

**Appendix P: Table 5.10 Stories Reflecting Aspects of the Organizational Culture of Company X in Relation to the 4 Major Cross-cultural Referenced Studies**

<p><b>Cross-cultural Research and Story Excerpt</b></p> <p><b>1. Power Distance (<u>high</u>) (Hofstede et al, 2010; GLOBE (House et al, 2004) Achievement versus <u>Ascription</u> (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1998) <u>Traditional</u> (WVS, Ingelhardt, 2011)</b></p>
<p><b>Egypt Stories</b></p>
<p><i>'The .... director told me that I should fill any gaps that occur in the project... (I) decided to take the initiative that would prevent a potential problem happening if it got overlooked. The next day I received an angry email from the person, who was responsible for taking action complaining that I should not interfere, it wasn't my responsibility... When I replied to explain that I took the action to prevent a potential mistake and that was the important thing to consider, not who is responsible. He replied with another angry email informing me that it was not appropriate for me to comment on how someone should respond...The situation changed dramatically as soon as this manager found out that I was given the 'green light' to take the initiative by the .... director. He told me that if the ... director had told me to take the initiative then it was absolutely fine to have done what I did, no problem at all. So I concluded that it's not about what you do, it's all about who has permission to use power and authority.'</i> 01:S02</p>
<p><i>'It would be unforgivable to tell my boss 'I can't go because I don't know anything about this project'. He would simply tell me, we can't tell the client we are not going to meet him because the project manager is absent, someone has to meet the client, so get ready to meet him. Even if the person responsible is absent someone else is sent in his place, we can't possibly ever suggest postponing the meeting until the right person is available.'</i> 01:S03</p>
<p><i>'He (project manager) seemed to blame me by telling me I should have made sure this ....office upgrades to the software – which obviously it's beyond my role to even consider asking the IT Manager to do this. He is considered a successful manager as he has a track record of bringing in big sales for the company, so he is very confident about how he manages teams as he is backed up by the senior management'.</i> 05:S01</p>
<p><i>'He referred to my line manager (more senior in age) and asked for his opinion, which wasn't in agreement with my suggestion. So the structural engineer ignored my suggestion and listened to my manager, which turned out to be a mistake later on in the project.... This shows you that age and seniority of rank are highly respected in my culture.'</i> 06:S02</p>
<p><i>'Several years ago, which I remember to this day, I asked my manager if I could add on two days leave without pay. He out rightly rejected the request even after I told him it was for a very important reasons.... He didn't give me an explanation; I just had to accept his decision, however to this day I still wonder why he refused.'</i> 09:S01</p>
<p><i>'About five years ago I sent an email of thanks and appreciation to my team for achieving a major project. I copied in some heads of department and directors (who were involved in some way with the project). You can't imagine the reaction from the senior management; it was like a world war.....the senior managers told me I had no right to send such emails as I wasn't in a position that allowed me to do such things.'</i> 11:S01</p>
<p><i>'The prevalent management style here depends on position management. A manager could be wrong in his decision and he might be aware of that &amp; insist on sticking to that rather than admit he's made a mistake. Just now I faced a situation where I was told by my manager to reject the recommended procedure to submit the design for further checks in response to my email suggesting the design should go for further checking. He told me I was not to initiate such actions as it is beyond my role as it must come from him. He expects me to indirectly reject the idea of submitting the design for further checks, even though I don't agree. It's an example of using team members as scapegoats and keeping their (managers') image as being experts in the profession so that other departments refer directly to the senior dept manager rather than the team.'</i> 11:S02</p>
<p><i>'When it came to my turn I said that if the company wanted to achieve these future projects successfully &amp; keep its market position among the top ...firms in the world it needed to invest heavily in training....that everyone at every level needed training &amp; that we needed a more proactive approach to winning business in the future. There needed to be a clear strategy for winning future business. My comments were not welcomed by the director or senior managers'.</i> 11:S03</p>
<p><i>'There are occasions in which I am given aspects of a project to work on which are not explained nor is the background to the actual project. The manager doesn't provide any guidance which makes me feel confused &amp; unclear as to how to achieve a good outcome. The lack of direction &amp; support makes it difficult to feel motivated.'</i> 12:S01</p>

<i>'..in the Middle East managers have a reluctance to listen to their subordinates, furthermore they don't like to hear criticism of anything they represent or are responsible for.'</i> 14:S02
<i>'..really shows the difference in culture between Egypt and the West...the owner of the (USA) company, walking around the office with a trash trolley collecting up trash...If that had happened here , in Egypt, it's unlikely he would have been considered a leader; staff would probably just say he was a humble man.'</i> 15:S01
<i>'I asked him (my manager) to attend the meeting with me... to give it more credibility...I knew I wouldn't be taken seriously be since this generation especially those with military background) has it firmly instilled in them that younger people couldn't possibly know more than their elders.. I changed tactics immediately...The idea was simple; they would easily accept a point raised by one of their age group, but hardly accept the same point if it was raised by a much younger person'.</i> 17:S01
<i>One time I had to take time off because of an operation. I told my manager about it as I would be in hospital for several days and wouldn't be able to go to work until I was fully recovered. He told me that I shouldn't go to the hospital until I finished the work allocated to me. I was shocked that he expected me to put work before my health. He also told me that he would arrange to give me a company laptop so that I could work remotely from the hospital. He is a totally authoritarian manager concerned about getting the work done.'</i> 18:S01
<i>'My colleague and I had arranged to attend a meeting with a senior manager from another department. Although we weren't directly involved in the topic of the meeting we wanted to offer our support and contribute to finding a solution. At the outset I asked him (the senior manager) a question to which he reacted in a very negative way – asking.... "who do you think you are?". If I had been a senior manager that particular manager wouldn't have reacted like that.. hierarchal status is respected here despite the negative impact it can have.'</i> 18:S02
<b>UK Stories</b>
<i>'I had been expecting to get promoted, so my expectations were quite different to the outcome of the appraisal meeting. There is a lack of regular monitoring and communication between managers and their subordinates.'</i> 26:S01
<i>'X joined the team (as) a manager who didn't last long. X had been recruited to take up a post in Z (a Middle East country), however within 6 months he had fallen foul of the director there. Prior to that he was sent to Y (a Middle East country) and only lasted a few hours there as the director in Y sent him back. Ultimately, he was terminated. Relationships with...directors are critical for senior managers to succeed and this was a case of poor communication.'</i> 26:S02
<i>'I noticed a distinct difference in culture head office seemed much more formal and hierarchical. I didn't know anyone in the office and didn't know the Middle East at all; fortunately one of the directors who is based in the UK office was also in the Middle East office at the same time. I was used to a less formal work environment, than what appeared to be the case in the Middle East office, so when it came to lunch time I asked him if he wanted to go out for lunch. This was viewed as strange ...firstly because I was on first name terms and secondly because it seemed normal for me to go to lunch with colleagues, managers alike, but far from normal in this office.'</i> 37:S01
<b>2. <u>Survival</u> (WVS, Inglehardt, 2011)</b>
<b>Egypt Stories</b>
<i>'..even my team members didn't fully appreciate the gesture as they generally prefer to keep a low profile; it makes them feel safer than to be highlighted in some way.'</i> 11: S01
<i>'..my manager took me aside and told me if I want to be successful in the company I need to... (give) feedback behind closed doors; don't make any comments about anyone or talk about the future.'</i> 11:S03
<b>3. <u>Neutral vs Emotional</u> (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998)</b>
<i>'I decided to make up for the lack of resources and avoid being late (for the project deadline) by working overnight. I did it on two occasions. Ms X (a subordinate) found out that I had worked overnight and she said she felt really bad, so she came in at the weekend, to try to make it up in some way.'</i> 06:S01
<i>'The head of department took it (my feedback) personally and felt very offended'... He took it as if I was attacking him and saying he failed to do his job properly.'</i> 11:S03
<i>'Here we depend a lot on emotional management. There are several cases in which underperforming employees are allowed to carry on working without any corrective action.'</i> 13:S01
<i>'He did this to soften the reaction of the senior managers and appeal to their expertise rather than the emotional defensive response.'</i> 14:S02
<b>UK Stories</b>
<i>'There seems to be a paternalistic management approach in the Middle East offices. I was in a meeting in a Middle East office..... with a director when one of his team burst in and started explaining something to the director in a</i>

very emotional way...I surmised that the guy had some problem of a personal nature, which was bringing him close to tears. The director managed to placate him and seemed to be offering him some advice and support.... in the UK we wouldn't volunteer advice to our subordinates on personal matters.... however in this particular instance it seemed that X (the director) was totally comfortable in his role of 'advisor'. That shows how our cultures are quite different. 23:S01

**4. Sequential vs Synchronous Time (Trompenaars and , Hampden-Turner, 1998)**

**Egypt Stories**

'Here in Egypt I am asked to work hard by working more hours In the USA, I was asked to work smart, meaning how to make my job easier... using the right tools.' 15:S03

**UK Stories**

'There was one particularly challenging project that myself and a team were working on & I noticed the Project Manager (PM) found it difficult to manage – he just couldn't control it. This impacted on the team directly as we ended up working round the clock.' 19:S01

'I was sent off to Egypt to work with the team, who were exhausted from the excessive hours of work they had put in. The deliverables were far too ambitious and what added to the stress of the whole project was that the client didn't really understand what they wanted. There was a lack of clarity of the goals and roles and responsibilities of everyone who was managing & coordinating.' 21:S01

'It was around Christmas time and I was working on a proposal which I was told in no uncertain terms I had to finish by the deadline, despite the fact I had booked 2 weeks annual leave... It's not unusual to have to cut short holidays to fly to projects or work at weekends – that's what's expected.' 24:S01

**5. Universalism versus Particularism (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998)**

**Egypt Stories**

'the new employer(Company X) agreed to extend the joining date..... This was an unusual situation for the new company (employer) to consider, however it was agreed as part of my joining conditions.' 07:S01

'There is a manager who has been promoted to a senior position despite the fact that he is not qualified for the post. It's an accepted fact that his ex-peers know he only got the promotion due to his connections.' 08:S02

**UK Stories**

'A few years ago the company put an advertisement to recruit staff in the local press in X (a Middle East country). On this particular occasion the company name was not included in the advertisement. Apparently 75% of the local staff sent their CVs in response. That was quite a shock to everyone concerned. In response the company did review salaries and make some other adjustments to the remuneration policy in that particular office.' 23:S02

**6. Specific versus Diffuse (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998)**

**UK Stories**

'On the X project there was a basic lack of coordination & lack of management. I got dropped in to it on return from leave. I was sent off to Egypt to work with the team, who were exhausted from the excessive hours of work they had put in. The deliverables were far too ambitious & what added to the stress of the whole project was that the client didn't really understand what they wanted. There was a lack of clarity of the goals & roles & responsibilities of everyone who was managing & coordinating.' 21:S01

'We work in a contradictory work environment. We were working on a project in the GCC Region and we should do all the design work as the lead team – we take the initiative. But issues started to be made by (head) office and they started interfering in the design and making changes to the design without consulting us. They then went ahead and did the presentation to the client. The presentation failed to highlight many aspects as the head office team was unable to justify some key design points. The project lost credibility in the client's eyes as the head office team wasn't able to explain some key design aspects sufficiently. The general perception in the company is that there are too many bosses to respond/report to and we can lose sight of the project deliverables as a result of that.' 27:S01

'Their roles were never made clear so it seemed that there was a lot of treading on each other's toes. The project manager became almost obsolete as his way of managing the project was very different to how the senior of the (UK) office approached things and he tended to dominate and he micro managed a big part of the work due to his expertise in certain areas.' 29:S01

**7. Uncertainty Avoidance, (Hofstede et al, 2010); GLOBE, (House et al, 2004)**

**Egypt Stories**

'He (my manager) said the idea was to keep them (junior engineers) focused on a set of tasks and not deviate from that blueprint. He also added that growth and development of subordinates was not the focus nor will it be in the

<i>future.</i> 04:S01
<b>8. Individualism <u>Communitarism</u> (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) <u>Collectivism (ii)</u> (GLOBE, (House et al, 2004)</b>
<b>Egypt Stories</b>
<i>'When I asked one of the underperforming staff why they don't make more effort the reply was that they know his job is secure and his manager will never tell him to leave as this would be an inhuman thing to do – to make him unemployed when he has family responsibilities.'</i> 13:S01
<i>'There are several cases in which underperforming employees are allowed to carry on working without corrective action... his job is secure and his manager will never tell him to leave as this would be an inhuman thing to do, to make him unemployed when he has family responsibilities.'</i> 13:S01
<b>UK Stories</b>
<i>'When the new employment contracts were sent to us from headquarters there was one particular clause that we took exception to. It stated that all employees were expected to be committed to the company at all times. That I thought was a telling statement. I responded by saying that they could expect me to be fully committed during working hours; however outside of that – it wasn't going to happen.'</i> 22:S01
<b>9. <u>Masculinity/Femininity</u> (Hofstede, et al, 2010) <u>Gender Egalitarianism (low)</u> (GLOBE, House et al, 2004)</b>
<b>UK Stories</b>
<i>'You will not find as many women working in the company as there should be as it's a company that doesn't give enough consideration to working mothers. Last year X who has a small child &amp; husband, was given very little advanced notice about a project she had to be involved in that required her to travel to Egypt for several months...it was quite a hectic lifestyle. There are a lot of short notice travel plans that get made here, so if you have family commitments you are unlikely to be so easily available'. 29:S03</i>
<i>'There is discrimination between genders which is immediately obvious when you look at the list of directors, they are all men. My colleagues &amp; I sometimes talk about what prospects there are for any of us women to have a career here....There was a case of a female colleague who was due for promotion, however she it was delayed for quite some time. When she did eventually get promoted it was at the same time as a male colleague was promoted.... So that was a very obvious message that men are preferred to women in management.'</i> 36:S01
Legend: <u>underline</u> indicates the aspect of the cultural dimension highlighted in the Stories Story codes: First 2 digits: 01 – 18= Egyptian interviewees; First 2 digits: 19 -37 = UK interviewees