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UNDERSTANDING THE CULTURAL VALUES AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL IN CENTRAL AFRICA: A TEST OF THE CVSCALE IN CAMEROON

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ABSTRACT

In order to reduce the risk of failure, it is vital to learn about the different cultures around the world before doing business in other countries. Nonetheless, the existing cross-cultural business literature dealing with culture assessment methods has been widely criticized (Sharma, 2010). For instance, most studies operationalize personal cultural orientations for individual consumers based on the national scores on Hofstede (1980, 1991) cultural dimensions. In response to these concerns, the Cultural Values Scale (CVSCALE) is a 26-item scale that has been developed by Yoo, Donthu, and Lenartowicz (2011) to capture Hofstede's (1991) five cultural dimensions at the individual level. However, none previous studies have investigated these dimensions in Central Africa in general and specifically in Cameroon, a country which has many different ethnic groups. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to test the reliability and validity of the CVSCALE in Cameroon. The sample of this study is based on 700 managers working in a French or English context and belonging to 8 different ethnic groups. Exploratory factor analysis as well as confirmatory factor analysis are conducted by the authors. Results indicate that the CVSCALE exhibits appropriate reliability and validity. This study allows consumer researchers and business practitioners to assess the cultural orientations of individuals and to use primary data instead of cultural stereotypes. The CVSCALE is also very adequate for global market segmentation. Global product and brand managers will benefit from the scale because they can find equivalent market segments across countries based on consumer groupings showing similar cultural orientations.

Keywords: culture, values, CVSCALE, Cameroon, Hostede