Cultural Values and the CSME

Betty Jane Punnett
Emily Dick-Forde, Justin Robinson

Abstract

The advent of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) will encourage firms to address business opportunities on a regional basis, and to adopt regional management practices. For example, a company might find it most efficient to provide uniform management training to all its managers throughout the region rather than on a country-by-country basis. It has been demonstrated in studies around the world that effective management needs to be closely linked to cultural values – that is, management practices need to match the cultural values of managers and their subordinates. To be successful on a regional basis, therefore, it will be important for firms to understand cultural value similarities and differences across the countries of the region. There is a popular belief in the region that values in different countries can be quite varied; for example, the people of Barbados see themselves as different from the people of Jamaica or St. Vincent, and so on. This would suggest that management approaches need to be adapted from country to country, and that companies will not be able to adopt uniform regional management approaches. There is, however, little empirical evidence to support this view. In contrast to the popular belief, the similarity in cultural antecedents (i.e., the factors thought to shape cultural values), such as economy, geography, history, political systems, and so on, suggests that cultural values should be relatively similar across English-speaking countries in the region. This paper reviews results from four empirical studies in some English-speaking countries (Barbados, Jamaica, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Trinidad & Tobago). Three studies used survey instruments and interviews to measure a variety of different cultural values; the fourth focused on behaviours. The cultural values measured were based on well-accepted national cultural value models that have been researched around the world, including value concepts such as individualism, mastery over nature, power and hierarchies, and so on. The scores are compared among the regional countries included in the studies. The regional comparisons suggest that cultural values across the English-speaking countries studied are very similar. These results are discussed in terms of regional management approaches. The limitations of the studies are discussed as well as opportunities for further research.
Cultural Values and the CSME

A number of Caribbean companies are already operating on a regional basis, and the advent of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) will encourage firms to address business opportunities on a regional basis, and to adopt regional management practices. Companies may find it efficient to produce in one location and supply the entire region, and a company might find it best to provide uniform management training to all its managers throughout the region, rather than on a country-by-country basis.

It has been demonstrated in studies around the world that effective management needs to be closely linked to cultural values – that is, management practices need to match the cultural values of managers and their subordinates (Hofstede, 1984; Boyacigiller, Kleinberg, Phillips, & Sackman, 2004). To be successful on a regional, rather than a national basis, it will be important for firms to understand cultural value similarities and differences across the countries of the region. There is a popular belief in the Caribbean region that values in different countries can be quite varied; for example, the people of Barbados see themselves as different from the people of Jamaica or St. Vincent, and so on. This would suggest that management approaches need to be adapted from country to country, and that companies will not be able to adopt uniform regional management approaches in the Caribbean. There is, however, little empirical evidence to support this view. In contrast to the popular belief, the similarity in cultural antecedents (i.e., the factors thought to shape cultural values), such as economy, geography, history, political systems, and so on, suggests that cultural values should be relatively similar across English-speaking countries in the region (Nurse & Punnett, 2002).

Results from three empirical studies in a selection of English-speaking countries in the region are reviewed in the current paper to examine the degree of cultural similarity or difference found in the region; a fourth study which focuses on behaviour is reviewed and related to the cultural values identified. The studies were undertaken by various authors in Barbados, Jamaica, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Trinidad & Tobago to examine similarities and differences in the countries. These countries are fairly representative of the diversity in the region – in terms of level of economic development and growth, ethnic makeup, size, location, and politics. If there are substantial value differences across the region, one would expect to find differences among these countries.

METHODOLOGY

The studies used both survey instruments and interviews to measure a variety of different cultural values, personal characteristics, and decision-making styles. The variables measured were based on well-accepted models that have been researched around the world. The cultural scores are compared among the regional countries included in the studies, and the behavioural scores are compared with the United Kingdom. The four studies reviewed in this paper are each discussed elsewhere in more detail. The objective of the current paper is to bring these results together to begin to provide a picture of cultural similarities and differences across the region, and to explore how these affect management practices, and relate to the effectiveness of management practices.
RESULTS of the STUDIES

The background of each study is briefly reported in the following sections, and the main results are presented.

Study 1 – Successful Professional Women
There is much discussion in the business and research communities about the existence of unique personal and cultural characteristics that have an impact on professional success. Such characteristics may distinguish women from men, more successful from less successful individuals, individuals from different cultures and socioeconomic classes, and individuals active in different industrial or occupational sectors.

The first study considered professionally successful women in three Caribbean locations and compared this group to a group of University students, including both females and males (see Nurse & Punnett, 2003 and Punnett, 2003 for details). It is important to note that success is defined for this study as professional success. Many women are successful in terms other than their professional choices, and some women who are successful professionally may not feel that they are successful more generally. This study simply looks at the characteristics of women who have succeeded in their chosen professions. Specifically, respondents were drawn from the following groups:

- middle and upper level managers in the private sector (managers of managers),
- university administrators and tenured full professors,
- entrepreneurs/small business owners (in business more than two years),
- government ministers, and
- professionals, such as doctors or lawyers (who had evidenced substantial accomplishment in their profession).

These groups were chosen because they were readily accessible, could potentially exhibit variation because of occupational/profession, and provided an adequate sample size.

Variables and Measurement
Variables to be measured were identified and existing measures evaluated. The literature suggests that women face special difficulties in virtually all societies, and have to try harder than their male colleagues to be successful. Based on this literature, the following personal characteristics were selected as the most likely to influence success:

- Self-efficacy – this is the degree to which people believe that they are able to accomplish the goals that they wish to accomplish.
- Locus of Control – this is the degree to which people attribute control over what happens to them internally or externally.
- Need for Achievement – this is the degree to which people want to accomplish objectives, which they see as representing something worthwhile.

Successful women were hypothesized to have a high sense of self-efficacy, internal locus of control, and a high need for achievement. Standardized tests were evaluated in terms of psychometric properties, and previous cross-cultural use. Those used in our study were felt to be the best available (Jackson, 1985; Sherer & Maddux et al., 1982; Spector, 1988; Tepper & Shaffer, 1996).

The study also measures certain important cultural values, and includes women from a variety of occupations/professions in the samples. While it seems logical that successful
women, in all locations, will exhibit similar characteristics, it can also be argued that cultural values (both national and occupational/professional) will influence the relative importance of these characteristics. The cultural values measured are based on Hofstede’s (1984) model and the instrument was developed by Dorfman & Howell. The Dorfman & Howell (1988) questionnaire measures three of Hofstede’s dimensions on a bi-polar scale:

**Individualism/Collectivism** refers to the extent to which the individual or the group is emphasized in decision-making and activities – some societies place more emphasis on the individual, others on group interactions.

**Uncertainty Avoidance** refers to the degree to which people are comfortable with a lack of certainty and seek security – some societies are more comfortable with certainty, others are comfortable with a higher degree of uncertainty.

**Power Distance** refers to the degree to which inequalities in power are acceptable – some societies accept inequalities as being appropriate, others prefer greater equality in power.

The Hofstede cultural value dimensions have been widely used in a variety of research studies over the past twenty years, and many scholars find the dimensions intuitively appealing. There has, however, been substantial criticism of the instrument used by Hofstede to measure these dimensions. The Dorfman and Howell measure is an alternative to the Hofstede measure, and Dorfman & Howell (1988) report acceptable psychometric properties for the scales. These cultural values were identified as the most likely to vary among locations.

Data were collected from University students to provide a comparative score. Students were selected as a comparison group because it seemed that this was a likely base from which successful women would emerge. University students, by the very fact that they have chosen to go to University and have been selected to attend, are likely to exhibit personal characteristics that are linked to success – that is, high on need for achievement, internal on locus of control, and high on self esteem. If the women scored significantly higher than the students on these characteristics, it would be strong evidence of the importance of these characteristics in their success. The students and the successful women come from the same cultural backgrounds, and if the cultural measures are a valid representation, scores on these measures should not be significantly different for the women and the students.

Student responses were first analyzed to see if there was a significant difference between female and male students. There was no significant difference; therefore the mean scores for the successful women were compared with the mean scores for all students. The women from the three countries had very similar scores on all the variables measured (no significant between-country differences at the 0.01 level). The women were not significantly different from the students on the culture measures; but the successful women were significantly higher in terms of self esteem, internal locus of control, and need for achievement, as the following illustrates:
Successful Women  4.13  2.12  13.37  3.2  4.25  2.0
University Students  3.73  3.15  10.36  3.14  4.08  2.16

S/E – Self Efficacy, LoC – Locus of Control, nAch – Need for Achievement
C/I – Individualism/collectivism, UAI – Uncertainty Avoidance, PD – Power Distance

From a cultural perspective, all three countries are moderate in terms of individualism/collectivism, high on uncertainty avoidance and low on power distance. The following graph portrays the scores:

This graph illustrates the similarity of all respondents on the three cultural variables (the last three), as well as the similarity of the women from all three countries on the personal characteristics (the first three) and the differences between the women and the students on the personal characteristics. These results support the contention that cultural values in the three countries are essentially the same, as well as the hypothesis that successful professional women, compared to the norm, will have a high self esteem, and internal locus of control, and a high need for achievement.

**Study 2 – Caribbean Cultural Values**

This second study was designed to measure cultural values in selected countries in the English speaking Caribbean, to compare the cultural value profiles in the selected countries, to relate the value profiles to “cultural antecedents”, such as history, ethnicity, the economy, and language; and to explore the findings in terms of management issues (Punnett, 2003)
These measures of cultural values, and comparisons of value profiles among countries, helps specify the values that are likely to be important in the workplace, and this provides a basis for suggesting effective management practices for the region. Understanding the relationship between the cultural values and cultural antecedents helps explain why certain cultural values may exist in the Caribbean region, and locates the results of this study into the larger body of literature that has examined cultural values and the factors that influence values.

The English speaking Caribbean has been influenced by a variety of factors which may contribute to a somewhat unique cultural value profile, which in turn is likely to influence the management practices that are effective. Some similarities and differences in the region are:

- The island states of the English speaking Caribbean are small countries with developing economies; however, there is substantial variation among the islands in terms of per capita GDP and economic growth.
- The states were, until relatively recently, British colonies with a consequent British influence; but, with the exception of Barbados, they changed hands among the British, French and Spanish and retain remnants of the influence of all three former colonial powers.
- A large percentage of the population in all the island states is of African origin, descendents of slaves brought to the West Indies to work the plantations; however, the ethnic mix varies from island to island, with larger Indian, Chinese, or Syrian/Lebanese populations in some locations.

The ethnic, economic, historical, and language factors briefly identified suggest that the English speaking countries may share cultural values, related to shared influences, but also that there may be differences among the countries, due to the variations. Specifically, in the three countries – Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad & Tobago (T&T) - included in this study we find the following:

**Shared Influences** - All are English speaking and democracies, with systems of education and law based on British systems. Christianity is the predominant religion. They have been independent since the 1960s and are classified by the United Nations as upper level developing economies.

**Variations** – Barbados was never a French or Spanish colony while both Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica have Spanish influences. The people in Barbados and Jamaica are predominantly of African origin (91% in Jamaica and 80% in Barbados) while Trinidad has a larger East Indian population (46% East Indian and 40% African). Barbados has a somewhat larger European population (4%) than the other two (less than 1%). Trinidad and Jamaica also have people of Chinese and Syrian or Lebanese descent. The ethnic mix is reflected in a greater mix of religions in T&T. Barbados’ Gross Domestic Product (GDP)/capita, adjusted for Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) is US$11,200 compared to US$8,500 in T&T and US$3,350 in Jamaica. Barbados and T&T have experienced
economic growth of about 5% in recent years while Jamaica’s economy has declined by about 1%.

The British influence suggests the cultural values in these countries may be similar to other English speaking (Anglo) societies. Anglo societies have been described as individualistic, achievement oriented, competitive, mastering nature, favoring equality, and open to change. In contrast to this profile developing (poorer) societies have been described as more collective, less achievement-oriented, less competitive, subordinated to nature, incorporating greater differentials in power, and less open to change. Anglo countries in Hofstede’s (1980) sample were very high on individualism, moderately low or low on uncertainty avoidance and power distance, and moderately high on masculinity. Developing countries, in general, were low on individualism, moderately high on uncertainty avoidance and power distance, and mixed (moderately low/high) on masculinity. These profiles can be used to examine anglo influences in the English-speaking Caribbean compared to economic development influences.

The islands of the English speaking Caribbean share a history of colonialism and plantation-based economies, initially with absentee landlords (Lindo, 1995). This history is generally believed to have contributed to a management style that is top down, authoritarian, hierarchical, control and punishment oriented, and lacking in trust - what would be described as a “Theory X” management style (McGregor, 1960). The question has been raised, however, as to whether this management style is effective in the current environment. In a recent study, Garvey (in preparation) describes the Jamaican management “psyche” as based on status, lack of trust and control, and she attributes Jamaica’s lack of export success to this psyche. Carter’s 1997 study of Jamaican workers concluded that current management practices in Jamaica were de-motivating to workers. One can speculate that while employees are seeking independence, responsibility, trust, and autonomy, managers are providing the reverse - it may be that management practices in the English speaking Caribbean, based on historical influences, are contrary to what would be effective today, based on employees current values. Empirical evidence of cultural values in the region will be helpful in determining what management style is likely to be most effective.

This study measured a series of cultural dimensions using the Cultural Perspectives Questionnaire. This measure was selected as an alternative to the Hofstede Value Survey for several reasons. The Hofstede model has been both widely used and widely criticized (for example, Chandry and Williams, 1994; Maznevski et al., 1997; Punnett and Withane, 1990; Yeh and Lawrence, 1995) Concerns have also been raised about the meaning of individualism, and the uni-dimensional, bipolar nature of the Hofstede scales - ie, collectivism at one end, and individualism at the other, feminine at one extreme and masculine at the other. One alternative that in some respects overcame these concerns was the Cultural Perspectives Questionnaire (CPQ) based on Kluckhohn and Strotbeck's (1961) value orientations emanating from their anthropological work. Maznevski and DiStefano (1995) had developed and tested an instrument for measuring the cultural

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1 Ethnic and economic figures are from the CIA Fact Book internet website, March 6, 2001.
orientations proposed by Kluckhohn and Strotbeck, and it was felt this instrument would provide additional insights into the English speaking Caribbean cultural value set.

**The Cultural Instrument**

The CPQ focuses on four dimensions (relationships among people, relationship with the environment, view of human nature, and people’s activity base) and the culturally-preferred responses within each of these dimensions. Cultures all respond to each of these dimensions, they may respond in a variety of ways, and most interestingly, they may exhibit high scores on different responses (e.g. individualist and collectivist at the same time). The dimensions are, thus, not uni-dimensional and bipolar, but multi-faceted. Responses to each dimension are described as follows (see Maznevski et al., 1997, for details):

**Relationships** - responses can be individualistic, colineal, and hierarchical. Individual” suggests that our main responsibility is to and for ourselves and our immediate family. Colineal suggests responsibility to and for a larger group, such as the extended family or work group. Hierarchy suggests power and responsibility unequally distributed with power and responsibility for others going hand in hand.

**Environment** - responses can be subjugation, mastery, and harmony with the environment. Subjugation indicates that it is natural to follow a predetermined path and obey forces around us. Mastery indicates that we can control nature and our environment. Harmony indicates a need to maintain the balance of forces in the world around us.

**Human Nature** - responses can indicate that humans are basically good or evil or that they are changeable. Good suggests that people are to be trusted, evil that people are inherently bad and not to be trusted. Changeable indicates that people's basic nature is neither good nor evil, but can change.

**Activity** - responses can be doing, being, and thinking/controlling. Doing implies a preference for activity. Being implies a reference for spontaneity and reactions based on emotion. Thinking/controlling implies a preference for rational thinking before acting.

All responses will be found in all societies, but a different rank order is likely, indicating a preference for certain responses. The CPQ measures each response category using a series of statements (for example, "people tend to think of themselves first before they think of others" contributes to the individual aspect of relationships) with a seven point Likert scale response from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. As the quoted statement indicates, statements are about society at large, not about an individual’s personal preference. Maznevski & DiSteffano (1995) and Maznevski et al. (1997) report acceptable psychometric properties for a cross-cultural instrument in the developmental stages.

The objective of this study was to describe the cultural value profiles found in the three countries, and to compare value profiles to identify similarities and differences. In addition, we wanted to relate the cultural value profile to cultural antecedents. We used
Anglo influences and economic influences to develop alternative value profiles with which we could compare the profiles identified in the three countries, as follows:

**Relationships** - developing societies are generally described as more hierarchical and collective whereas Anglo societies are described as very individualistic. An economic influence would thus mean respondents should favor hierarchical and collective solutions; an Anglo influence would mean respondents should favor individualistic solutions.

**Environment** - developing societies have been described as believing in divine will - subjugation to nature, while Anglo societies have been described as believing in master of nature ("Man conquers mountain" headline in the English press when Sir Edmund Hilary reached the summit of Mt. Everest, according to Adler, 1996). An economic influence would thus mean respondents should favor subjugation; an Anglo influence would mean respondents favor mastery.

**Human Nature** - developing societies are described as seeing human nature in relatively simple terms, as either good or evil; whereas Adler (1996) describes North Americans as generally seeing people as more changeable – we believe this would be the case in Anglo societies more broadly. An economic influence would thus mean respondents would favor a good or evil view of human nature; an Anglo influence would mean respondents favor a view of human nature as changeable.

**Activity** - developing societies are described as basing decisions intuition and what seems emotionally right – ie, being oriented; western societies, including Anglo societies are more oriented towards a rational basis for decisions – ie, thinking/controlling; and Adler (1996) describes Americans as doing oriented – we believe this would also be the case for Anglo societies more broadly. An economic influence would thus mean that respondents would favor being; an Anglo influence would mean respondents favor a doing or thinking/controlling.

Contrasting profiles are as follows:

**SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESIZED PROFILES:**
**DEVELOPING COUNTRY VS ‘ANGLO’ COUNTRY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Dimension</th>
<th>Hypothesized Profile for Developing Country</th>
<th>Hypothesized Profile for Anglo Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationships</strong></td>
<td>Hierarchical/Collective</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
<td>Subjugation/Harmony</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Nature</strong></td>
<td>Good or Evil (unchangeable)</td>
<td>Changeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity</strong></td>
<td>Being</td>
<td>Thinking/Doing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of this study provided the following profile for the three countries:
1 – Individual, 2 – Colineal, 3 – Hierarchical; 4 – Subjugation, 5 – Mastery, 6 – Harmony; 
7 – Unchangeable, 8 – Changeable; 9 – Doing, 10 – Being, 11 - Thinking

The value profile for the three countries was essentially identical, and scores for the three countries were very highly correlated (Jamaica & Barbados and Barbados & T&T 0.96, Jamaica & T&T 0.97). This supports the contention that cultural value profiles in the three countries are very alike. The countries are relatively high on individual and colineal values and lower on hierarchy (both influences), they are low on subjugation and high on harmony and mastery (both economic development and anglo influences), see people as both unchangeable and changeable (both influences), highest on thinking, relatively high on doing, and lower on being (anglo influence). Overall, this suggests that both anglo influences and economic development influences have been important in shaping the cultural values in the Caribbean region.

**Study 3 – Ford Foundation**

The third study (funded by the Ford Foundation) was a multi-method, multi-sample study. Most of the data collection took place over approximately two years (2000-2002). The study included discussion groups, interviews, and surveys, and respondents included Senior Managers (SM), Human Resource Managers (HRM), and students, from Barbados, Jamaica, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines (SVG). The study investigated aspects of management activities, management style, cultural values, and personality.
characteristics. The study considered the degree to which management follows patterns described as typical of the developing world, and the degree to which current management practices appear to relate to the region’s history. This paper reports only on a portion of the study – the cultural characteristics described by interviewees.

A total of fifty-six interviews were conducted. Thirty of these were with SMs, 7 in Barbados, 10 in Jamaica, and 13 in SVG; twenty-six were HRMs, 8 in Barbados, 11 in Jamaica (one training officer was included in this sample), and 7 in SVG. Interviews were developed and pre-tested in Barbados by the core group of researchers. Research assistants were trained by the principal researcher, and conducted the interviews. Interviewees were asked to rate each country on several cultural dimensions, which encompass both the values identified by Hofstede and those identified by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck. Scores are reported in the following table (scores range from 1 to 10).

**Mean Scores on Cultural Value Dimensions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Value Dimension</th>
<th>Barbados</th>
<th>Jamaica</th>
<th>SVG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group (low) vs. individual</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchy/power/equality (low) vs. inequality</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>6.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of life (low) vs. success</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male/female roles - rigid (low) vs. fluid</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty/risk avoidance (low) vs. acceptance</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing (low) vs. being</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores for the three countries are somewhat similar. If we compare the profiles using a correlation, Barbados and Jamaica are very alike (0.90), Jamaica and SVG are quite similar (0.72), and Barbados and SVG are similar (0.58). Statistically this indicates that they all come from the same population.

**Discussion of Results of Cultural Studies**
The successful professional women study, the Caribbean cultural values study, and the Ford Foundation study all measured cultural values empirically. The regional comparisons suggest that cultural values across the English-speaking countries studied are more similar than different. The shared antecedents have likely resulted in underlying values that do not differ dramatically. Nevertheless, there remains a sense of variation from one island country to another. Perhaps one can argue that the underlying values are alike, but the outward expression can differ. In a sense this is like the language that we speak. In all the islands creole is spoken, and there are underlying similarities in the various creoles, because of their common roots, nevertheless the Bajan accent is different from the Jamaican, and sometimes a Bajan has difficulty understanding a Jamaican and vice versa.
Overall, when one looks at the cultural comparisons from the three cultural studies presented here, the following emerges as typical of respondents in these studies:

- Respondents are both collective and individualistic.
- Respondents view hierarchies and power differences negatively.
- Respondents believe in equal opportunities for all.
- Respondents are confident in their ability to deal with external forces but also want to work with these forces.
- Responses do not feel subjugated by external forces.
- Respondents prefer certainty to uncertainty and are not risk takers.
- Respondents believe that some people can change their behaviour from good to bad and vice versa, but that others cannot.
- Respondents are thinkers and doers, but acting on the basis of emotion is also important.

Insofar as a cultural value profile can be described as positive, this profile certainly would be so described from a business perspective. Virtually all of the words are words that would apply to a desirable employee. The possible exception is the strong preference for certainty, which may limit the likelihood of innovation and creativity.

**Study 4 – Decision Making**

The fourth study is part of a larger, global study which looks at decision making and the sources that managers use in making decisions. This study is quite different from the previous three, because it does not deal with cultural values, but rather with behaviours, which may be the result of cultural values. The instrument consists of several scenarios (for example, hiring a new employee) and asks respondents to identify from a list which sources they are most likely to use in reaching a decision. Peterson, Smith et al. (2003) discuss the results from a wide array of countries. Included among the countries are Barbados and Jamaica.
**SOME EMPIRICAL DATA ON DECISION MAKING**

What sources do people use more/less for making decisions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Barbados</th>
<th>Jamaica</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Formal Rules</em></td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>41 (2)</td>
<td>40 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Unwritten Rules</em></td>
<td>18 (5)</td>
<td>45 (1)</td>
<td>21.5 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Specialists</em></td>
<td>22.5 (4)</td>
<td>27 (4)</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Subordinates</em></td>
<td>32 (2)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Co-workers</em></td>
<td>28 (3)</td>
<td>29 (3)</td>
<td>25 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Superior</em></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Own Experience</em></td>
<td>36.5 (1)</td>
<td>23 (5)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Societal Beliefs</em></td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28.5 (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The higher the score the more important the source

The results for Barbados and Jamaica are presented above and compared to those for the United Kingdom (numbers in brackets are rankings). The top two rankings in Barbados are written rules and unwritten rules. The top two for Jamaica are superiors and written rules. It is striking that the scores for these sources are over 40, and the score for the third-ranked source in both Barbados and Jamaica drops to 29. This suggests that the first two sources are especially important to managers in these countries. It is interesting that both countries rely heavily on written rules for making decisions. Barbados, however, appears to be especially rule-bound with unwritten rules being almost as important as the written rules. Jamaica backs up written rules by turning to a superior. The United Kingdom, in contrast relies very little on rules or superiors. Most important in the United Kingdom were personal experience and subordinates.

Statistically, if the profiles of the three countries are compared, using all of the categories, there is a high negative correlation between the UK and Jamaica (-0.78), a small negative correlation between the UK and Barbados (-0.04) and no correlation in either direction between Barbados and Jamaica. If subsets of questions are considered, the picture is different, with a number of positive correlations for Barbados and Jamaica, and negative ones for each of those relative to the United Kingdom. For example, if the first five categories are used, Barbados and Jamaica are 0.63 while the UK and Jamaica are -0.71 and the UK and Barbados are -0.87. Of course, there are some subsets where this is not the case – if the last three categories are used, then the UK and Barbados have a high positive correlation (0.84) while the UK and Jamaica have a negative correlation.
(-0.85) and the Barbados and Jamaica have a negative correlation (-0.44).

A focus on the sources where Barbados and Jamaica are most alike, and most different from the UK (formal rules, subordinates, and own experience) provides an insightful comparison. Correlating only these three categories, we find the Barbados and Jamaica profile essentially identical (0.99), and both entirely different from the UK (-0.96 and -0.98 for Barbados and Jamaica respectively). Because this study focuses on behaviour rather than cultural values, it is valuable to consider how these behaviours might relate to cultural characteristics.

One can hypothesize that the colonial influence of the United Kingdom could have resulted in all three countries being similar. An alternative hypothesis, however, is that colonial status implies very different decision making styles for the colony from that of the colonial master. The second hypothesis is supported by these results. These results suggest that for colonies, it was important to follow the rules and defer to superiors. Following the rules would have been rewarded, whereas innovation and creativity would have been discouraged. To the extent that people in the colonies internalized these values, it is not surprising that their behaviours reflect this.

**Discussion – Decision Making and Cultural Values**

Consider the fourth study in the context of the cultural profile identified - it seems likely that the emphasis on rules in Barbados, and rules and superiors in Jamaica, are likely related to a preference for certainty. Uncertainty can be limited if one has rules to follow or if one can refer to one’s superiors, if there is any uncertainty. Equally, the low score of Barbados and Jamaica on using subordinates also reflects this. Subordinates are likely uncomfortable, because of their preference for certainty, in being involved in decisions, and their bosses will feel that they have little to contribute to ensuring that the right decision is made.

This fear of uncertainty may also have resulted in a management style in the Caribbean which perpetuates many of the aspects of the colonial days. That is, the top down, authoritarian style that assumes that those at the top know best, and that those at lower levels should accept instructions and simply follow them. Unfortunately, this management style seems in conflict with the rest of the cultural profile identified previously. Low power distance, mastery and harmony over external forces, both collective and individual, doers and thinkers – these all describe employees who want to participate in decision making and can make a valuable contribution if given the opportunity.

The challenge for managers in today’s globally competitive environment is to ensure that they make the best possible use of all their resources, especially their human resources. Many successful companies encourage participation and innovation and creativity as a means to capitalize on their human resources. This is particularly a challenge in the region, given the management style described here, and the wish to avoid uncertainty. If managers can find ways to use the cultural profile described to encourage employees to participate and innovate, while avoiding a feeling of exposure to risk, they may find that
their employees’ performance improves substantially. For example, participative decision making can be introduced gradually, and managers have to ensure that participation is rewarded, and if employees make mistakes, they are coached into appropriate decisions, rather than punished.

The underlying similarity of the cultural values, combined with surface distinctions, among the countries has interesting implications for business and management. The similarity suggests that people in the region are likely to respond in comparable ways to the same stimuli – ie, they will be motivated by analogous factors, reactions (positive or negative) to products will be much the same, and so on. This implies that businesses can take a largely regional approach to product development, reward systems, training programmes, and so on. Businesses can use one country for tests, and interpret the results on a regional basis, and managers can adopt similar management styles throughout the region.

Although a regional strategy may be appropriate, the distinctions are also relevant. Effective managers will pay attention to the distinctions, and incorporate them into decisions. For example, a standardized product might be developed and sold throughout the region, but the advertising may have to be adapted to fit with the nationalistic preferences of each country. Buckley’s cough mixture is sold throughout the region, with essentially the same advertisement, but in each country, the country’s name is mentioned – so, for Barbados, the advertisement says something to the effect of “Bajans get coughs …”. Some local companies may have to adopt similar approaches to be effective.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH
A major limitation of all the studies is that the sample of respondents is limited to a rather select group. We cannot say that the cultural values identified in these studies would be found in the broader population. Studies need to be done in the wider population, and the research needs to be extended to other islands. These studies are also limited in terms of the value dimensions examined. There are other dimensions that should be considered. Studies need to be done to examine a wider array of variables. These studies do not specifically link cultural values and behaviour, and understanding this link is critical to understanding what is effective in terms of management practice. Laboratory and field experiments would be especially valuable in understanding these relationships, and effective practices.

There has been relatively little empirical management research in the region, and consequently the opportunities for valuable research, which answers important questions are almost limitless. Management academics in the region should work closely with their management counterparts to ensure that research is both academically rigourous and practical from a management perspective.
REFERENCES


