

Abstract

Purpose: In considering a) evidence of negative consequences of power distance (PD) and uncertainty avoidance (UA) in countries and organizations, b) serious concerns on applying Hofstede's national culture value directly to organizational and individual level studies, and c) the lack of individual level researches about social capital on a more generalized sample, this study explored how individuals behave with regards to their culture orientation and under the influence of external culture climate.

Method: The study used position generator to measure social capital (network diversity and prestige) and used Individual Cultural Values Scale to measure cultural orientation (PG and UA) on 164 samples with working experience in Hong Kong. Afterwards, respondents were assigned to one of the four culture-change vignettes and then reported their changes in social network preferences.

Results: individual's culture orientation of PD and UA was not related to his/her social capital. Climate change of decrease PD, decreased UA and increased UA resulted in increase in social capital. Non-significant result was found for increase PD condition.

Implications: Culture change can influence social capital at individual level. People demonstrated culturally adaptive behavior which deviates from individual's cultural orientation. This study also provided empirical support that position generator as a useful social capital measurement. Companies should be aware their organizational culture directly affect employees' social interactions in the company.

Keywords: social capital, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, position generator