

CONVERSION OF OB CONSTRUCTS TO CB CONSTRUCTS: SCALE DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION EXERCISE

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ABSTRACT: This paper aims to share the experiences of converting Hofstede's constructs from Organization Behaviour (OB) perspective to Consumer Behaviour (CB) perspective. This research paper presents three prominent phases in this exercise (a) selection of items from previous studies (b) ensuring Content Validity and (c) ensuring Criterion validity. Focus groups were conducted and results were significant to ensure the valid items to measure the cultural dimensions, namely Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism and Masculinity in a consumer research study.

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper was to present the scale conversion procedure based on the adaptation technique. Two philosophically distinct frameworks; one based on organisational behaviour (OB) and the other on Consumer Behaviour (CB) are used in devising a new instrument.

Most important part of any research study was to develop a highly reliable and valid scale that accurately measures the concepts on which a theoretical framework was based. This research paper gives a detailed account of the methodology and procedures adopted for scale transformation techniques and deals with validity issues and reliability issues. Finally a consolidated customised research instrument was proposed in this study which will be of interest to those academicians and practitioners who are interested in measuring cultural dimensions from the marketing perspective.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A cross cultural study had been conducted by IBM's psychologist Geert Hofstede in 1980's on IBM's employees located in 76 countries. As a result of this empirical work cultural dimensions were extracted by statistical reduction methods such as factor analysis and were further used to develop scales on which countries are scored. The purpose was to make culture meaningful and empirically verifiable. Typology of cultural dimension was based on organization behaviour, whereby the scale proposed by Hofstede measures work related values of individuals. These dimensions are: Power distance (PDI), Individualism (IDV), Uncertainty avoidance (UAI), Masculinity (MAS).

Hofstede's cultural dimensions have been profusely used in the context of OB measuring work related values and have been sparsely used to measure CB perspective. Moreover the existing cross-cultural studies that use cultural dimension scale in measuring CB use the original scale proposed by Hofstede in without any major modification. Researcher criticise Hofstede's scale for methodological simplicity, conceptual and instrumental equivalence [1]. It was argued that Hofstede scale was restricted to one discipline only measuring works related values and beliefs. The scale would have been a more reliable and valid tool if espoused using multi-disciplinary background. Another issue with original scale was with its conceptual application. Since Hofstede work was used in cross cultural researches therefore cultural

utility of attitudinal and behavioural constructs in original model was questionable. Similarly it was important to have instrumental equivalence to measure the CB. The constructs in original instrument gaged the work related behaviour and were not deemed suitable from a marketing perspective hence had a limited application.

III. METHODOLOGY

The objective of the current study was to develop a robust validated customised scale to be used in CB studies. The entire procedure was based on the notion of "adoption" to "adaptation". The research tool for the current study was developed in three phases i.e., (a) Selection of corresponding CB variables from previous studies; (b) Content Validity (c) Criterion Validity.

In the first phase CB variables were selected from previous studies. The epistemological view of cultural dimensions was the original conceptual definition of each dimension as proposed by Hofstede [2]). For example the concept of Power Distance was related to various institutions such as family, school and work organization at national level. The corroborating consumer behaviour variables are not literal meaning of each dimension. Rather they are supporting items adopted from works of previous studies that have replicated Hofstede's dimensions in context of consumer behaviour [3,4,5, 6,7].

Power Distance: It consists of ten items espoused from Hofstede's original work. An example is 'Parents teach children obedience'. Corresponding to this concept were CB equivalents consisting of seven items. Example of this concept is 'I believe power distance between social classes'.

Individualism: Sample item is 'Everyone is supposed to take care of *him- or herself and his or her immediate family only*'. Corroborating to this concept were seven CB statements. Example for this is 'For me, my own needs are more important'.

Uncertainty Avoidance: Example statement is 'The uncertainty inherent in life is felt as a continuous threat that must be fought' along with ten corresponding CB items such as 'I try to avoid uncertainties before buying'.

Masculinity: Example is 'Men should be and women may be assertive and ambitious' and six in context of CB. Example item is 'I decide where to buy and what to buy in family decision.'

In the second phase Content validity was ensured through a panel of 10 doctoral students. Furthermore, before the scale was validated a power point presentation was given to the respondents relating to the conceptual definition and operational definition of each construct from the organizational viewpoint. The respondents were provided with questionnaires containing the original construct borrowed from Hofstede and CB equivalents phrased by the researcher based on prior knowledge and through literature review as mentioned above. The subjects were required to place a check mark against the corresponding CB statements they considered valid for measuring the representative cultural dimension construct from original source. Table 1 -4 shows tabular presentation on individual validity of each construct obtained through content validity tests.

In the third phase Criterion validity was ensured through a focus group. The participants of the focus group were eight senior faculty members of a business school teaching marketing, organizational behaviour and psychology subjects. These participants were doctoral degree holders or doctoral candidates and had adequate research background. Apart from this, these participants had suitable cognitive skills to understand the process of criterion validity adopted in the focus groups.

The participants were provided with a questionnaire that consisted of Cultural dimension constructs borrowed from the Individual behaviour perspective used by different researchers.

More items were added to the CB equivalents in addition to the ones used in Phase 1.

Table 1: Power Distance

Corresponding Consumer Behavior variables	Content Validity	Criterion Validity
I buy things which are status symbols.	89%	85%
I buy from air-conditioned, glass walled famous malls/shops.	79%	86%
I prefer to enjoy a power distance even during buying process.	71%	28%
I believe power distance between social classes.	71%	70%
I buy original brands.	65%	72%
I buy those products which are popular in my social circle.	65%	71%

Table 2: Collectivism

Corresponding Consumer Behavior variables	Content Validity	Criterion Validity
For me, needs of my family & friends are more important.	94%	99%
I consider family & friends as my priority for shopping.	84%	100%
I prefer to buy family packs whenever possible.	84%	42%
I always buy according to family needs.	82%	100%
I involve my family & friends when buying something expensive.	82%	86%
I like sharing my small things	82%	86%

with my family & friends.

Table 3: Uncertainty Avoidance

Corresponding Consumer Behavior variables	Content Validity	Criterion Validity
I seek recommendation from family & friends.	84%	85%
I analyze products from different perspectives.	84%	56%
I trust on my past experience.	76%	85%
I search on internet extensively.	76%	99%
I seek guidance from sales persons/retailers.	76%	100%
I visit many shops.	76%	100%

Table 4: Masculinity

Corresponding Consumer Behavior variables	Content Validity	Criterion Validity
I try to dictate my own terms during shopping	76%	85%
I decide where to buy and what to buy in family decision	74%	70%
I prefer products with durability.	71%	99%
I assert more pressure while shopping	66%	85%
I use status brands to show my success	63%	42%
I prefer products with ruggedness	61%	100%

Items for corresponding Cultural Dimension scale were espoused from the previous studies. The details are as: **Power distance** scale had eight items adopted from various studies [8, 9,10,11, 12]; **Individualism** had nine items [13,14, 15, and 12]; **Uncertainty Avoidance** was measured through 16 items [12, 16, 17, 18]; and **Masculinity** consisted of seven items taken from previous studies [19, 20, 12].

The respondents were asked to rank order each statement in term of their validity. ‘0’ was invalid, ‘1’ was least valid, ‘2’ was valid and ‘3’ was invalid. Table 1 -4 shows Criterion validity results.

The findings from the focus group are the second step to prove the validity of the measuring instrument to be used for the study in progress. All the participants in the focus group equivocally validated the consumer behaviour statements as a true measure of Cultural dimensions constructs adopted from Hofstede’s study.

The scale was pretested with students sample to check the reliability of the scale and a positive response rate elicited from the respondents.

The questionnaire had an opening statement beginning with an introductory note about the author, briefly stating the purpose of the study and the importance of respondent’s contribution in the current research. The confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents was also assured simultaneously in the opening part.

IV. LIMITATIONS

This study must be read along with its limitations. Firstly, the focus group participants were selected on the basis of both judgment and convenience. All the respondents were active researchers. Secondly, the universal use of of students in the research process, which make the process robust and

economically feasible, may be criticized from different non-academic quarters.

V. CONCLUSION

Despite its limitations, the findings of this study provide a basis for young social scientist to convert scales form one discipline to another one following a predetermined procedure.

The study produces various implications for social scientist especially those who would like to convert instruments in their research or those who would like to develop new instruments to measure something with a an old reliable construct for a new discipline.

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