

Women Entrepreneurs' Socio-cultural Characteristics: Applying the Hofstede Model to Entrepreneurs in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

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This article aims to investigate the socio-cultural dimensions of entrepreneurship as one aspect of achieving women's economic empowerment. A case-study research approach was used by applying Hofstede's Cultural Model. The study has followed the descriptive approach through analysing questionnaire data. The important findings of this paper were: 1) that the UAE encourages women's entrepreneurship, which resulted in an increase of 48.3%; 2) the UAE is achieving progress in this field; and 3) the third and most important result was that women entrepreneurs in the UAE tend to have a high masculinity and collectivity, and score medium in the other two indicators: power distance and uncertainty avoidance. One limitation of the study was the indirect relationship with the respondents, as the Ajman Businesswomen Council in the United Arab Emirates sent it to them directly, as they consider it top secret data that cannot be shared with anyone. The results of this study would contribute to the formation and support of organisational culture in both governmental and private institutions in Gulf societies. There is very limited literature on assessing business-women's role in the UAE based on field work, apart from the new result that disproves what Hofstede suggested about Arab countries.

Keywords: *Socio-cultural Dimensions, Entrepreneurship, Hofstede Model, Empowering Women Economically, United Arab Emirates*

Introduction

Global interest in women entrepreneurs has been growing (Marlow & McAdam, 2013; Marlow et al., 2009) as the number of women entrepreneurs increases and women-owned businesses continue to contribute to employment creation and the development and growth of local economies (Gender Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2011a; Verheul et al., 2006). However, much of this interest remains largely in Western, Anglo-Saxon contexts such as the UK and the USA (Al-Dajani & Marlow, 2010), focusing mostly on the study of opportunities and modes of organising (Busenitz et al., 2003) or networking formation (Watson, 2012), and less so on analysing the environments in which entrepreneurship occurs. Moreover, while current studies have recognised heterogeneity amongst entrepreneurial motivations (Ulhaner & Thurik, 2007; Verheul et al., 2006), many unanswered questions remain regarding the impact of macro national social values and cultural traditions (Al-Dajani & Marlow, 2010; Roomi, 2013; Zahra & Wright, 2011) and gendered social forces (Brush et al., 2009; Diaz Garcia & Welter, 2011; Loscocco & Bird, 2012) on motivations for entrepreneurship. In particular, the existing literature lacks empirical evidence on the unfolding of entrepreneurial motives within the context of women's lives and their work-family interface (Jennings & McDougald, 2007). In its current state, the existing literature has not fully explored the entrepreneurial motives of women entrepreneurs in the context of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries within the larger developing Arab Middle East (AME) region. This study adopted the definition that "Culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" (Hofstede, 2011). In the mid-eighties of the last century, when the "Gender and Development" approach was launched at the Nairobi Conference in 1985, which was launched from an integrated perspective of the contribution of women to development, emphasising women's non-commodity production and refusing to divide the work of women between private and public spheres. Hence, this study focuses on the socio-cultural dimensions in an Arab country following the Hofstede model and comparing the results to his results in the Arab world.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based upon the discussion of socio-cultural dimensions of entrepreneurship and its' role in achieving women's economic empowerment, and theoretical orientations of the "Sociology of Entrepreneurship" and the "Socio-cultural Dimensions Model of Geert Hofstede", and the sociological background for women's economic empowerment that proceeds from 1) the approaches of "Sustainable Human Development"; 2) "Women in Development"; and 3) "Women and Development".



First: Sociology of Entrepreneurship

The entrepreneurial approach emerged from the early sociologists, Durkheim and Karl Marx, where Durkheim in the “division of social work” pointed out the importance of economic activity within the social context, emphasising the role of division of labour and the resulting mechanisms for cooperation in economic institutions and the impact of it on the community. Raymond Aron analysed entrepreneurship through Marx’s socio-economic thinking, in the convergence of the entrepreneurial and capitalist directives, both working on accumulating capital in a capitalist society with exploitative economic functions. Joseph Schumpeter agreed with Aron, who determined its characteristics to be; innovation and creativity, and defined the entrepreneur as the creative individual and the primary driver of economic development, while Karl Marx disagreed (Bouguerra & Rahmani, 2017, p. 96).

Entrepreneurship emerged as a solution to the social and economic crisis that resulted in a high unemployment rate. It became a socio-economic institution with new roles, adding social roles to its economic functions (Al-Tayeb, 2011, pp. 64-65), and all this within the context that contains all these capabilities and embodied in "Culture" (Zayed, 2011, p. 247).

Second: The Sociocultural Dimensions Model of Geert Hofstede

“Hofstede's Cultural Model” defines culture as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes members of one group from others, which is clearly expressed in the different values of people (Hofstede, 1995, p. 207). He assumed that there are “mentality programs” developed in the family and reinforced in schools and social formal and informal organisations. These programs contain components of national culture (Hofstede, 2013, p. 6), which are passed on to their economic institutions where they operate or manage, and are dominated by what he calls the “corporate culture”. Hofstede has identified six themes as indicators of cultural dimensions from which to judge the attitudes of individuals in society, for 40 countries, seven of them were Arab, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the Arab Emirates. These seven countries were surveyed both in 1969 and 1972, but when Hofstede tried to extend the country list in 1982. It turned out that IBM had not only inadvertently wiped the tape containing the raw survey data, but it had also destroyed the data printouts. The only data printouts that were saved pertained to the total region, so he was forced to treat these countries as one region, whereas he may have wanted to keep at least Egypt and Lebanon separate. This, according to Hofstede (2001, p. 52), made the region culturally less homogeneous than would be desirable. Baskerville (2005) noted that cultural homogeneity would be expected to be relatively low among Arabic-speaking countries, despite Hofstede’s claim that cultural homogeneity may be low among newer nations but not among the sample of nations analysed in his work. The total Arabic-speaking region had 141 IBM respondents, 79 in 1969 and 62 in 1972.

Six themes as follows:

Power Distance: is defined as “the extent to which the less powerful members of organisations and institutions accept and expect that power is distributed unequally.

Individualism vs. Collectivism: explores the “degree to which people in a society are integrated into groups.” Individualistic societies have loose ties that often only relate an individual to his/her immediate family. They emphasise the “I” versus the “we.” Its counterpart, collectivism, describes a society in which tightly-integrated relationships tie extended families and others into in-groups. These in-groups are suffused with strong loyalty and support each other when a conflict arises with another in-group.

Uncertainty Avoidance: is defined as “a society's tolerance for ambiguity”, in which people avoid or avert an unexpected event, unknown, or away from the status quo. It refers to individuals feeling uncomfortable with risk, risk aversion/hatred, and thus avoid it and avoid change.

Masculinity vs. Femininity: In this dimension, masculinity is defined as “a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material rewards for success.” Its counterpart represents “a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life.” Women in the respective societies tend to display different values. In feminine societies, they share modest and caring views equally with men. In more masculine societies, women are somewhat assertive and competitive, but notably less than men. In other words, they still recognise a gap between male and female values. This dimension is frequently viewed as taboo in highly masculine societies.

Long-Term Orientation vs. Short-Term Orientation: This dimension deals with the connection of the past with the current and future actions/challenges. A lower degree of this index (short-term) indicates that traditions are honoured and kept, while steadfastness is valued. Societies with a high degree in this index (long-term) view adaptation and circumstantial, pragmatic problem-solving as a necessity.

Indulgence vs. restraint: This dimension refers to the degree of freedom that societal norms give to citizens in fulfilling their human desires. Indulgence is defined as “a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun.” Its counterpart is defined as “a society that controls gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms”.

This study will work on the first five measures/indexes of Hofstede.

Third: The Sociological Approach to Women's Economic Empowerment

This article addresses the economic empowerment of women from the angle of intervention and action, as empowerment is a blueprint for action to achieve a specific result and goal. This is the most widely used methodology in recognising women as an active element in development, and thus seeks to eliminate all manifestations of discrimination against them, by providing tools that ensure the success of their self-reliant participation (Shomro et al. 2006, p. 32).

a. Sustainable Development

This is based on the definition of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987, p. 8) and “a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs” (WCED, 1987, p. 9)

b. Women and their Relation to Development

Approaches to women’s role in development have emerged from the recommendations of international conferences, which were based on the assumption of the negative impact of keeping women away from development efforts, and that their integration may make development activities more meaningful and effective. This approach (Women in Development WID) focused on productive aspects, ignoring family roles and socio-cultural context. Then came the Nairobi conference, as mentioned earlier. And this approach was replaced by the Gender and Development approach (GAD) (Bradshaw et al., 2013, pp. 3-4).

Methodology

The study depends on a multiple dimensional analysis, that uses Hofstede's cultural dimension Model by analysing entrepreneurship as a practice of economic empowerment and measuring its socio-cultural dimensions according to this model.

By using a quantitative methodology, 251 structured questionnaires/surveys were conducted with female entrepreneurs in UAE society, in addition to secondary data sources. The study depended on the three-Likert Scale, giving scores from 0 to 33 for rarely the first level; from 34 to 66 for the second level which sometimes answers; finally from 67 to 100 for the third level if the answer is always.

Thus, the study stems from the fact that women are partners in development, and that entrepreneurship is a pattern that integrates the social and economic dimensions. It is fused in the cultural context, and involves power distance, uncertainty, competition, independence in making a decision, managing projects, collective work, and deals with institutions as organisations and social entities, not only economic producing entities. The study applies five dimensions of the Hofstede six model. It also draws on a number of indicators of economic empowerment identified by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP Arab Human Development Report, 2005, p. 60):

- To achieve economic independence for women by providing funding, technical support, and administrative assistance to set up their projects;
- The self-reliance of women in the management of their projects, and having the right to take profits for herself and having the freedom of action in the project; and,
- Active and knowledgeable participation in the management of her family's affairs.

The study identified three indicators to measure the achievement of women's entrepreneurship for economic empowerment: 1) Including articles about women's entrepreneurship in-laws; 2) The ability of women to access and control resources; and 3) To achieve economic independence of women by providing funding, technical support and administrative assistance to set up special projects in different sectors to achieve change in the economic and social system.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Women entrepreneurs in the UAE community feel a high degree of inequality in power distance

Hypothesis 2: Women entrepreneurs in the UAE community are highly inclined/ tending to avoid uncertainty.

Hypothesis 3: Women entrepreneurs in UAE society prefer a high degree of collectivity rather than individuality.

Hypothesis 4: Women entrepreneurs in the UAE community are strong in performance (showing more Masculinity)

Hypothesis 5: Women entrepreneurs in the UAE community have a long-term view focusing on the future.

Hypothesis 6: Women's entrepreneurship leads to women's economic empowerment.



Literature Review

Many studies worked on Arab Culture in an international model, Hofstede study in 1980 (Hofstede, 1980) included seven Arab countries, as mentioned above. Trompenaars's study (Trompenaars, 1993) included 28 countries, five of them were Arab countries: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt, and Bahrain. Cassel and Blake's study (Cassel & Blake, 2011, p. 1054) the dimensions of Hofstede model were applied in Saudi Arabia. The study of Bjørn, (Bjørn, 1999, pp. 231-244), used an extended domain of national culture, which included 15 dimensions. In these models, the Arabs are characterised by long power distance/high hierarchy, collectiveness, masculinity (according to Hofstede's model), relationship orientation, high avoidance of uncertainty, humane orientation, tribal and family receptiveness, gender discrimination, past orientation and long power distance (according to Globe project). Due to these characteristics, the Arabs were attached to the eastern cultures in Southeast Asia as the assessments were similar between the Arabs and this region (Steers, 2010, p. 64). Table 1 presents a collection of these models and their dimensions and the characterisation of Arabs according to these models.

Table 1: Characteristics of Arab countries according to Models in Literature

<i>Author</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Characteristics of the Arabs</i>
<i>* Multiple-dimensional Models</i>		
<i>G. Hofstede, 1980,1988</i>	- Power distance - Uncertainty avoidance - Individualism/collectivism - Masculinity/femininity * Hofstede's five dimensions - Long/short term Orientation	- Long power distance - High avoidance of uncertainty - Strong collectivity - Masculinity - Short term orientation
<i>Hofstede and Minkov, 2008, 2010, 2013</i>	* Hofstede's six dimensions - Indulgence vs. Restraint * Hofstede's seven dimensions - Monumentalism vs. flexumility	- Indulgence - flexumility
<i>Edward T. Hall 1981. 1990</i>	-Context - Space - Time: Monochronism/ polychronism	- High context - Strong Particularism - Strong polychronism (P-time)
<i>Globe Project, House et al., 2004</i>	- Performance orientation - Uncertainty avoidance - Humane orientation - Institutional collectivism - In-group collectivism - Assertiveness - Gender egalitarianism - Future orientation - Power distance	- Relationship orientation - High avoidance of uncertainty - Humane orientation - Tribal collectivism - Family collectivism - Receptiveness - Gender Discrimination - Past orientation - Long power distance
<i>S. Schwartz, 1992, 1999, 2006</i>	- Embeddedness/autonomy - Hierarchy/egalitarianism - Mastery/harmony	- Embeddedness - Hierarchy - Harmony
<i>R. Gesteland, 1999</i>	- Relationship vs. deal focus - Low vs. high context - Formal vs. informal - Monochronic vs. Polychronic - Expressive vs. reserved	- Relationship-oriented - High context - Informal orientation - Polychronism - Expressive culture
<i>Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997, Trompenaars and Woolliams 2003</i>	- Universalism vs. Particularism - Individualism vs. Communitarianism - Neutral vs. Emotional - Specific vs. Diffuse - Achievement vs. Ascription - Time: - Sequential vs. Synchronous - Present vs. Future - Internal vs. external control	- Strong Particularism - Communitarian orientation - Emotional orientation - Diffusion-oriented - Ascribed Status - Synchronous/past and present orientation - External control, outer-directed
<i>Georgas, et al., 2004</i>	- Affluence - Religion	- Moderated orientation - Strong orientation
<i>* Uni-dimensional Models</i>		
<i>F. Fukuyama,1995</i>	- Trust/non-trust	- Trust-focus (family/kinship)
<i>I. Nonaka,1991</i>	- Implicit/explicit knowledge	- Implicit/tacit knowledge
<i>Dumitrescu, 2012</i>	- Eloquence: the rhetorical use of understatement vs. Overstatement	- The rhetorical use of overstatement

* **Source:** Najm A. Najm, American Journal of Business, Economics and Management, pp. 424-425. And Dziedzic (2017), Organisational culture in cross-cultural management, in Teczk, Janusz and Buła, Piotr, (Eds.) (2017) Management in the time of networks, cross-cultural activities and flexible organisations, International Management Foundation, Cracow University of Economics, Cracow, p. 37

Women's access to the field of entrepreneurship is considered one of the foundations and pillars of their economic empowerment; this is an indicator of the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM); women's engagement in the field of entrepreneurship increased (GEM, 2019, p. 104).

Although greater equality has been achieved, it did not tackle the real structural problem: the unequal gender roles and relations that are at the basis of gender subordination and women's exclusion. This approach also focused on what have been termed practical gender needs, such as providing better access to water, which would reduce the amount of time women and girls must spend in domestic activities and thus allow them more time for education or employment. There was no questioning why collecting water has been constructed as a female responsibility, or why improved access to water is a need for women and girls only. (Bradshaw et al., 2013, p. 3). The gap in economic participation remains wide, estimated at 41%, in addition to the low level of women's economic participation globally (The Global Gender Gap Report, 2016).

Women are also the most vulnerable and most affected. In peace, they face the risk of not meeting their needs. In times of economic, social and environmental pressures, they may even be subject to physical violence and sexual assault (The World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, 2014, p. 27). Therefore, many efforts have been made to develop a framework for advancing the struggle for women's equality, social justice, and “empowerment” has emerged intending to reshape economic, social and political structures to overcome obstacles and inequalities that give rise to their problems. Advancing gender equality requires strengthening different dimensions of women's autonomy: economic and political autonomy, full citizenship and freedom from all forms of violence, and sexual and reproductive autonomy. (Bradshaw et al., 2013, p. 6).

This gap can be explained from shortages of women in local political cultures, through laws passed by many countries that discriminate against women in terms of family, property, citizenship and employment, to fundamentalist economic control, policies and practices that may deny women their rights as workers or even their right to work (Bradshaw et al., 2013, p. 7). In particular, in Arab countries, women's economic empowerment constraints posed by culture cannot be overlooked (UNFPA, 2014, p. 39), as Arab culture is a complex collective whole of people's self-perceptions, values and attitudes that can help us understand Arab individuals (Najm, 2015, p. 423). In addition, there are other characteristics of the Arab cultural structure, most notably: the dominance of the extended family and the resulting patriarchal culture, the prevailing beliefs, symbols and customs still reflect the inferior view of women (Zayed, 2011). Another study adds other dimensions to those for the economic empowerment to culture is power (Ahmad, 2008, p. 33). Besides, there is education, training,

care-sharing, and reproductive and sexual health (Women's economic empowerment, 2012, pp. 4-6).

The low participation of women in the labour market can also be due to the heterogeneity of the status of women in Arab countries, which is influenced not only by cultural including religious factors but also by social relations (Abu Nahla, 2005, p. 12). Empowerment of women has become a developmental priority/imperative. This does not only end with access to employment but is linked to the functional structure available to women in Arab societies on two levels. The first is at the level of the economic sector to which women are enrolled. The second is at the level of enrollment of women in the formal sector and their transformation from the informal to formal sectors (Abdel Fattah, 2010).

To achieve economic empowerment, the causes of women's reluctance to become entrepreneurs must be overcome. Although the services, industries and traditional handicrafts sectors are concentrated on women, they face several difficulties, including administrative and financial problems (Shastri & Shastri, 2019), and perhaps the most serious and most severe of these problems are due to the prevalence of societal customs and traditions. (Muralidharan & Pathak, 2018, p. 27; Al-Bagoury, 2017, p. 77; Zirik & Ben Harrath, 2010, p. 65)

The socio-cultural context of women's economic empowerment is a key requirement for development, and it should, therefore, be understood as the socio-cultural dimension of women's entrepreneurship (Zayed, 2011; Al -Tayeb, 2011, pp. 64-65)

Entrepreneurship in the UAE

The past few decades have witnessed a significant increase in the number of female-owned businesses (Marlow et al., 2009; Verheul et al., 2006; Tlaiss, 2013). This evolution has progressed and reached the Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC), as the assets of small and medium-sized companies managed by women entrepreneurs are 385 billion USD, and the proportion of women entrepreneurs in the region increased from (4%) to (10%) during the period from 2011 to 2014. Here, the UAE presents an inspiring model for women's empowerment, which is based on the development of socio-cultural contexts in UAE society and the presence of women in the economic arena, and considering them as partners in economic, social and political life, as it is considered one of the socially encouraging environments of women's role (Majed & Al-Hashimi, 2016, p. 35)

To identify the socio-cultural dimensions of women's entrepreneurship in UAE society, two studies were used. The first study (Georgia, 2013), which applied the Hofstede model to the Arab countries, based on the role of culture in shaping the reality of institutions, making

cultural identity a complex aspect of life. The second study was (Najm, 2015), which targeted the dimensions of Arab culture depending on comparison among the models of national cultures for international and Arab experiences. This study included an analysis of 11 international models and six Arab models and concluded that studying international models is not sufficient to explain many of the decisions made and implemented by members of Arab societies.

The UAE is a hub for entrepreneurial projects, not only in the Gulf region but also throughout the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA). It is the most diversified economy among them, has a high Gross Domestic Product and ranks first among Arab countries practising business at ease, and is placed 16th in global competitiveness (World Bank, 2005, p. 313). The Union of Seven Emirates is home to 50% of the top 100 startups in the MENA region (Al-Zaaby, 2018). SMEs make up 94.3% of the economic projects in the UAE, employ about 62% of the labour force and contribute to 75% of the GDP. The UAE is classified as having reached the stage of dependence on development and innovation according to the stages of economic development among the Arab countries, in attracting Investment and establishing small and medium enterprises compared to the rest of the Arab countries (Al-Bagoury, 2017, p. 10).

The UAE released Federal Law No. 2 of the year 2014, regarding small and medium entrepreneurship aiming at encouraging and spreading the culture of entrepreneurship, which is considered the basis of economic development. The UAE also is working on developing those businesses and giving incentives to citizens to engage in such businesses (UAE Economy Ministry, 2018). Then the Cabinet issued an executive regulation of the federal law No. 2, by resolution No. 35 of the year 2016 (UAE Ministry of Finance, 2018). The United Arab Emirates also signed the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2004 (CEDAW), with some reservations on a number of articles because of incompatibility with Islamic principles (Islamic Sharia'a).

Women in the UAE formed about 4.5% of the total business owners, with 55,855 women who registered a variety of businesses during the first half of 2016. They also manage an estimated 12.5 billion AED in investments in various fields (OHCHR, 2010). The UAE also does not charge the small and medium women's businesses any fees, and the business incubator in Dubai deals with about 45 new startups and entrepreneurs every year (WBF, 2014, p. 99, p. 118), which indicates great diversity in the areas of working for Emirati women. Women's issues in the UAE are supported by a semi-governmental body known as the General Women's Union, which was established by Sheikha Fatma bint Mubarak in 1975 (General Women's Union, 2018). The government began granting licenses to women to start their businesses, and the Dubai and Abu Dhabi Chambers of Commerce established women's



councils in 2002. In the same year, the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women in the UAE was launched and was updated in March 2015 (General Women's Union, 2018).

The Emirates Businesswomen Council was established in 2001 (UAEBWC website, 2018), then the Businesswomen Councils were subsequently established in Abu Dhabi in 2001 (ADBUSINESS Women website, 2018, etc.). The Ajman Businesswomen Council was established in 2004 (AJMANChamber website, 2018). This increased the number of women entrepreneurs and the perception of their importance.

The State has also made greater efforts in the field of partnerships to prepare women leaders, and several funds have been established to provide the necessary financial and human resources for the advancement of women and their place in the labour market (AWO, 2016, p. 13). An electronic application for families was also created to contribute to the creation of investment opportunities for productive women (General Women's Union, 2015, p. 7) and many other efforts have also been made.

Analysis

First: Introduction

On the ground, when the Hofstede model of socio-cultural dimensions was applied to the sample in Ajman, it was found that the UAE encourages Emirati women entrepreneurs to become independent and eliminate discrimination. 58.5% of the respondents indicated that the state always encourages them to take responsibility for their business. Moreover, 48.2% of their proposals, ideas and innovations were welcomed and were accepted by UAE officials to expand women's businesses. Another point that reflects the increasing interest in training and qualifying Emirati women for the labour market is the large number of courses attended by female entrepreneurs in the sample, as 20.3% of the sample attended more than 15 courses, more than one-third of the sample attended less than five courses, their percentage reaching (35.9%). Also, the fields of training varied, most of the respondents received capacity building courses, which comprised 52.2%, and the rest received different courses such as public administration, entrepreneurship and accounting, etc. Also, less than half (45.6%) of respondents in Ajman indicated that the state gives them sufficient opportunity to make decisions and express their own opinions regarding their businesses. 58.5% believe that the state always encourages independence and being responsible for their business.

The following is a presentation of the characteristics of the sample and then testing the hypotheses of the study and finally, a comparison between the results of the study and the results of Hofstede in the Arab world.

Second: Sample Characteristics

First, regarding the types of fields, they work on; clothing, accessories and jewellery occupied the first place with 28.3%, and the fields also varied between handicrafts 20%, cosmetics 12%, education and training 8%, technology, software and media 4%, popular food 4%, hospitality 4%, manufacturing sweets 4%, and perfumes 4%.

Second, regarding the social background of the sample: 1) the educational level varied, where less than one-third of the sample received university education (27.9%), while two-thirds of them received less than university education (64.1%), and the percentage of masters and doctorate holders represented 8% of the sample. The sample is characterised by the diversity of age, where about 20% of them fall in the age group of under 30 years, about 40% fall in the age group of over 30 and less than 40 years). About 40% fall in the age group of 40 years and over. The researcher also noticed that most of them are married (76%). Three-quarters of them reside in Ajman (76%), while about a quarter was from Sharjah, Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

The sample was divided into three business types; one-third only selling craftwork, another third depending on producing and selling a commodity and the last third delivering services. The main motivation for the establishment of the business was self-actualisation and psychological satisfaction for 72% of the sample, while the economic motivations of family dependence on income were the reason for 8% of the sample, and for securing the future 8% of them. Those were reasons to start the business in the first place; on the other hand, making use of leisure time pushed 12% of the sample to start their own business.

Most of the women entrepreneurs relied on their own money as business capital (59.8%). However, 27.9% of the respondents received capital from their spouse or family, and 12.3% of them received a loan to finance the business. These results illustrate the economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs in the United Arab Emirates.

Third: Testing the Hypotheses

Table 2 shows the sentences used to measure each dimension, sentences 1 to 4 to measure power distance, sentences from 5 to 8 measure the uncertainty avoidance, sentences from 9 to 13 measure collectivity, sentences from 14 to 18 measure the masculinity and sentence 19 measures the long term orientation.

Table 2: Sentences of Each Dimension

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Sentences</i>	<i>Answers</i>			<i>General Estimation</i>	<i>Score</i>
		Rarely	Sometimes	Always		
<i>Power Distance</i>	1. the state gives me sufficient opportunity to make decisions and express my own opinions regarding my business	8.30%	46.10%	45.60%	Sometimes	52
	2. The state always encourages independence and being responsible for my business	8.30%	33.20%	58.50%	Always	
	3.I can discuss my business easily with officials	23.90%	43.80%	32.30%	Sometimes	
	4.I have freedom to do whatever is best for my business	37.80%	37.30%	24.90%	Rarely	
<i>Uncertainty Avoidance</i>	5. There are written laws that organise the business operation	33.60%	37.30%	29%	Sometimes	66
	6. My proposals, ideas and innovations are welcomed and receive acceptance by UAE officials	15.90%	35.90%	48.20%	Always	
	7.I prefer adhering to the status quo rather than taking risk	18.10%	40.70%	41.20%	Always	
	8.I have the ability to face and deal with difficult matters and manage crises	24.90%	37.30%	37.80%	Always	
<i>Collectivity vs individuality</i>	9.I prefer individual work to collective work	8.30%	33.20%	58.20%	Always	79
	10.I prefer collective work and working in groups in my business	15.90%	47.80%	36.30%	Sometimes	
	11.I encourage collective work and believe it is the main reason for success	4.10%	41.50%	54.40%	Always	
	12.Giving up personal interests is better so we can help each other	13%	34.80%	52.40%	Always	
	13.the business is secure and stable	12%	20.70%	66.80%	Always	
<i>Masculinity vs Femininity</i>	14.Gain, evolution, and challenge values prevail in my business	8.30%	20.70%	71%	Always	68
	15. Women occupy high ranked jobs in my business	21.60%	26%	52.40%	Always	
	16.the working environment is characterised by low pressure of work	20.70%	45.60%	33.60%	Sometimes	
	17.I prefer small businesses	12.40%	58.10%	29.50%	Sometimes	
	18. Quality in performance is the true criterion for evaluating performance effectiveness	0%	16.60%	83.40%	Always	
<i>Long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation</i>	19. My business involves strategic planning and long-term planning	8.70%	51.90%	39.40%	Sometimes	54

Testing the First Hypothesis: Women entrepreneurs in the UAE community feel a high degree of inequality in power distance.

Table (3) shows that the power distance score for women entrepreneurs in UAE is 52, which means rejecting the hypothesis, as women entrepreneurs in the UAE don't feel a high degree of inequality in power distance.

Testing the Second Hypothesis: Women entrepreneurs in the UAE community are highly inclined/ tending to avoid uncertainty.

Score in Table 3 shows that the uncertainty avoidance score is 66 for the women entrepreneurs in the UAE, which means rejecting the hypothesis, as women entrepreneurs in the UAE do not tend to avoid uncertainty.

Testing the Third Hypothesis: Women entrepreneurs in UAE society prefer a high degree of collectivity rather than individuality.

The results of Table 3 show that the collectivity score is 79, which means accepting the hypothesis, as women entrepreneurs in the UAE prefer collective work rather than individual work.

Testing the Fourth Hypothesis: Women entrepreneurs in the UAE community are strong in performance (showing more Masculinity).

The results of Table 3 show that the women entrepreneurs feel that the community is performing strongly (Masculine) than being feminine as the score is 68, which means accepting the hypothesis, this means women entrepreneurs in the UAE tend to be more masculine than feminine.

Testing the Fifth Hypothesis: Women entrepreneurs in the UAE community have a long-term orientation/view towards the future.

Table (3) results show that women entrepreneurs in the UAE community tend to have a long-term orientation (to some extent) as the score is 54, which means accepting the hypothesis.

Testing the Sixth Hypothesis: Women's entrepreneurship leads to women's economic empowerment.

Results show that Alpha is 0.000, which means accepting the hypothesis, meaning that women's entrepreneurship leads to women's economic empowerment, by 75%.

Table 3: Score for Each Dimension

	<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	Power Distance	52
2	Uncertainty Avoidance	66
3	Collectivity vs individuality	79
4	Masculinity vs Femininity	68
5	Long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation	54

Fourth: Comparing the results to Hofstede's results in Arab Countries

To compare the results of this study to what Hofstede did to classify the Arab administrations, the researcher categorised the variables and analysed them. Results show that almost all the sample indicated “always” for collectivity (Score 79) and masculinity (Score 68) dimensions although they indicated “sometimes” for the dimensions of power distance (Score 52), long term orientation (Score 54), and uncertainty avoidance (Score 66). However, it has high percentages in all sentences that make it a tent to be close to being always. A very important difference to be mentioned here, between this study and Hofstede's study, as follows.

On the one hand, both studies did not agree on: 1) the power distance dimension when Hofstede classified it in the Arab world by score of 80, which is higher than the international determined rate of 55, although the study results showed a score of 52 which is close to the international classification. This means there is no high inequality in power distance in the UAE. 2) collectivity rather than individuality, as Hofstede classified it in the Arab administrations by a score of 38, that is lower than the international determined rate of 64, and the study's score is 79, which is close to the international one, that means a preference for collective rather than individual work.

On the other hand, both studies agreed on: 1) the uncertainty avoidance dimension, he classified it by score of 68, which is higher than the international determined rate of 43, although the results of this study showed a score close to Hofstede's of 66. 2) masculinity versus femininity, Hofstede's score for this dimension was higher (52) than the international rate (50), this dimension's score in this study is 68, which means there is a tendency towards masculinity. Higher than what Hofstede and international rate found.

The results of the long-term dimension for this study was a score of 54. However, Hofstede did not study this dimension in the Arab world.

Fifth: Conclusion and Discussion

In conclusion, the UAE supports women's entrepreneurship and women's economic empowerment, as evidenced by the above-mentioned efforts. This has led to the economic empowerment of women - through entrepreneurship - from the following indicators: 1) the number of women entrepreneurs has increased recently (by 48.3%); 2) that the largest percentage of the sample of female entrepreneurs (59.8%) got their business capital from their own money or received a finance loan, which allows them to access and control resources for themselves; and 3) The highest percentage of women entrepreneurs (80.1%) identified the main reasons that led them to start their business was the serious desire for self-actualisation, personal independence, self-reliance and satisfaction, in addition to a favourable economic opportunity. Based on the sociological approach that the establishment of women in the project is based on either the factors of attraction or push factors in the surrounding environment, the first encouraging and the latter forcing women to start the project. It was clear from the previous results that the lowest percentage (16%) was the factors pushing women to establish their business as their family depends on this income or to secure their future. Entrepreneurship provides them with economic independence, enhancing their self-image and self-confidence, and increasing their value in the home and society.

Also, the results of applying Hofstede's model to the sample show that women entrepreneurs feel a moderate degree of power distance, which means that Emirati entrepreneurship combines reliance on formal mechanisms and laws and official bodies, in addition to the participation of institutions in the formulation of objectives and control of individuals. They also feel a moderate degree of uncertainty, unlike what Hofstede indicated by its rise in Arab countries, which means that the culture of UAE society and its entrepreneurs is characterised by initiative, ambition and risk appetite while taking responsibility for their actions, which positively reflects on the spirit of innovation and creativity in the future. Women entrepreneurs also have a high tendency towards collectivity, which can reflect the nature of community culture that favours ties, social relationships, friendships and family settings. This has resulted in economic empowerment.

It can also be explained that the age of most (79.68%) female entrepreneurs in the sample falls in the age categories of 30 to under 40. Those over 40, due to the specificity of the reality of Arab social structure, young girls from an early age do not expect to go to work, due to the expectation that she will get married. Therefore, the preference is either to devote herself to her family and household duties or to tend more towards a job in the public sector. This means women tend to gravitate to entrepreneurship and establish their businesses at a relatively advanced age when she has the moral and material willingness to take the initiative and bear responsibility by setting up her own business, or get rid of the burdens of a



government job. It also could be that this decision comes after being more free of being pregnant or having the responsibility of young children.

However, this last point (having children and/or a husband), does not prevent women in the UAE from starting their businesses. This point is proved by the fact that 72% were in the labour market already before starting their businesses, although 28% are free of domestic responsibilities before starting their own businesses. That indicates a high awareness in the community about the importance of women's economic and social roles, besides her role in the family.

The fact that more than half of the sample received various kinds of training reflects their awareness of the importance of developing their personal, social and technical skills. It is consistent with studies that have identified the characteristics of an entrepreneur - including (Rauch et al., 2009) - that women entrepreneurs build their projects based on knowledge gained so that they can take responsibility for establishing the business and managing it.



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