

CULTURE CONSEQUENCES

A Research Study in Malaysia

October 2008

SAMPLE & METHODOLOGY

1. Interviews were conducted in KL, Selangor, Perak, Penang and Kedah in October 2008.
2. A total of 3644 respondents were interviewed (n=3644).
3. Respondents selection is founded on a stratified random sampling process. The stratification includes age, gender and race in order to yield close to the correct demographic compositions of the total sample (with reference to the government census of year 2000).
4. Interviews were face-to-face aided with a structured questionnaire. Interviewing was done in Bahasa Malaysia, English and Chinese.

Sample		
Race	Sample	Percentage
Malay	1803	49.5%
Chinese	1350	37.0%
Indian	491	13.5%
Total	3644	100%
Gender		
Male	1842	50.5%
Female	1802	49.5%
Total	3644	100%
Age		
20-25	643	17.6%
26-30	577	15.8%
31-35	544	14.9%
36-40	482	13.2%
41-45	422	11.6%
46-50	354	9.7%
51-55	249	6.8%
56-Above	373	10.2%
Total	3644	100%

POWER DISTANCE

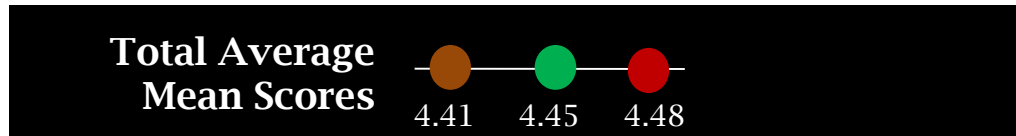
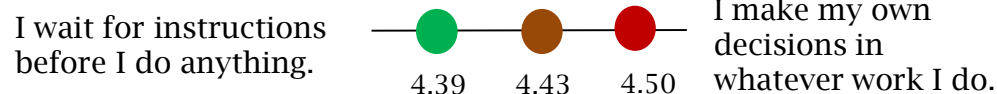
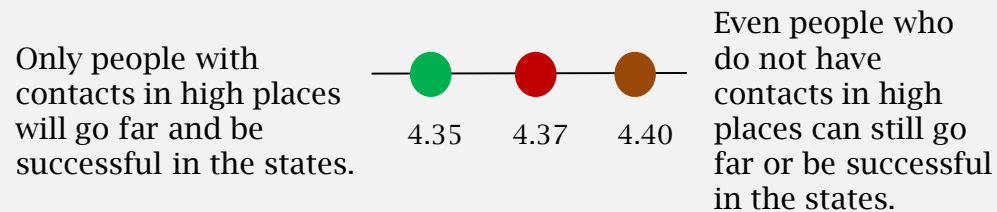
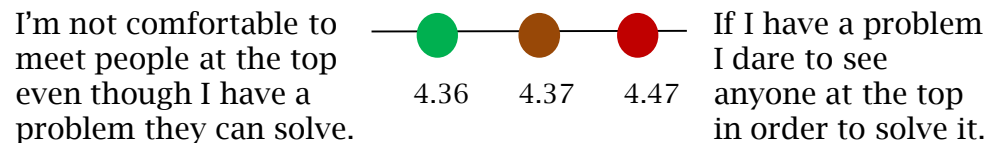
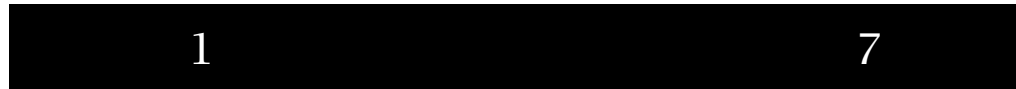
Power distance has to do with the degree to which unequal distribution of power and wealth is tolerated.

This can be determined by the level of hierarchy in workplaces and distance between social strata.

According to Hofstede (2001), Malaysia hold large power distance (104) while Austria hold small power distance (11) among 50 countries.

POWER DISTANCE

BY RACE



- Overall, Chinese lean more towards the lower power distance compared to the other two main races (Malay & Indian). They believe that everyone is equal in the eyes of the law.
- On the other hand, Indians tend to be more optimistic. They believe people can still succeed even they do not have contacts in high places.

Legend:

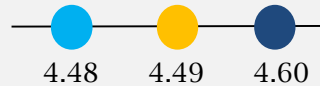
- Malay, n=1803
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- Indian, n=491

POWER DISTANCE

BY EDUCATION LEVEL

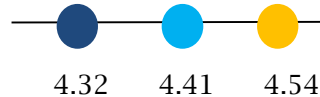
1 7

There are people who get special treatment even from legal standpoint.



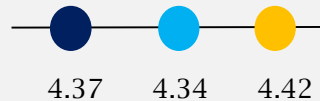
Everyone is equal in the eyes of the law.

I'm not comfortable to meet people at the top even though I have a problem they can solve.



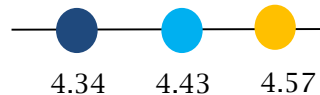
If I have a problem I dare to see anyone at the top in order to solve it.

Only people with contacts in high places will go far and be successful in the states.



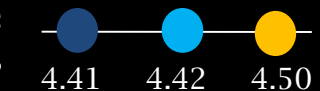
Even people who do not have contacts in high places can still go far or be successful in the states.

I wait for instructions before I do anything.



I make my own decisions in whatever work I do.

Total Average Mean Scores



1. Educational opportunities have been improved; we have seen that power distance scores decrease with increased in level of education.

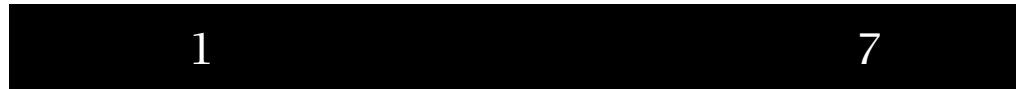
2. However, less educated people think that everyone is equal, compared to people with a higher education level.

Legend:

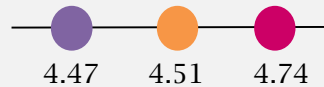
- PMR & below, n=1164
- SPM, n=1799
- STPM & above, n=681

POWER DISTANCE

BY INCOME LEVEL

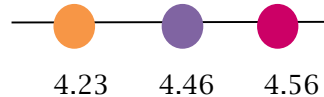


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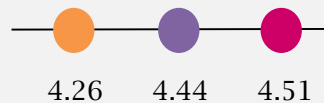
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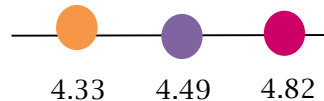
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I wait for instructions before I do anything.



I make my own decisions in whatever work I do.

Total Average Mean Scores



1. Generally, the power distances between lower income tend to be larger than upper income.
2. People with lower income are likely to expect instructions, while upper income people are expected to participate in decision making processes.

Legend:

- Lower Income (RM3000 & below), n=2502
- Middle Income (RM3001 - RM5000), n=826
- Upper Income (RM5001 & above), n=316

INDIVIDUALISM V.S. COLLECTIVISM

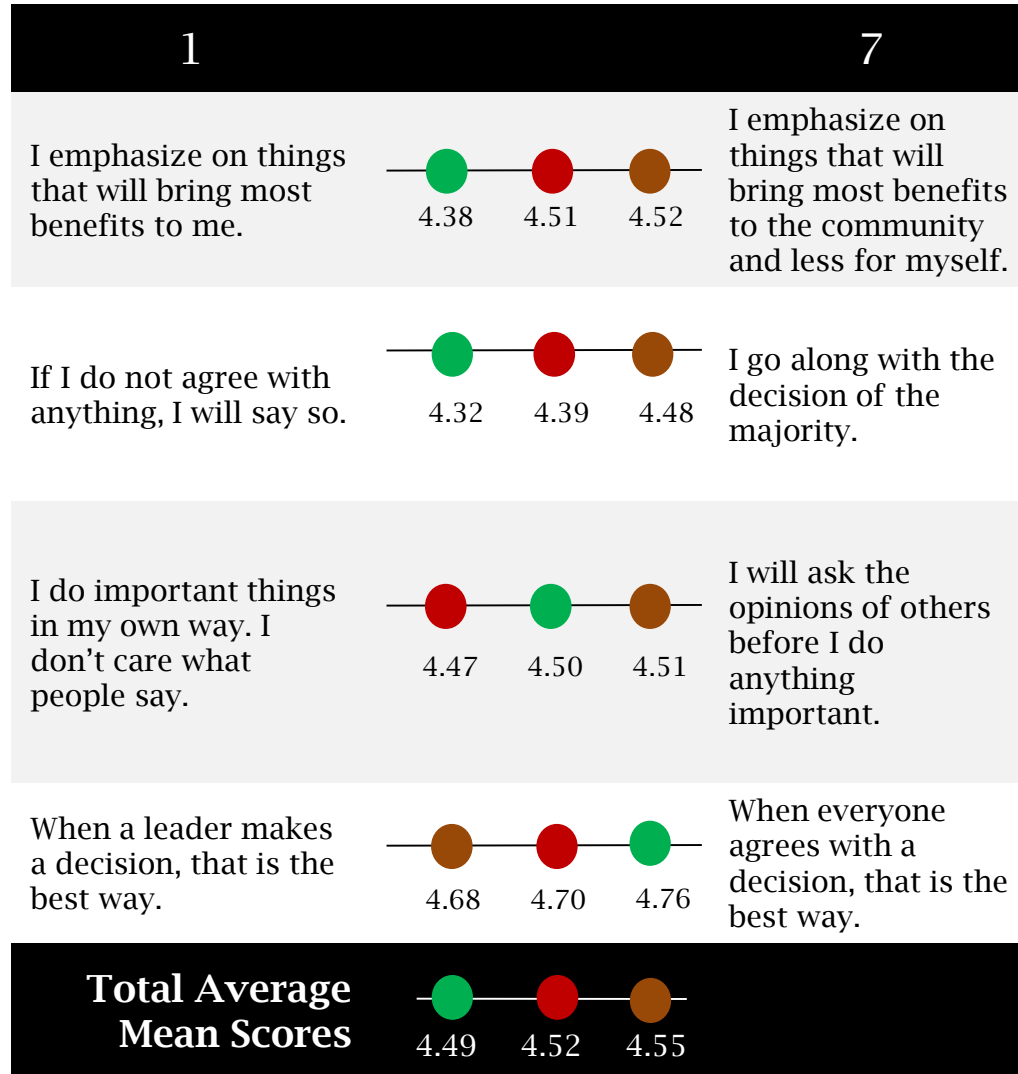
Individualism stands for a society in which the ties between individuals are loose: Everyone is expected to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family only.

Collectivism stands for a society in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.

According to the Individualism Index Values for 50 countries by Hofstede (2001), the highest individualism values were found for the United States (91), the lowest, for Guatemala (6) and Malaysia was in the rank of 36 with the scored of 26.

INDIVIDUALISM V.S. COLLECTIVISM

BY RACE



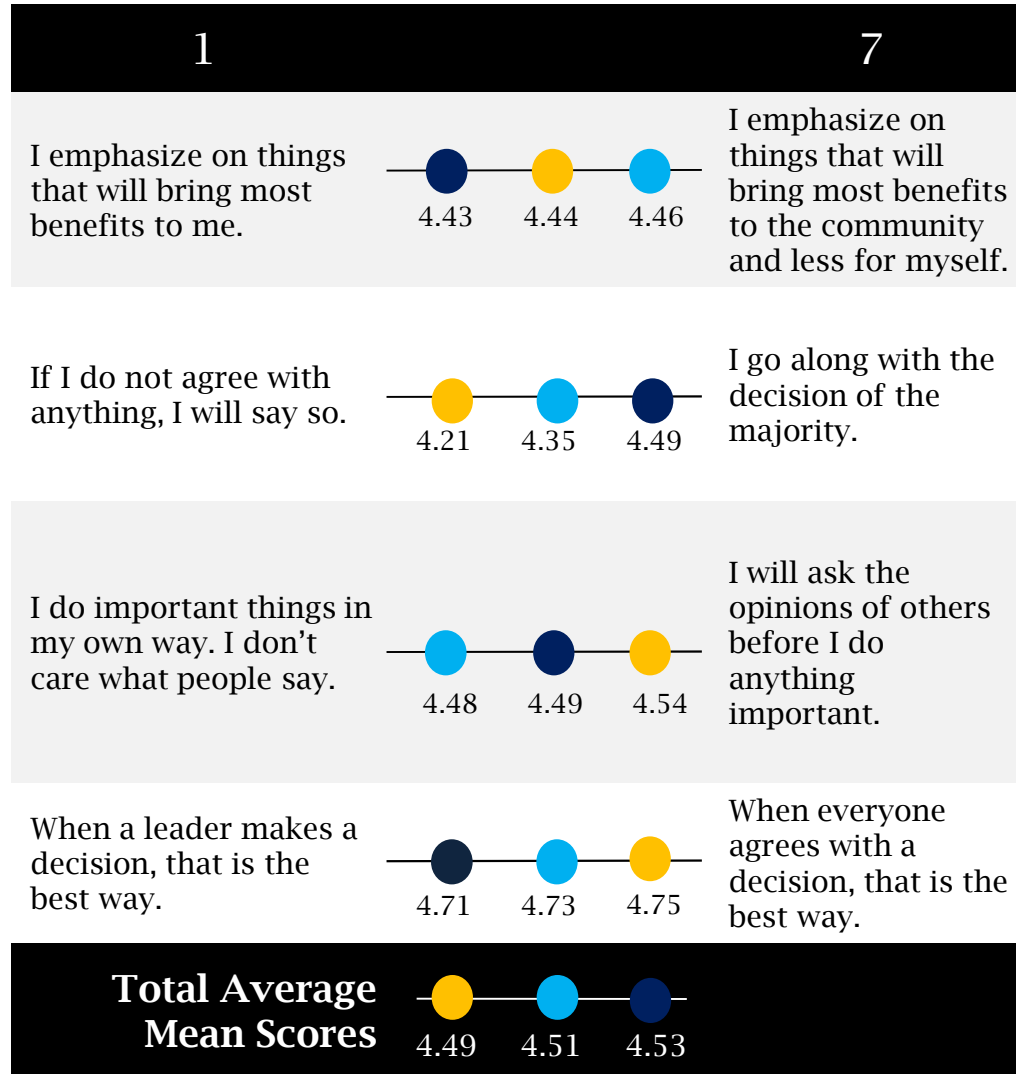
1. Collectivism exists across ethnic groups, but they differ in content and orientation. (In average, Malays have a score of 4.49, Chinese, 4.52 & Indians, 4.55; this is out of a total of 7).
2. Indians show more respect to leaders and believe that decisions made by leaders are the best.

Legend:

- Malay, n=1803
- Chinese, n=1350
- Indian, n=491

INDIVIDUALISM V.S. COLLECTIVISM

BY EDUCATION LEVEL



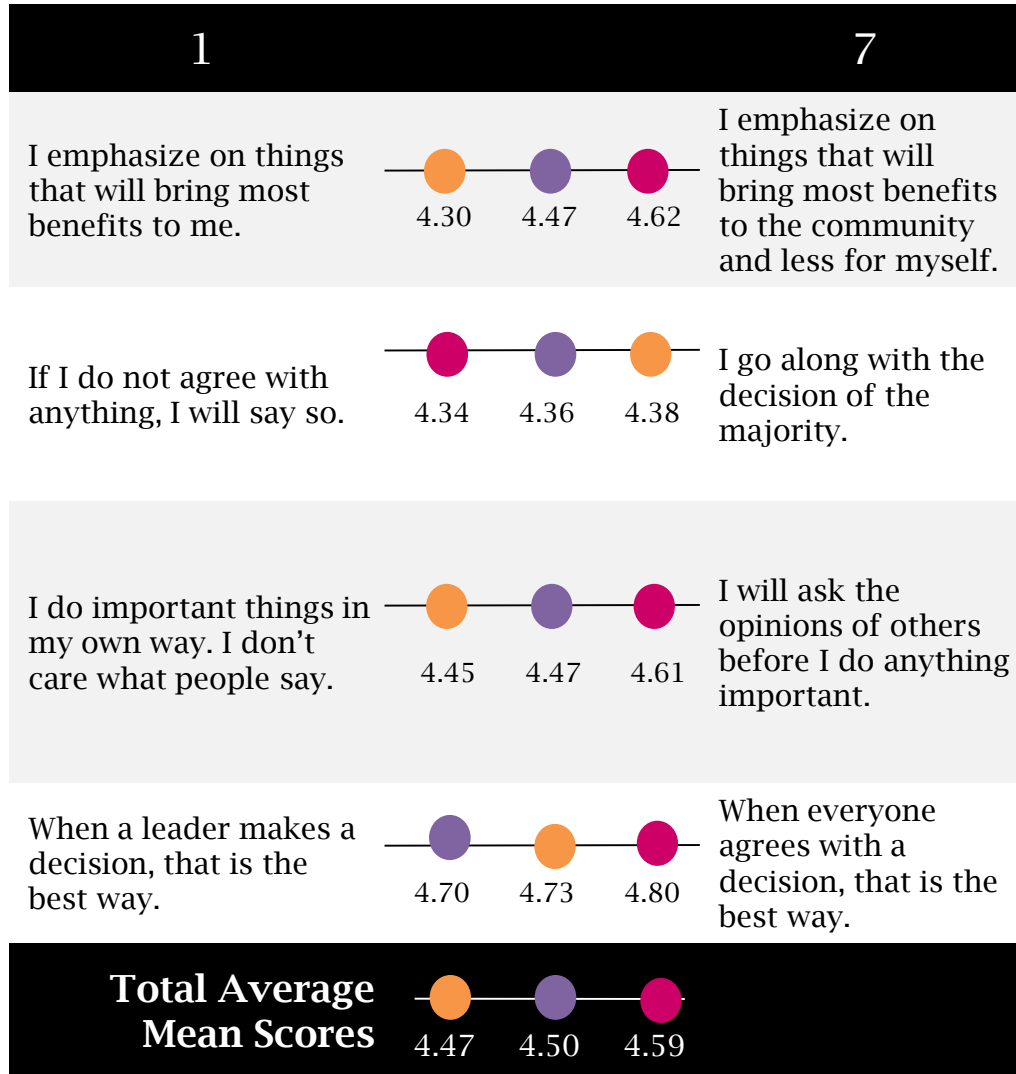
- Education level affects the level of individualism or collectivism. The study shows that respondents with higher education levels (43%) are more likely to express their opinions when it conflicts with the majority, compared to respondents with lower education levels (53%).
- However, most of the respondents said that they will ask the opinions of others before doing anything important (PMR & below 51%, SPM 51%, STPM & above 55%).

Legend:

- PMR & below, n=1164
- SPM, n=1799
- STPM & above, n=681

INDIVIDUALISM V.S. COLLECTIVISM

BY INCOME LEVEL



1. Majority of respondents' attitudes towards others depend on their group membership. They tend to avoid confrontations as about half (50%) of the respondents will go along with majority (Lower income 48%, middle income 50%, upper income 49%).
2. Generally, most of the respondents are emotional dependence with others. Others' opinions are important for them in doing anything important (Lower income 52%, middle income 51%, upper income 55%).

Legend:

- Lower Income (RM3000 & below), n=2502
- Middle Income (RM3001 - RM5000), n=826
- Upper Income (RM5001 & above), n=316

MASCULINITY V.S. FEMINITY

Masculinity stands for a society in which social gender roles are clearly distinct: Men are suppose to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. Femininity stands for a society in which social gender roles overlap: Both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.

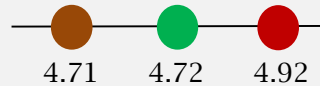
According to the Masculinity Index Values for 50 countries by Hofstede (2001), the highest individualism values were found for the Japan(95), the lowest, for Sweden(5) and Malaysia was in the rank of 25 with the scored of 50.

MASCULINITY V.S. FEMINITY

BY RACE

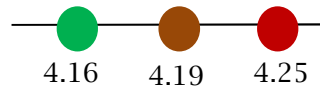
1 7

A woman's work is at home; the kitchen and children.



Woman can do man's work just as well, no difference.

I agree with the idea that "I would rather fight than to lose out"



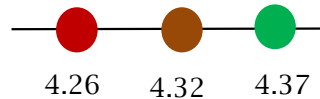
I do not agree with the idea that "I would rather fight than to lose out".

I am most impressed by a person who is successful through his own efforts.



I'm most impressed by a person who is successful by using a group effort.

Massive infrastructure such as highways, airports are important to show the success of a country.



The quantity of life is more important, for example clean water and environment.

Total Average Mean Scores



1. There is no significant differences in masculinity or femininity among the three main races in Malaysia.
2. However, Chinese tend to have more of the belief that woman can do man's work just as well.
3. Other research (Sendut, 1990) shows that the highest priority of Malays is to get along with others. This is reflected in this study in which Malays are impressed by achieving success using a group effort.

Legend:

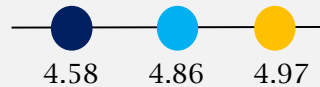
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MASCULINITY V.S. FEMINITY

BY EDUCATION LEVEL

1 7

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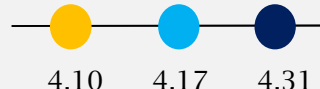
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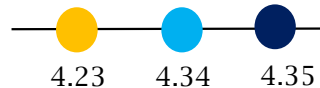
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Total Average Mean Scores



1. Education level stands also for occupation and social class. According to Hofstede (2001), the more highly educated scored more masculine, assertive values than the others.
2. Respondents with higher education believe that gender is not a factor for work performance. Besides, they are more impressed by a person who is successful through his own efforts compared to group efforts.

Legend:

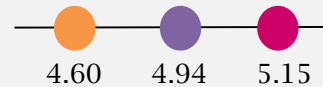
- PMR & below, n=1164
- SPM, n=1799
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MASCULINITY V.S. FEMINITY

BY INCOME LEVEL

1 7

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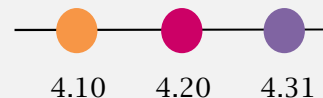
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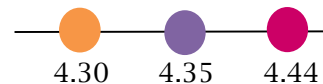
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I'm most impressed by a person who is successful by using a group effort.

Massive infrastructure such as highways, airports are important to show the success of a country.



The quantity of life is more important, for example clean water and environment.

Total Average Mean Scores



1. Related to the education level, upper-middle-class respondents believe that both men and women are equal in job performance.
2. Different from respondents with lower education levels, respondents who earned RM3000 and below are more impressed by a person who is successful through his own efforts.

Legend:

- Lower Income (RM3000 & below), n=2502
- Middle Income (RM3001 - RM5000), n=826
- Upper Income (RM5001 & above), n=316

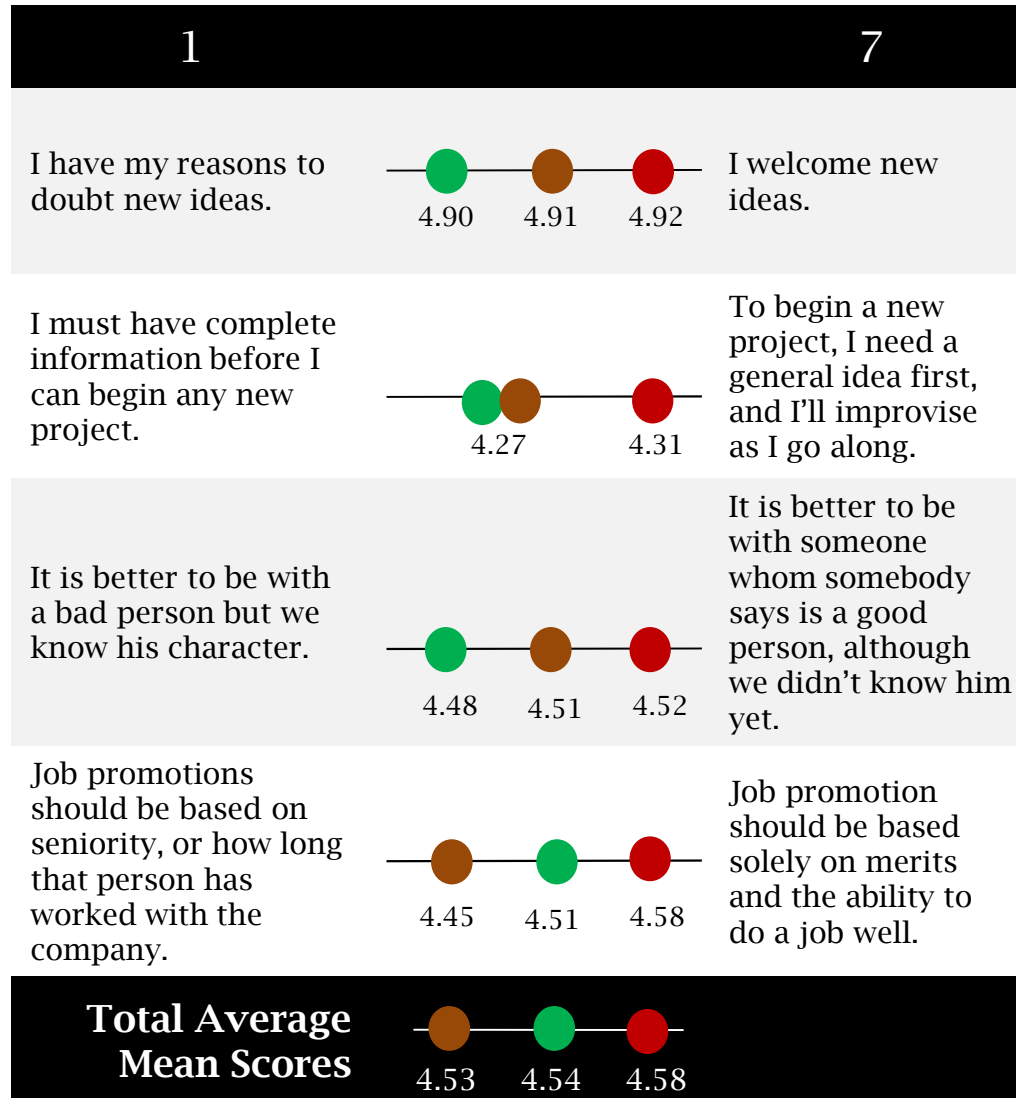
UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

Uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which a society strives to avoid uncertainty by reliance on social norms, rituals, and bureaucratic practices to alleviate the unpredictability of future events.

According to the Uncertainty Index Values for 50 countries by Hofstede (2001), Greece scored the highest (112). In Asia, Japan (92) and Korea (85) scored high. Singapore (8), Hong Kong (29), Malaysia (36), India (40), the Philippines (44), and Indonesia (48) scored low; Taiwan (69) and Thailand (64) are in the middle.

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

BY RACE



1. The approximation data suggests that Malaysian Chinese avoid uncertainty less than Malays as originally proposed by Hofstede (1991).
2. Consistent with Hofstede's prospect, there was a slight tendency for Chinese to show higher tolerance to uncertainty.

Legend:

- Malay, n=1803
- Chinese, n=1350
- Indian, n=491

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

BY EDUCATION LEVEL



I have my reasons to doubt new ideas. 4.87 4.90 4.98 I welcome new ideas.

I must have complete information before I can begin any new project. 4.20 4.30 4.31 To begin a new project, I need a general idea first, and I'll improvise as I go along.

It is better to be with a bad person but we know his character. 4.43 4.50 4.59 It is better to be with someone whom somebody says is a good person, although we didn't know him yet.

Job promotions should be based on seniority, or how long that person has worked with the company. 4.42 4.54 4.68 Job promotion should be based solely on merits and the ability to do a job well.

Total Average Mean Scores 4.50 4.60

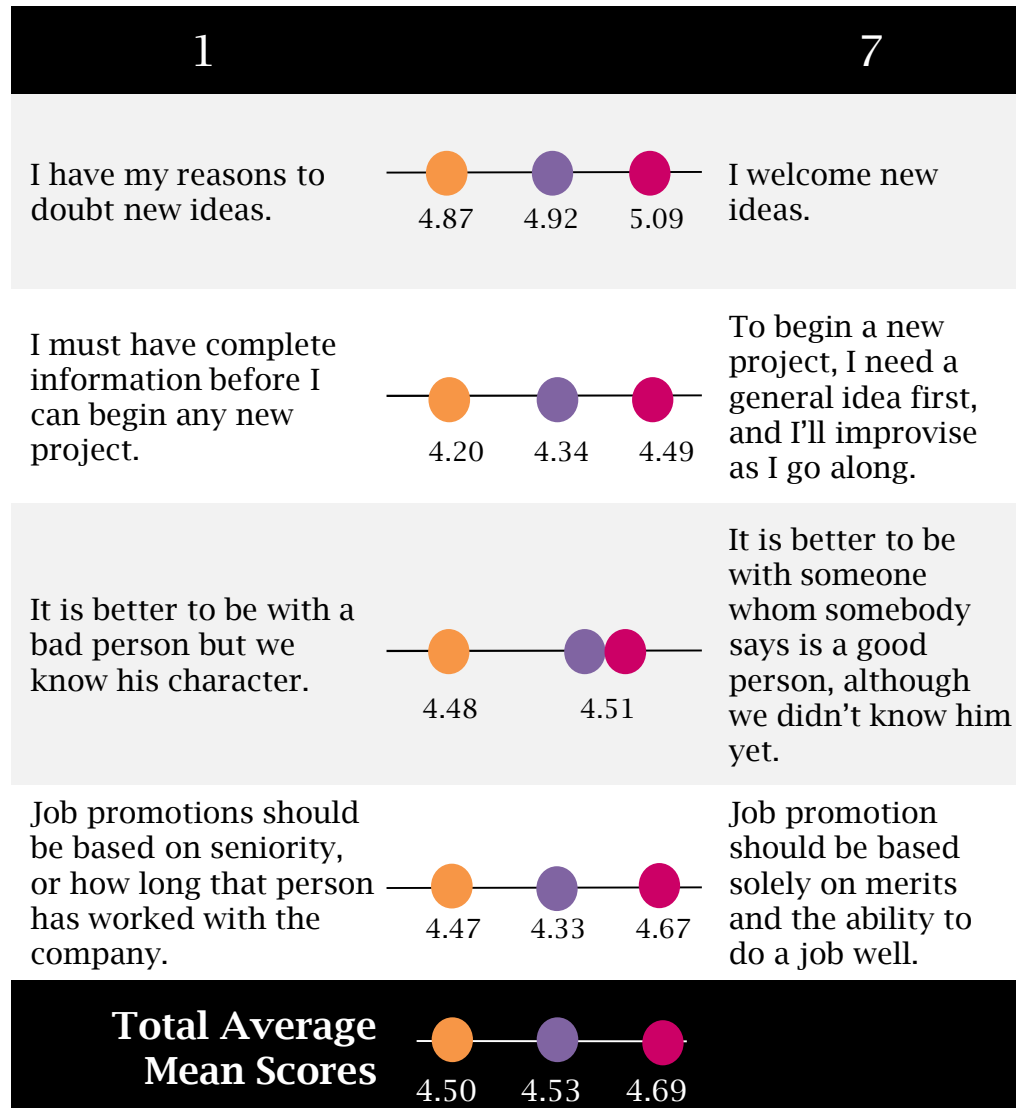
1. The statistical analysis in Hofstede's study illustrates that the more highly educated were less risk oriented.
2. Respondents with higher education are more tolerant towards ambiguity such as new ideas or partners. However, they will prefer to have complete information before they start a new project.

Legend:

- PMR & below, n=1164
- SPM, n=1799
- STPM & above, n=681

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

BY INCOME LEVEL



1. Results showed that respondents with higher income tended to differ from those with lower income when it came to avoiding uncertainty.
2. The degree of uncertainty avoidance reduced as the income level increased.
3. In other words, higher income respondents are more comfortable with ambiguity.

Legend:

- Lower Income (RM3000 & below), n=2502
- Middle Income (RM3001 - RM5000), n=826
- Upper Income (RM5001 & above), n=316

CONFUCIAN WORK-DYNAMISM

Hofstede and Bond (1984) identified a Confucian dynamism labeled long-term orientation versus short-term orientation to life.

The Confucian dynamism dimension describe cultures that range from short-term values with respect for tradition and reciprocity in social relations to long-term values with persistence and ordering relationships by status.

Countries high in Confucian work dynamism are Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore – popularly referred to as the Five Economic Dragons

CONFUCIAN WORK-DYNAMISM

BY RACE

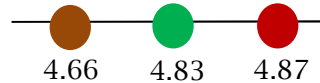
1 7

What happened in the past is more important than the future.



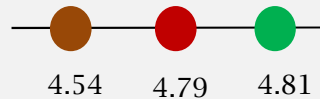
Only the future is important. What is past is past.

Money must be spent, to use, it is to be enjoyed now.



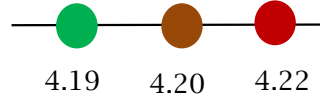
I save money for use in the future.

I believe that if your destiny is to have only so much, that's it.



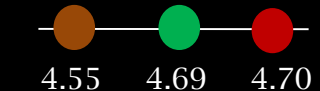
I do not believe in destiny. I can have more if I work for it.

Who am I to be able to create change?



I have the potential to add to the greatness of this country.

Total Average Mean Scores



1. Overall, Malay and Chinese had similar scores compared to Indians. They tend to believe that the future is more important and money should be saved for the future.

2. Indians believe that how much a person can have relies on their destiny.

Legend:

- Malay, n=1803
- Chinese, n=1350
- Indian, n=491

CONFUCIAN WORK-DYNAMISM

BY EDUCATION LEVEL

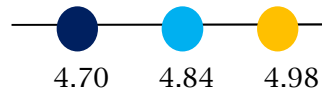
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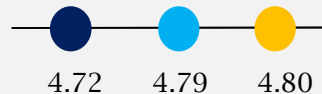
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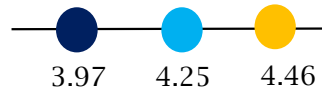
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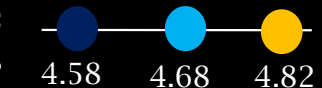
I do not believe in destiny. I can have more if I work for it.

Who am I to be able to create change?



I have the potential to add to the greatness of this country.

Total Average Mean Scores



1. The findings showed that respondents with higher education levels are oriented towards the long-term when compared to respondents with education levels of PMR and below.

Legend:

- PMR & below, n=1164
- SPM, n=1799
- STPM & above, n=681

CONFUCIAN WORK-DYNAMISM

BY INCOME LEVEL

1 7

What happened in the past is more important than the future. ● 4.85 ● 4.91 ● 4.97 Only the future is important. What is past is past.

Money must be spent, to use, it is to be enjoyed now. ● 4.78 ● 4.79 ● 4.80 I save money for use in the future.

I believe that if your destiny is to have only so much, that's it. ● 4.66 ● 4.82 I do not believe in destiny. I can have more if I work for it.

Who am I to be able to create change? ● 4.00 ● 4.39 ● 4.45 I have the potential to add to the greatness of this country.

Total Average Mean Scores ● 4.63 ● 4.67 ● 4.76

1. Generally, upper income respondents tended to “create” instead of “believe”. They will probably work for what they want and think that they have the potential to add to the greatness of the country.

Legend:

- Lower Income (RM3000 & below), n=2502
- Middle Income (RM3001 - RM5000), n=826
- Upper Income (RM5001 & above), n=316