item response theory, and latent class analysis. • These three approaches are based on the latent variable approach: its key aim is to compare empirical relations between the latent variable and indicators across cultural groups to identify whether the measurement instruments are similarly understood by respondents. (see Section 5.7.2)
	Ignorance of the complex multi-level nature of cultural phenomena (see sections 4.3.4 and 4.7.2)	• The multilevel nature of cross-cultural phenomena can be acknowledged through hierarchical linear modelling (herafter HLM). in data analysis. • HLM was explicitly developed to deal with multilevel data, allowing for estimations conducted simultaneously at multiple levels (e.g. families, consumer groups, work groups, companies, nations, etc.) it provides an opportunity to estimate effects across levels of analysis. • Moreover, HLM allows for the simultaneous examination of the effects of individual-level and group-level variables on individual-level outcomes (e.g., phenomena of consumer behavior), while accounting for the non-independence of observations within groups. (see Section 5.7.3)

| Ignorance of alternative explanations (see sections 4.3.4 and 4.7.2) | • Testing Alternative Explanations.
• Using HLM, it is possible to consider alternative explanations simultaneously, including for example, cultural, contextual as well as individual variables as an explanation for country differences across 40 countries. The study investigated whether and how institutional country differences (e.g., cultural, demographic, economic, and political differences), as well as variances in respondents' educational backgrounds, moderate the relationship between corporate reputation and consumer loyalty.
(see Section 5.7.4) |

7 Limitations and Suggestions for further Critical Debate

This study has tracked the development of research process-oriented issues in cross-cultural research across the last six decades. The hope is that it will further stimulate recognition of the persistent limitations in the field, spur the dissemination of the available coping mechanisms and future directions, which is essential to move the field forward in terms of theoretical, conceptual, methodological, empirical, and analytical rigor. This study also aims to provide a point of reference for researchers new to the field, who may find this comprehensive overview useful. There are, however, some limitations that need to be noted, in the hope of encouraging additional publications on cross-cultural research practices.

The reviews analyzed in this study based their assessments on research procedural steps reported in articles. However, editors and authors often seek and receive additional data that may not be included in the final article. For example, procedures for establishing instrument equivalence a priori may, due to space limitations, not be reported in the journal. In this way, certain studies may have met specific challenges in the research process, but the use of coping mechanisms was not mentioned specifically in the final article. Although the scientific outlets screened for reviews here were informed by journal ratings, a predominance of US and European journals may unintentionally reflect an ethnocentric bias or preference for certain types of methodologies and approaches. In addition, the information in the reviews was examined, filtered, evaluated and correlated through my own understanding, which was addressed by describing both the data collection and its analysis in detail.

This review of reviews concerned in particular developments in marketing, management, and organizational psychology. Although some of the quoted papers included insights and research practices from other disciplines – such as sociology, psy-

chology, political science, and anthropology – a deeper recognition of research practices in these other fields is warranted. This is especially relevant to the aim of identifying promising research practices. Future review publications could be accompanied by additional opinions and viewpoints derived directly from cross-cultural scholars and journal editors as well as reviewers of journal submissions. Such insights could be used in particular to assess the research practices that are usually not reported in published articles.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Details of Reviews included in the final Sample

No.	Author(s), scientific outlet and year of publication	• Disciplinary focus, • Period covered • Type and number of outlets surveyed • Type and number of articles assessed • Review type • Scope and focus of review
1	Frijda and Jahoda (International Journal of Psychology, 1966)	• Cross-cultural psychological research • Late 1950ies and early 1960ies* • Leading journals and handbooks in psychology** • Empirical and conceptual articles related to cross-cultural psychology*** • Critical review • The purpose of this article is to analyze methodological issues with regards to sampling, data equivalence, and conceptualization of culture.
2	Berrien (International Jour(Nath, 1969)nal of Psychology, 1967)	• Cross-cultural psychological research • Late 1950ies and early 1960ies* • Leading journals and handbooks in psychology** • Articles related to cross-cultural psychology*** • Critical review • The purpose of this article is to analyze methodological issues with regards to (a) the comparability of respondent or subject samples, (b) the ethnic determination of researchable questions, (c) the comparability of research instruments, and (d) the circumstances under which ethnically-detached or culturally-bound interpretations may be justified.
3	Nath (book publication, 1969)	• Cross-cultural management research • 1960s* • Leading journals and handbooks in management and psychology** • Empirical articles holding relevance for management theory and have a cross-cultural comparative orientation*** • Critical review • Review the present state of cross-cultural management research with regard to sampling issues, instrument development and testing, data collection, and generalization of findings.
4	Ajiferuke & Boddewyn (Academy of Management Journal ,1970)	• Comparative Management Studies • 1954 – 1969 • Journals and handbooks in management** • 33 highly cited comparative management studies • Focused critical review • The purpose of this review is to appraise a selected group of 33 comparative management studies in terms of explanatory variables used.

5	Boddewyn & Nath (Management International Review, 1970)	- Comparative management studies 1960s* - Management journals and handbooks** - Articles related to comparative management research*** - Focused critical review - The purpose of this review is to comment on the theoretical and analytical rigor ofs comparative management studies.
6	Roberts (Psychological Bulletin, 1970)	- Cross-cultural studies of organizational behavior 1962 – 1969 - Journals within the following disciplines: Political science, psychological, and sociological literature, and several business and educational outlets 526 comparative empirical articles that include culture as an explanatory variable - Focused critical review - The purpose of this review is to assess whether investigations are guided by theoretical priciples and to evaluate whether the methodological approaches are appropriate.
7	Schöllhammer (Management International Review, 1973)	- International business and comparative management research 1959 – 1968 - Publications that were referenced in The International Executive under the headings of general management, marketing, public relations, industrial relations, finance and accounting - Review of conceptual, empirical, descriptive, analytical, and normative publications (the number of articles is not specified) - Critical review - The purpose of the review is a) to assess selectively research on international business and comparative management issues from a methodological point of view, b) to evaluate the used techniques of inquiry in the light of the substantive-theoretical significance of the findings, and c) to point out trends and research gaps.
8	Evan (International Studies of Management & Organization, 1975)	- Cross-cultural research on organizational behavior 1960s and early1970s* - Leading journals in the field of international and domestic management, psychology, and sociology** - Focused critical review - Conceptual and empirical papers*** - The purpose of the review is to appraise empirical research on the relationship between culture and organizational behavior.
9	Kraut (Academy of Management Journal, 1975)	- Cross-national management research 1960s and early 1970s - Leading journals and handbooks in the field of international management and applied psychology** - Conceptual and empirical articles - Critical review - The review assesses the theoretical foundation and sampling choices made in past research.
10	Green & White (Journal of International Business Studies, 1976)	- Cross-national consumer behavior reseach 1960 and 1970s* - Leading journals and handbooks in the field of cross-national business

		research, marketing and applied psychology**
		• Conceptual and empirical articles***
		• Critical review
		• The purpose of theis review is to identify and explain the major methodological considerations, which should be incorporated into cross-national studies.
11	Malpass (American Psychologist, 1977)	• Cross-cultural psychology
		• 1960 -1975
		• Leading journals in psychology and cross-cultural psychology**
		• Empirical and conceptual papers***
		• Method of analysis is not specified.
		• Focused critical review
		• The purpose of the review is to tack stock and discuss the theoretical foundation and epistemological orientation of the researchers in the field from a critical point of view.
12	Boddewyn (Journal of International Business Studies, 1981)	• Comparative Marketing
		• 1970s
		• Leading journals and handbooks in the field of comparative marketing**
		• Empirical and conceptual papers***
		• Critical review
		• The purpose of this review is to examine the field of comparative marketing in terms of its theoretical foundation, research perspective and epistemological positioning, research instrument development, sampling choices made.
13	Child (Research in Organizational Behavior, 1981)	• Cross-National Study of Organizations
		• 1970s*
		• Leading journals and handbooks in the field of cross-cultural management and organizational behavior
		• Empirical and conceptual papers***
		• Focused critical review
		• The purpose of the review is to examine the theoretical and methodological treatment of culture as an explanatory variable.
14	Inzerilli (International Studies of Management and Organization, 1981)	• Cross-cultural management and organizational research
		• 1960s – 1970s*
		• Leading journals and handbooks in the field of cross-cultural management and organizational research**
		• Empirical and conceptual papers***
		• Focused critical review
		• The purpose of the review is to examine the research orientation of the field and evaluate approaches to conduct comparative research across cultural boundaries.
15	Bhagat and McQuaid (Journal of Applied Psychological Monograph, 1982)	• Cross-cultural research on micro-organizational behavior
		• 1970s
		• Leading journals and handbooks in the field of cross-cultural organizational behavior and psychology**
		• Conceptual and empirical papers***
		• Critical review
		• The purpose is to review cross-cultural studies of organizational behavior in terms of their theoretical foundation, conceptulaization

of culture, research perspectives and epistemological orientation.

16	Child & Tayeb (International Studies of Management & Organization, 1982)	• Cross-National Organizational Research • 1970s and early 1980s* • Leading journals and handbooks in the field of cross-cultural management and organizational behavior ** • Conceptual and empirical papers*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine the theoretical and methodological treatment of culture as an explanatory variable.
17	Adler (Academy of Management Review, 1983)	• Cross-cultural management • 1971-1980 • 24 journals in the field of management and organizational behavior • 1840 internationally oriented empirical articles (geographic and cultural) and 404 cross-cultural management empirical articles • Systematic content analysis • Articles with an international and cross-cultural focus were assessed with regard to content, research orientation, and time line.
18	Sekaran (Journal of International Business Studies, 1983)	• Cross-cultural management research • 1970s* • Leading journals and handbooks in the field of cross-cultural management applied psychology** • Conceptual and empirical papers*** • Critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine the state of affairs with regard to the theoretical foundation of empirical studies, their approaches to measurement instrument development, conceptualization and operationalization of culture, data equivalence, and employed methods of analysis.
19	Neghandi (Journal of International Business Studies, 1983)	• Cross-cultural management research • 1960s and 1970s* • Leading journals in the fields of cross-cultural management and psychology** • Conceptual and empirical papers*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine the state of affairs with regard to the theoretical foundation of empirical studies and available approaches to conceptualize and operationalize culture.
20	Smircich (Administrative Science Quarterly, 1983)	• Cross-cultural organizational research • 1970s and early 1980s* • Leading journals and handbooks in the fields of cross-cultural management and psychology** • Conceptual and empirical papers*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine the significance of the concept of culture for organizational analysis. In particular, this paper itacks stock of the ways culture has been developed in organization studies: as a critical variable and as a root metaphor.

21	Adler (Advances in International Comparative Management: A Research Annual, 1984; book publication)	• Cross-cultural management • 1970s and 1980s* • Leading journals and handbooks in the fields of cross-cultural management and psychology** • Conceptual and empirical papers*** • Critical review • The purpose of this paper is to review the development of international, comparative, and cross-cultural management research from a methodological perspective.
22	Albaum & Peterson (Journal of International Business Studies, 1984)	• International marketing research • 1976-1982 • 17 academic journals and 6 proceedings series in management and marketing were selected • 111 empirical research studies within the field of international marketing • Systematic content analysis • The purpose of the review is to assess the state of the art in empirical research conducted on international marketing issues by answering the following questions: How is this research being conducted? What research designs are being employed to collect data, and what techniques are being used to analyse data?
23	Roberts & Boyacigiller (Research in Organizational Behavior, 1984)	• Cross-national organizational research • 1970s – 1980s • 5 large scale multi-attribute cultural studies (i.e., Hofstede, 1980; England, 1975; Hickson, McMillan& Associates, 1981; Heller et al., 1981; Tannenbaum et al., 1974) • Systematic content analysis • The purpose of the review is to assess five major cross-national organizational studies in terms of the following eight criteria: countries studied, research question(s) posed, theoretical deriations, conceptualization of culture, cultural and substantive variables assesses, operationalization of variables and survey design, recognition of alternative explanations for observed variance, number of respondents surveyed.
24	Clark (Journal of Marketing, 1990)	• International Marketing • 1970s and 1980s* • Leading journals handbooks in the fields of international marketing and management** • Conceptual and empirical papers*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine the concept of culture and consider its usefulness and applicability for research in international marketing.
25	Boyavigiller and Adler (Academy of Management Review, 1991)	• Global management research • 1980s* • Leading journals and handbooks in the fields of global management research and organizational psychology • Management studies involving culture as an explanatory variable • Critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine the theoretical foundation of management studies involving culture as an explanatory variable.

26	Nasif (Management International Review, 1991)	- Comparative management research 1980s* - Leading international business and psychology journals (not exactly speciefied)** - Management studies involving culture as an explanatory variable - Critical review - The purpose of the review is to assess sampling choices, instrumentation, data collection and analysis, levels of analysis and generalizability.
27	Peng et al. (Journal of Organizational Behavior, 1991)	- Cross-national management research 1981 – 1987 24 major management related journals - Systematic content analysis - Reviews the literature by focusing on several criteria. Such as, the nations studied, sample size, type of the sample, means of data collection, and analytical methods used.
28	Triandis (Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 1992; book publication)	- Cross-cultural industrial and organizational psychology 1970s – 1990s* - Leading journals in organizational psychology and management 400 empirical and conceptual articles - Critical review - The purpose of the review is to broadly review the identified articles by evaluating several methodological issues such as epistemological approaches, construct development, and theoretical foundation.
29	Aulakh & Kotabe (Journal of International Marketing, 1993)	- International marketing 1980 – 1990 - Leading journals specialized in international business and general journals publishing domestic marketing issues 270 empirical articels on international marketing issues - Systematic content analysis - The purpose of the review is to examine the state of the art in international marketing research in the 1980-90 period, with particular emphasis on the conceptual framework and theory development in the field and the methodologies used in conducting the research.
30	Cheng (Management Science, 1994)	- Cross-cultural organizational research 1980s and early 1990s* - Leading journals specialized in cross-cultural organizational and management** - Conceptual and empirical papers*** - Critical review - The purpose of the review is to examine developments with regard to the theoretical foundation of studies and the conceptualization and operationalization of culture.
31	Douglas et al. (Research Traditions in Marketing, 1994; book publication)	- Cross-national consumer research traditions 1985 – 1994 - Journals specialized in marketing and consumer behavior - Conceptual and empirical papers*** - Critical review - The purpose of the review is to assess theoretical and conceptual issues in empirical research on consumers across cultures.

32	Öngel & Smith (Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 1994)	• Cross-cultural psychology • 1970 – 1993 • Publications in the Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology • 721 articles • Systematic content analysis • The purpose of the review is to assess objectives indexes such as normal location of authors, culture groups studied, focus of the study, and nature of samples. Furthermore, qualitative judgements are made with regard to whether a study had an emic or etic orientation and how culture was conceptualized.
33	Redding (Organization Studies, 1994)	• Comparative magement research • Late 1970s – early 1990s* • Leading international management journals** • Published reviews, conceptual papers, and viewpoint • Method of analysis was described as a review of reviews • The purpose of this review is to note progress over recent years in clarifying conceptual issues in comparative organizational behavior theory, to review the quality of such work in terms of relevance, method, and epistemology and to consider new and innovative developments in the 1990s.
34	Samiee & Jeong (Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 1994)	• Cross-cultural research in advertising • 1980 – 1992 • 18 leading marketing, management and international business journals • 24 empirical studies on cross-cultural research in advertising • Systematic content analysis • The purpose of this review is to critically evaluate the following nine characteristics: unit of analysis, country selection, treatment of culture, media and advertising copy selection, method of content analysis, emic and etic instrument considerations, translation issues, extreme response styles, and method of analysis.
35	Sondergaard (Organization Studies, 1994)	• Citations of Hofstede' s (1980) work in, management, psychology and marketing • 1980 – 1982 • 550 studies studies referring to Hofstede's (1980) publication on national differences in work-related values within the above stated disciplines • Citation analysis • The purpose of this study is to examine how, and with what result, the work of has been applied by researchers.
36	Tayeb (Organization Studies, 1994)	• Cross-cultural research in organizational behavior • 1980s and early 1990s* • Leading international management journals and handbooks** • Empirical and conceptual papers*** • Critical review • The purpose of this review is to examine research process-oriented steps with regard to conceptualization and operationalization of variables, data collection and interpretation.
37	Li & Cavusgil (International Business Review, 1995)	• International Marketing • 1982 – 1990

- 26 journals with an international business/ marketing orientationa and marketing journals whose primary focus is no international research
- 757 articels with an international focus
- Systematic content analysis
- The purpose of the review is to (a) *delineate and classify various research streams in intemational marketing*; (b) *assess the progress that has been achieved within each research stream*; and (c) *evaluate research methodologies that have been employed by these research streams*.

38	Malhorta et al. (International Marketing Review, 1996)	- Cross-cultural marketing research - Early 1990s* - Journals and Handbooks specialized in marketing and consumer behavior** - Empirical and conceptual articles - Critical review - The purpose of the review is to examine the state of affairs in cross-cultural marketing studies with regard to the emic-etic dilemma, research design issues, and data analytical issues.
39	Cavusgil & Das (Management International Review, 1997)	- Cross-cultural business research - 1980s and 1990s* - Journals specialized in cross-cultural business research** - Conceptual and empirical articles*** - Critical review - The purpose of the review is to construct a compendium of generic methodological problems in cross-cultural business research.
40	Lonner & Adamopoulos (Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 1997; book publication)	- Cross-cultural psychology - 1980s and 1990s - Journals specialized in cross-cultural psychology** - Empirical and conceptual articles*** - Focused critical review - The purpose of the review is to examine the leading frameworks and theoretical approaches in studying the influence of culture on behavior and cognition.
41	Samiee & Athanassiou (Journal of Business Research, 1998)	- International strategic management - 1982 – 1993 - 6 top-tier, peer-reviewed publication outlets for international strategic management research - 42 empirical studies on international strategic management issues - Systematic content analysis - The purpose of this review is to critically evaluate the following eight characteristics: level of analysis, study types, data collection methods, geographic domains, validity and reliability checks, methods of data analysis, dependent constructs, and independent constructs.
42	Sin et al. (Journal of International Consumer Marketing, 1999)	- Cross-cultural consumer studies - 1991 – 1996 - 11 top marketing journals, 8 journals dedicated to international business and marketing studies - 53 empirical cross-cultural consumer studies - Systematic content analysis - The purpose of this review is to assess trends in research design, data

equivalence issues, and analytical methods used.

43	Aycan (Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 2000)	• Cross-cultural industrial and organizational research • 1980 – 2000 • Journlas and handbooks in industrial and organizational psychology** • Empirical and conceptual articles*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to critically evaluate the theory and scope of cross-cultural industrial and organizational research.
44	Maheswaran & Shavitt (Journal of Consumer Psychology, 2000)	• Cross-cultural consumer behavior • 1990s* • Journlas and handbooks in consumer research and psychology** • Empirical and conceptual papers*** • Critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine conceptual and methodological issues that are central to conducting cross-cultural research, including selecting or blending emic and etic research approaches, achieving measurement equivalence, expanding the cultural constructs and geographical regions under investigation, and understanding mediating processes.
45	Singelis (Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 2000)	• Cross-cultural social psychology • 1990s* • Leading journals and handbooks in cross-cultural psychology** • Empirical and conceptual papers*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine the paradigmatic positioning of cross-cultural research and to shed light on the theoretical foundation of cultural explanantions, as well as conceptualiztaion and operationalization of culture.
46	Steenkamp (International Marketing Review, 2001)	• International marketing research • 1980s and 1990s* • Leading journals and handbooks in international marketing, management, and cross-cultural psychology** • Empirical and conceptual papers*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine the role of national culture in international marketing research
47	Lowe (Journal of Culture and Organization, 2002)	• Cross-cultural research in management and organizational psychology • 1980s and 1990s* • Leading journals and handbooks in cross-cultural management, and cross-cultural organizational psychology ** • Empirical and conceptual papers*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine and critically discuss the paradigmatic positioning of cross-cultural management research and organizational psychology.
48	Schaffer and Riordan (Organizational Research Methods, 2003)	• Cross-cultural organizational research • 1995 -2001 • 9 leading management and psychology journals • 210 articles of cross-cultural research studies

		• Systematic content analysis
		• The purpose of the review is to examine keymethodological issues within the context of a three-stage framework: (a) *the development of the research question*, (b) *the alignment of the research contexts*, and (c) *the validation of the research instruments.*
49	Brouwers et al. (Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 2004)	• Cross-cultural research published in the Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology • 1970 – 2004 • Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology • 200 randomly selected empirical articles • Systematic content analysis • The purpose of the review is to assess the rationale for the selection of cultures in empirical articles.
50	Holden (International Marketing Review, 2004)	• International Marketing • 1990s – early 2000s* • Leading journals and handbooks in the fields of international marketing and management research** • Empirical and conceptual papers*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine how Hofstede's theory has been integrated in international marketing research.
51	Leung, Bhagat, Buchnan, Erez, & Gibson (Journal of International Business Studies, 2005)	• International business studies with a focus on management • 2000s* • Leading journlas and handbooks in international business** • Empirical and conceptual papers*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine several theoretical advances in the study of culture and management research.
52	Cavusgil et al.(Journal of International Marketing, 2005)	• International marketing research • 1980s – 2000s* • Leading journals and handbooks in the fields of international marketing and business research** • Empirical and conceptual papers*** • Critical review • The purpose of this review is to review the development of the field from ontological, thematic, and methodological perspectives and critically evaluate both earlier and more recent developments.
53	Nakata & Huang (Journal of Business Research, 2005)	• International marketing research • 1990 – 2000 • Leading journals in the fields of international marketing • 587 empirical studies with a cross-national emphasis on marketing • Systematic content analysis • The review focuses on theoretical and methodologioal developments in the field of international marketing.
54	Earley (Journal of International Business Studies, 2006)	• Cross-cultural organizational research • 1990s and 2000s * • Leading journals and book publications in the disciplines of cross-cultural marketing and management research**

- Conceptual and empirical articles***
- Focused critical review
- The purpose of the article is to examine the two dominant culture frameworks advocated by Hofstede (1980) and House et al. (2004). The nature of the analysis used and the level of constructs is evaluated. Further, the ontological and epsitemological traits of both frameworks are critically assessed.

55	Kirkman et al. (Journal of International Business Studies, 2006)	- Cross-Cultural management and applied psychology research 1980 - 2002 40 business and applied psychology journals and two international annual volumes 180 empirical studies - Systematic content analysis - The review summarizes and synthesizes empirical research that has applied Hofstede's framework to organizational research. Studies are reviewed with regards to different levels of analysis and direction of effects. The findings are comprehensively integrated and synthesized for all five cultural value dimensions in Hofstede's framework.
56	Yang et al.(International Business Review, 2006)	- Internatinal business 1992 – 2003 - Six leading international businesss journals 1,296 empirical articles - Systematic content analysis - The purpose of the article is to examine empirical research in terms of five major aspects: data collection methods, sample sources including sampled countries and subjects, sampling methods, sample sizes, and response rates.
57	Gelfand, et al. (Annual Review of Psychology, 2007)	- Cross-Cultural Organizational Behavior 1990s and 2000s* - Leading journals and handbooks in the fields of cross-cultural organizational behavior - Empirical and conceptual papers - Critical review - The purpose of this review is to highlight critical challenges for future research, including moving beyond values to explain cultural differences, to attend to levels of analysis issues, to assess whether studies incorporated social and organizational context factors into cross-cultural research, and took indigenous perspectives seriously.
58	Okazaki & Mueller (International Marketing Review, 2007)	- Cross-cultural advertising research 1995 – 2006 - Major marketing and business journals 106 articles related to empirical cross-cultural advertising research - Systematic content analysis - The purpose of this review is to analyse empirical studies by topic areas addressed, research methods employed, and countries examined. Furthermore, the contribution of major cultural theories to international marketing and advertising research, such as Hofstede's (1980) cultural framework are discussed.
59	Tsui, Nifadkar, & Ou (Journal of Management, 2007)	- Cross-cultural organizational behavior research 1996 – 2005

- 16 leading management studies
- 93 empirical studies within the discipline of cross-cultural organizational behavior
- Systematic content analysis
- The purpose of this review is to analyse empirical studies by identifying the conceptual and analytical treatment of the concept of culture, which relates to construct validity. Furthermore, the role of culture in explaining organizational behavior between the nations being compared is assessed, which relates to internal validity. Finally, the review evaluates the meaning and generalizability of the knowledge gained to the nations being studied, which relates to external validity.

60	He et al. (Journal of International Marketing, 2008)	- Cross-national marketing research - 2000 – 2005 - 15 well-respected and peer-reviewed marketing journals - 243 cross-national empirical articles - Systematic content analysis - The purpose of the study is to examine the extent to which cross-national marketing scholars report measurement invariance (MI) assessment results.
61	Hult et al. (Journal of International Business Studies, 2008)	- Cross-cultural international business research - 1995-2005 - Leading journals in the fields of international business research - 167 empirical cross-cultural marketing studies - Systematic content analysis - The purpose of the review is to examine three aspects of equivalence (construct equivalence, measurement equivalence, and data collection equivalence).
62	Yaprak (International Marketing Review, 2008)	- International marketing research - 1990s and 2000s* - Journlas and handbooks in consumer research and psychology - Empirical and conceptual - Critical review - The purpose of the review is to examine the evolution of culture study in international marketing to paint a picture of how culture has been studied.
63	Zhang et al. (Journal of Business Research, 2008)	- Cross-cultural consumer service research - 1996 – 2006 - Leading journals in the fields of international marketing and business research - 40 empirical articles on cross-cultural or cross-national comparative research with a focus on consumer service from a consumer behavior perspective - Systematic content analysis - The purpose of the review is to examine empirical articles with regard to their positioning within the emic–etic debate, the operationalization and measurement of culture, and the selection of country and context.
64	Douglas & Craig (Beyond Hofstede, 2009; book publication)	- Cross-cultural marketing research - 1990 – 2000s* - Leading journals and handbooks of international marketing and management research, and cross-cultural psychology**

- Empirical and conceptual articles***
- Focused critical review
- The purpose of the review is to examine how culture concepts are used in cross-cultural marketing research. Furthermore, they assess to which degree and how alternative explanations have been recognized and modelled by researchers.

65   Nakata (Beyond Hofstede, 2009; book publication)

- Cross-cultural research in international marketing
- 1980s – early 2000s*
- Leading journals and handbooks of international marketing and management research, and cross-cultural psychology**
- Conceptual and empirical papers
- Focused critical review
- The review traces and discusses the ontological and epistemologica l presuppositions of predominant culture paradigms in international marketing.

66   Nakata & Izberg-Bilgin (Beyond Hofstede, 2009; book publication)

- Global Marketing
- 1990 – 2000
- Leading journals devoted to marketing, international marketing, and international business
- 587 empirical studies with a cross-national emphasis on marketing
- Systematic content analysis
- The review focuses on the following research questions: What is the prevalence of culture theories in global marketing, and how has that prevalence changed over time? How are these theories used? What types of theories get applied, and are these theories likely to promote cumulative learning? What is the nature and structure of these theories? Are certain theories explored more than others? What do the answers to these questions suggest about the value and contribution of culture theories to global marketing knowledge?

67   Taras & Steel (Beyond Hofstede, 2009; book publication)

- Cross-cultural research in business related disciplines
- 1980s – 2000s*
- Publications on which Hoftsede's theory is based, Hoftsede's two major book publications (1980, 2001) and a set of articles critically examining Hoftsede's theory***
- Focused critical review
- The purpose of the review is to examine and to critically discuss the significant impact of Hofstede's work on cross-cultural business studies. Moreover, the authors shed light on the assumptions stemming from the use and misuse of Hofstede's theory.

68   Taras et al. (Journal of International Management, 2009)

- Cross-cultural management research
- 1960s – 2000s
- 121 instruments for measuring culture within the disciplines of management and applied psychology
- Focused critical review
- The purpose of the review is to examine how culture has been operationalized over five decades. Fruthermore, the study focuses on the topics of culture definition, dimensionality of culture models, collection and analysis of data for measuring culture, levels of culture measurement, issues of cross-cultural survey equivalence and the reliability and validity of culture measures.

69	Best & Everett (Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 2010)	• Cross-cultural research in psychology • 2004 – 2009 • Publications within the Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology • 40 publications (empirical, review or methodological, and theoretical papers) • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine the statistical sophistication, the scope of recent cross-cultural research, the geographic distribution of authors and the number of countries sampled.
70	Cadogan (International Marketing Review, 2010)	• Cross-cultural marketing research • 2000s* • Publications within the Journal of International Marketing Review • Conceptual and empirical papers • Focused critical review • The purpose of the paper is to review research practices with regard to sampling choices in empirical papers submitted to the Journal of International Marketing Review. The author, also the editor of the journal, highlights good and bad practices of submissions with refard to the selection and number of cultures studied.
71	Leonidou (International Marketing Review, 2010)	• International marketing studies • 1975-2004 • Top ten mainstream marketing journals • 508 international marketing-focused articles were reviewed • Systematic content analysis • Review examines methodology issues pertaining sampling design, data collection, sample size, response rate, data analysis, and analytical techniques
72	Watkins (International Marketing Review, 2010)	• Cross-cultural research in marketing • 1990s and 2000s* • Leading journals and handbooks devoted to marketing, international marketing, and international business** • Empirical and conceptual • Critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine the relevant literature on conceptual and methodological issues (theoretical assumptions, measurement instruments design, and attention to data equivalence).
73	Engelen & Brettel (Journal of Business Research, 2011)	• Cross-Cultural Marketing Research • 1990 – 2008 • Leading journals in the fields of cross-cultural marketing and business journals • 99 empirical cross-cultural marketing studies • Systematic content analysis • The purpose of the review is to examine the most important conceptual, theortical, and empirical qualities of cross-cultural marketing studies
74	Taylor et al. (Advances in International Marketing, 2011)	• International advertising research • 2005 – 2010 • 4 top journals within marketing, 3 top advertising journals, and 3 top journals within an focus on international marketing and business

		• 80 empirical studies with a focus on an international advertising topic • Systematic content analysis • The purpose of the review is to examine the theoretical foundations of studies, the selection of cultures, the use of cross-national research teams, the employed data collection techniques, research instrument development, and survey methods.
75	De Mooij (International Marketing Review, 2012)	• Cross-cultural consumer behavior • 1990s and 2000s* • Leading journals of international marketing and management research, and cross-cultural psychology** • Empirical and conceptual*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine critically examine the application of dimensional models of national culture in the existing marketing literature with regard to the theoretical foundation of culture and its conceptualization (level of analysis).
76	McSweeney (International Marketing Review, 2013)	• Cross-cultural research in marketing and management • 1990s and 2000s* • Leading journals of international marketing and management research, and cross-cultural psychology** • Empirical and conceptual*** • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to examine critically examine the application of dimensional models of national culture in the existing marketing and management literature with regard to the theoretical foundation of culture and its conceptualization (level of analysis).
77	Sun et al. (International Marketing Review, 2014)	• Cross-cultural marketing research • 2000s – early 2010s* • Leading journals of international marketing and management research, and cross-cultural psychology** • Empirical and conceptual • Focused critical review • The purpose of the review is to highlight and discuss innovative empirical and conceptual papers that offer new approaches to measure culture directly.
78	De Mooij (International Marketing Review, 2015)	• Cross-cultural research in international marketing • 2000s – early 2010s* • Leading journals of international marketing and management research, and cross-cultural psychology** • Empirical and conceptual*** • The purpose of the review is to critical review proper and improper applications of cultural dimensions and critical mistakes made.

* Time frame is not explicitly specified. The information in the table are taken from the article's list of references.

** Type and number of journals screened for literature is not specified within the text. The information in the table are taken from the article's list of references.

*** Selction criteria for papers were not communicated within the text. The information in the table are taken from the article's list of references.