

# VALIDATING THE CULTURAL VALUE SCALE (CVSCALE): A CASE STUDY OF THAILAND

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## Abstract

The aim of this paper is to validate Cultural Values Scale (CVSCALE) in Thailand. The CVSCALE is a scale that has been purposed by Yoo, Donthu, and Lenartowicz (forthcoming) to capture Hofstede's (1991) five cultural dimensions at the individual level. It had been developed as an extension of Hofstede (1991) cultural values scale that had initially aimed to measure cultural values at the country level (Søndergaard, 1994). The CVSCALE consists of 26-items that assesses the cultural values in consistence with Hofstede's (1980, 1991) renowned five-dimensional typology of culture namely, Power distance, Uncertainty avoidance, Individualism Masculinity, and the Confucian dynamism. The reliability of the CVSCALE was tested using Cronbach's and the validity of the scale was tested using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) as well as Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The results of the test showed that the CVSCALE and its items had exhibited appropriate reliability (i.e., high internal consistency) and validity (i.e., face, convergent, and discriminant) to use in Thailand for the purpose of cultural value assessment of the respondents at the individual level.

## INTRODUCTION

Culture has arrived in the business research mainstream. Research related to culture is growing exponentially (Burgess 1992), and marketing researchers consider culture a critical determinant of behavior (e.g., Aaker and Williams 1998; Deshpande, Hoyer, and Donthu 1986; ter Hofstede, Steenkamp, and Wedel 1999;

Patterson, Cowley, and Prasongsukarn 2006). As noted by Pedersen (1988), the importance of culture to human society and identity has been widely acknowledged. Culture is not an external conception but integral to human society and identity, even though it may be superficially and outwardly seen in terms of external symbols and many account for different perceptions that different people have of the same situation

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(Pedersen 1988). Patterns of behaviour are learned. Individuals are born into a culture, and they must subsequently learn how to behave within their society (Triandis 1990). Consumers' cultural values play an important role in formulating international marketing strategy, for example, marketing program standardization and adaptation decisions (Samiee and Jeong 1994).

Nonetheless, the current cross-cultural business literature about culture assessment methods is rather chaotic (Yoo and Donthu, 2005). Due to the lack of universally accepted scales, number of scholars have been using Hofstede's questionnaire (Sondergaard 1994).

Hofstede's metric has been popular for several reasons. First, Hofstede's framework is very comprehensive and shows meaningful relationships with important demographic, geographic, economic, and political indicators of a society (Kale and Barnes 1992). Second, Hofstede's works have been confirmed empirically through replications (e.g. Shackleton and Ali 1990) and has been heavily cited as the most important and popular theory of culture types (Sondergaard 1994). Sivakumar and Nakata (2001) have also reported 1,101 citations to his work in the period 1987-1997. Explaining its growing use, Hofstede's theory has been noted as "*a watershed conceptual foundation for many subsequent cross-national research endeavours*" (Fernandez et al. 1997, p 43-44) and "the beginnings of the foundation that could help scientific theory building in cross-cultural research". Third, it consistently proves to be beneficial when adopted in cross-cultural and

international studies (e.g. Donthu and Yoo 1998; Mattila 1999; Furrer, Liu and Sudharshan 2000; Patterson and Smith 2001, 2003). Finally, Hofstede's cultural dimensions are highly relevant to explaining cross-cultural behaviour on service recovery attributes.

However, despite all its merits, Hofstede's (1980, 1991) measures were developed for work-related situations. From a marketing or management point of view it may be more useful to measure cultural values for general or consumer situations. That way cultural orientation may be better linked to individual or consumer attitudes and behavior (Yoo, Donthu, and Lenartowicz, forthcoming). Furthermore, as noted by Sondergaard (1994) the main use of Hofstede's work has been as a paradigm. This means that researchers have been extrapolating the Hofstede indices of national culture to any grouping, including individuals. Even though culture is characterized by shared values (Hofstede 1980), this is not an accurate procedure since dependent variable measures are collected from individuals at the present moment and independent variable measures are provided at the country level from the previous collected data. While Hofstede administered his instrument at the individual level, he performed all the data analyses and indices' calculations at the country level. This should not be taken as an implication that country and culture are the same, since national boundaries need not always coincide with culturally homogeneous societies (Dawar and Parker 1994; Roth 1995). Using national generalisations to explain individual behaviours is an ecological fallacy

because country-level relationships are interpreted as if they are applied to individuals (Yoo and Donthu 2000). Finally, scholars criticize Hofstede's scales for the lack of associations among items (for example, combining unrelated items under a cultural dimension and connecting unrelated items to a composite scale, see Robinson 1983). Also the items have been criticized for possibly capitalizing on statistical chance due to the small sample size (the number of data points being equal to the number of countries surveyed, see Dorfman and Howell 1988).

To address these concerns, Yoo, Donthu, and Lenartowicz (forthcoming) have applied Hofstede's cultural typology at the individual level and developed a scale to assess culture values (hereafter referred to as CVSCALE) using the personality-centered methodological approach. Applying Hofstede's cultural typology at the individual level is reasonable since the values of an individual person were identified in terms of the selected dimensions of culture. Moreover, culture flows from the group to its individuals members; the individuals are the final destination of culture. Hence, the individual persons internalize cultural belief systems and interpret the phenomenological world through their learned lens of meaning (McCracken 1986).

## **CVSCALE**

CVSCALE consists of 26-items (see table 1) that assesses the cultural values of individuals in consistence with Hofstede's (1980, 1991) renowned five-dimensional

typology of culture. Power distance is "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally". Uncertainty avoidance is defined as "the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations". Individualism "pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family"; collectivism is its opposite. Masculinity and femininity represent "the dominant sex role pattern in the vast majority of both traditional and modern societies". The Confucian dynamism refers to the long-term versus short-term orientation toward the future. Nonetheless CVSCALE provides the flexibility to conceptualize, measure, and aggregate cultural orientation at any level, group or country. CVSCALE has been in several countries for example, the US, Korea, Poland, and Brazil. Yet, the authors urge that the scale should be validated using larger sample and in other country. CVSCALE shows to be psychometrically sound and can be confidently used for measuring group or society cultural orientation for general consumer situations. In a specific sense, CVSCALE provides researchers with an opportunity to conceptualise and measure cultural values at the individual level if that makes sense for their application (Yoo, Donthu, and Lenartowicz, forthcoming).

**Table 1: CVSCALE, taken from Yoo, Donthu, and Lenartowicz, Journal of Marketing Research, (forthcoming), Items 1-4 were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly disagree” (1) to “Strongly agree” (5), Confucian dynamism ranging from “Not at all important” (1) to “Very important” (5)**

<b>Power distance</b>	
P1	People in higher positions should make most decisions without consulting people in lower positions.
P2	People in higher positions should not ask the opinions of people in lower positions too frequently.
P3	People in higher positions should avoid social interaction with people in lower positions.
P4	People in lower positions should not disagree with decisions by people in higher positions.
P5	People in higher positions should not delegate important tasks to people in lower positions.
<b>Uncertainty avoidance</b>	
U1	It is important to have instructions spelled out in detail so that I always know what I'm expected to do.
U2	It is important to closely follow instructions and procedures.
U3	Rules and regulations are important because they inform me of what is expected of me.
U4	Standardized work procedures are helpful.
U5	Instructions for operations are important.
<b>Collectivism</b>	
C1	Individuals should sacrifice self-interest for the group (either at school or the work place).
C2	Individuals should stick with the group even through difficulties.
C3	Group welfare is more important than individual rewards.
C4	Group success is more important than individual success.
C5	Individuals should only pursue their goals after considering the welfare of the group.
C6	Group loyalty should be encouraged even if individual goals suffer.
<b>Masculinity</b>	
M1	It is more important for men to have a professional career than it is for women.
M2	Men usually solve problems with logical analysis; women usually solve problems with intuition.
M3	Solving difficult problems usually requires an active, forcible approach, which is typical of men.
M4	There are some jobs that a man can always do better than a woman.
<b>Confucian dynamism</b>	
D1	Careful management of money (Thrift)
D2	Going on resolutely in spite of opposition (Persistence)
D3	Personal steadiness and stability
D4	Long-term planning
D5	Giving up today's fun for success in the future
D6	Working hard for success in the future

## **METHOD**

### *Translation*

To ensure item equivalence, a critical consideration in a cross-cultural study of this nature, the English version was translated by bilinguals whose mother language was Thai (Hambleton, 1993), and then back translated by bilingual authors whose mother language was English (Brislin, Lonner, and Thorndike 1973). (See table 2)

### *Sample*

As suggested by Smith and Schwartz (1997) to ensure that the differences obtained are due to cultural, as opposed to demographic differences, cross-cultural researchers are recommended to use persons from a similar demographic background, such as students or teachers. Using undergraduate students as respon-

dents for our study is appropriate since students are real life consumers. The sampling frame for this study is undergraduate university students in four regions of Thailand (North, North-Eastern, South, and Bangkok). Data for this study were collected via a self-report questionnaire from four universities namely Chiang Mai University (CU) for Northern region, Khon-Khen University (KKU) for North-Eastern region, Burapa University (BU) and Kasetsart University (KU) for Central and Eastern, Prince of Songkra Nakarin University (PSU) for Southern region. The questionnaire was completed by 250 university students from Northern region, 250 university students from North-Eastern, 301 university students from Central/East, and 297 university students from Southern region which make the total completed questionnaire equal to 1,098 sets.

**Table 2: CVSCALE, taken from Yoo, Donthu, and Lenartowicz, Journal of Marketing Research, (forthcoming), Items 1-4 were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" (1) to "Strongly agree" (5), Confucian dynamism ranging from "Not at all important" (1) to "Very important" (5)**

<b>Power distance</b>	
P1	บุคคลที่มีตำแหน่งสูงโดยมากแล้วควรตัดสินใจโดยไม่ต้องปรึกษาบุคคลที่มีตำแหน่งต่ำกว่า
P2	บุคคลที่มีตำแหน่งสูงไม่ควรที่จะถามความเห็นของผู้ที่มีตำแหน่งต่ำกว่าบ่อยจนเกินไปนัก
P3	บุคคลที่มีตำแหน่งสูงควรหลีกเลี่ยงการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคมกับบุคคลที่มีตำแหน่งต่ำกว่า
P4	บุคคลที่มีตำแหน่งต่ำไม่ควรโต้แย้งการตัดสินใจของบุคคลที่มีตำแหน่งสูงกว่า
P5	บุคคลที่มีตำแหน่งสูงไม่ควรมอบหมายงานสำคัญให้กับบุคคลที่มีตำแหน่งต่ำกว่ารับผิดชอบ
<b>Uncertainty avoidance</b>	
U1	การให้คำแนะนำพร้อมรายละเอียดเป็นสิ่งสำคัญ เพราะฉันจะใคร่ตลอดเวลาว่าฉันถูกคาดหวังให้ทำอะไร
U2	มันเป็นสิ่งสำคัญในการทำตามคำสั่งและขั้นตอนอย่างเคร่งครัด
U3	กฎและข้อบังคับเป็นสิ่งสำคัญเพราะมันเป็นสิ่งที่บอกให้ฉันรู้ว่าฉันถูกคาดหวังให้ทำอะไรบ้าง
U4	ขั้นตอนการทำงานที่เป็นมาตรฐานเป็นสิ่งที่มีประโยชน์
U5	คำแนะนำต่างๆ สำหรับการทำงานเป็นสิ่งสำคัญ
<b>Collectivism</b>	
C1	บุคคลควรเสียสละผลประโยชน์ส่วนตัวเพื่อส่วนรวม (ไม่ว่าจะเป็นที่โรงเรียนหรือที่ทำงาน)
C2	บุคคลควรที่จะยึดติดกับกลุ่มแม้ว่าจะอยู่ในช่วงที่กลุ่มประสบความยากลำบาก
C3	ความสุขสบายของกลุ่มสำคัญกว่าผลตอบแทนของแต่ละบุคคล
C4	ความสำเร็จของกลุ่มสำคัญกว่าความสำเร็จของตัวบุคคล
C5	บุคคลควรดำเนินเป้าหมายส่วนตัวหลังจากคำนึงถึงสิ่งที่ดีที่สุดในกลุ่มแล้วเท่านั้น
C6	ความจงรักภักดีต่อกลุ่มควรได้รับการสนับสนุนแม้ว่าเป้าหมายส่วนบุคคลจะถูกบั่นทอนไป
<b>Masculinity</b>	
M1	การประกอบวิชาชีพเฉพาะ (Professional career) เป็นเรื่องสำคัญสำหรับผู้ชายมากกว่าผู้หญิง
M2	ในการแก้ปัญหาใดก็ได้ก็ตาม ผู้ชายมักใช้การวิเคราะห์เชิงเหตุผล ส่วนผู้หญิงจะนิยมแก้ปัญหาโดยใช้สัญชาตญาณ
M3	การแก้ปัญหาที่ยุงยาก โดยปกติแล้วต้องอาศัยความกระตือรือร้นและวิธีการที่มีพลังซึ่งถือเป็นลักษณะเฉพาะอย่างหนึ่งของผู้ชาย
M4	มีงานบางประเภทซึ่งผู้ชายสามารถทำได้ดีกว่าผู้หญิงอยู่เสมอ
<b>Confucian dynamism</b>	
D1	ความระมัดระวังในการบริหารจัดการการเงิน
D2	ความไม่ทอดทิ้ง (ความแน่วแน)
D3	ความมั่นคงและความมีเสถียรภาพของบุคคล
D4	การวางแผนในระยะยาว
D5	การละทิ้งความสุขในวันนี้ เพื่อความสำเร็จในอนาคต
D6	การทำงานอย่างหนักเพื่อความสำเร็จในอนาคต

## **RESULTS**

### *Reliability*

Scale reliability was assessed in terms of item-to-total correlation and Cronbach's to determine the discriminative power and internal consistency of the measurement scale. Cronbach's Alpha (1951) is the most commonly used reliability coefficient as a generalized measure of the internal consistency of the construct indicators (Peter 1979). The Cronbach's was computed to test on the reliability of each dimension. The reliability was .63 for power distance, .81 for uncertainty avoidance, .81 for collectivism, .61 for masculinity, and .85 for long-term oriented (Confucian dynamism). Thus, the measuring instrument show to achieved satisfactory levels of reliability as all items yield value of more than 0.6 (Nunnally and Bernstein 1994).

### *Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)*

Factor analysis was performed and strong evidence for the unidimensionality for each of the subdimensions was found. Specifically, factor analysis revealed that in all cases only one factor had an eigenvalue exceeding 1.0 (2.091

for power distance, 2.864 for uncertainty avoidance, 3.074 for collectivism, 1.878 for masculinity, and 3.478 for long-term oriented). To ascertain whether the items have construct validity, factor analysis using orthogonal rotation was conducted for the twenty six items. Five distinct factors emerged in the sample and cumulatively these five factors explained 54.9 percent of the total variance. This was similar to Hofstede's (1980) country-level analysis in which 49 percent of the total variance was explained as well as to Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz (forthcoming) individual-level analysis in which 44.5% of the total variance was explained for the pooled data (49.0 % for Americans, 47.9% for Korean-American, and 40.7% for Koreans). Factor analysis using oblique rotation produced similar factor patterns, confirming the discriminant and convergent validity of the measures (Rummel 1970). All the items loaded highly on the appropriate factors and no item loaded on more than one factor, supporting the independence of the constructs and providing strong empirical evidence of their validity. Table 3 summarize the result of the test.

**Table 3: Summarize the result of the findings**

Constr- structs	Variables	Unidimen- sonality (eigenvalue)	Variance explained	Factor loading	Cronbach $\alpha$	Item-total correlation
CVSCALE	<b>Power Distance</b>	2.091	41.82%	.573	.6336	.3406
				.495		.2900
				.727		.4627
				.685		.4183
				.721		.4578
	<b>Uncertainty Avoidance</b>	2.864	57.23%	.683	.8108	.5209
				.777		.6321
				.766		.6178
				.788		.6251
				.765		.6031
	<b>Collecti- vism</b>	3.074	51.23%	.691	.8087	.5402
				.694		.5448
				.746		.6029
				.778		.6392
				.712		.5641
	<b>Masculinity</b>	1.878	46.95%	.667	.6105	.5166
				.704		.3891
				.760		.4580
				.753		.4829
				.488		.2479
<b>Confucian dynamism</b>	3.478	57.97%	.799	.8467	.6591	
			.830		.7005	
			.831		.6994	
			.821		.6971	
			.652		.5534	
			.601		.4941	

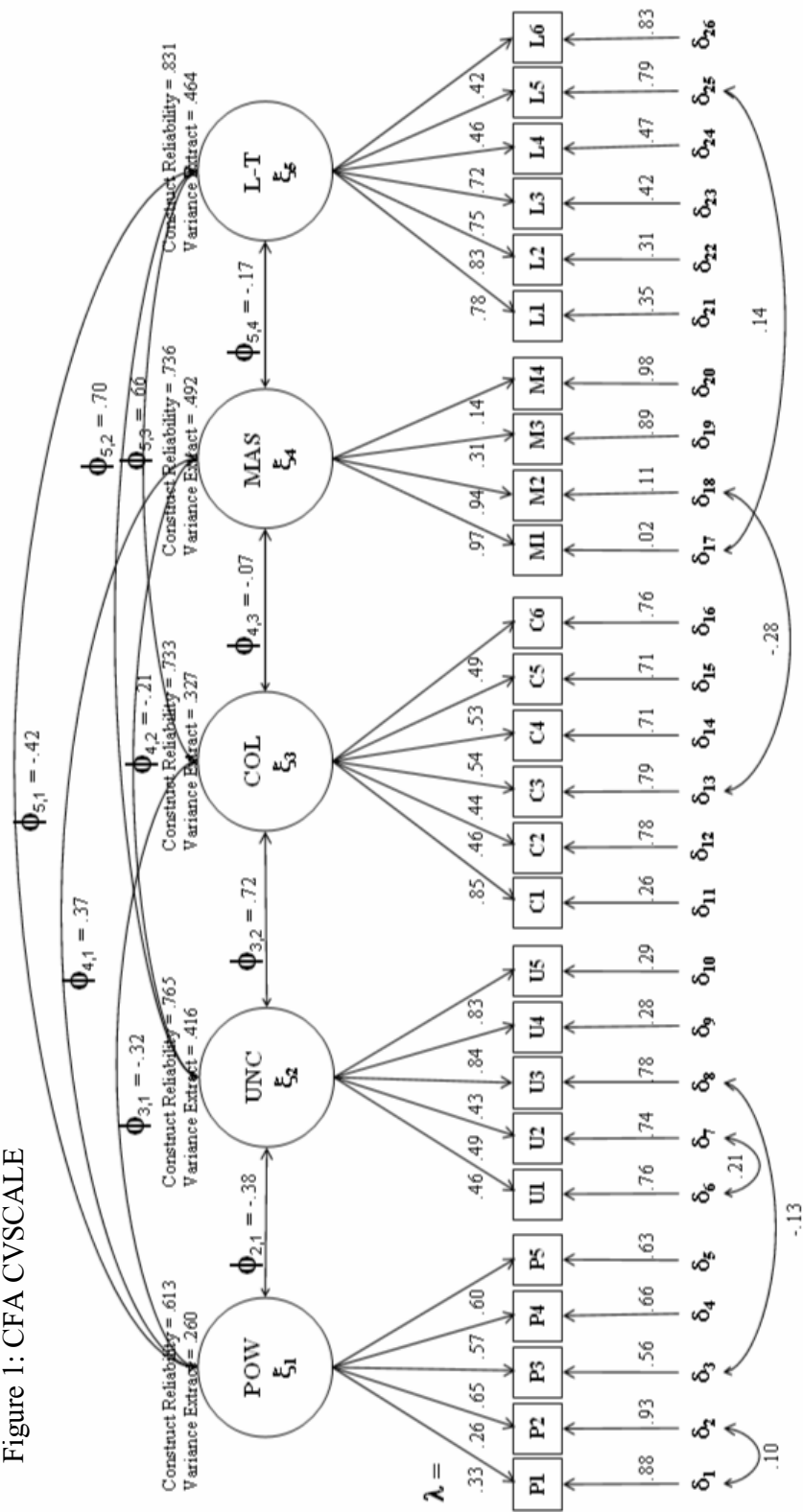


### *Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)*

The clean factor patterns shown in the exploratory factor analysis were consistently found in confirmatory factor analysis. Following the guidelines offered by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), we set a measurement model to have five factors (i.e., latent variables) with the 26 measured items. Observing the one latent variable per indicator rule, we specified a measured item to be loaded on one latent variable only; for example, a power distance item was related to only the power distance factor. A completely standardised solution produced by the LISREL 8.3 maximum likelihood method showed that all the items loaded on their corresponding constructs. Demonstrating adequate convergent validity of all items, t-values of all items show significance of more than .001 on all dimensions. The overall fit of the measurement model was excellent and similar to Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz (forthcoming): (d.f. = 192) = 302.08; goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = .98; adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) = .96; root mean square residual (RMR) = .050; standardized RMR = .050; root mean square error

of approximation (RMSEA) = .023; normed fit index (NFI) = .97; comparative fit index (CFI) = .99; and incremental fit index (IFI) = .99. Despite the large number of items considered, no substantial departures from unidimensionality were observed. The composite reliability estimates, which are evident of convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker 1981), were acceptable: .61 for power distance, .76 for uncertainty avoidance, .73 for collectivism, .74 for uncertainty avoidance, and .83 for long-term oriented (Confucian dynamism). The average extracted for each dimension was only moderate: .26 for power distance, .42 for uncertainty avoidance, .33 for collectivism, .49 for uncertainty avoidance, and .46 for long-term oriented (Confucian dynamism), but greater than the squared correlation between the dimension and any other dimension, which indicates the independence (divergent validity) of the dimensions (Fornell and Larcker 1981). Figure 1 presents the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) model of the CVSCALE.

Figure 1: CFA CVSCALE



## DISCUSSION

The increasing globalization of markets and the ease with which services and products now cross national boundaries provides a compelling reason for understanding the cultural context of consumer behavior (Patterson, Cowley, and Prasongsukarn 2006). Nonetheless, the current cross-cultural business literature about culture assessment methods is rather chaotic due to the lack of universally accepted scales. The result of this study has further proven the usefulness of the CVSCALE.

The application of the proposed instrument in cross-cultural studies is extensive. The CVSCALE can benefit cross-cultural researchers and multi-cultural business practitioners. This scale links cultural values to individual attitudes and behaviours because the data about cultural orientation, attitudes, and behaviours come from the same source.

Finally, by measuring cultural values and not equating them to the national culture, researchers can avoid the ecological fallacy, which occurs when the ecological or country-level relationships are interpreted as if they are applied to individuals (see Hofstede 1980).

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