

Cultural Web sites Adaptation of Global Brands: A Cross Comparison of Indonesia and Taiwan

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Abstract— This study analyzed the Indonesia and Taiwan's Web sites of top 100 most powerful brands by MilwardBrown Optimor. Content analysis was used in this study to investigate the culture value in the Web sites. The finding revealed that between Indonesia and Taiwan's Web sites is significant difference on the all of cultural dimension. The second finding is that among four brands category, information technologies and financial services showed significant difference between two countries. This study provides insight into globalization trends across countries and industries to determine the appropriateness of culture value in which country, and in what brand category should focus on online globalization.

Keywords: *cultural websites adaptation, global brands, cultural dimension*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Internet, with its capacity to expand beyond a country's territorial borders seems an ideal medium for globalization. Globalization is defined by Tomlinson (1991) as the "rapidly developing process of complex interconnections between societies, cultures, institutions and individuals world-wide". Levitt (1983) stated that globalization has been equated to operating with resolute constancy across the world, selling the same thing in the same way everywhere. However, on the web, the dynamics have changed because the website is for the world to see. Web sites do not just communicate with one segment of consumers in one language; instead they are "born-global" for all global consumers to see and they need to be adapted to different cultures and languages (Singh and Baack, 2004).

The aim of this study is to provide a framework to develop culturally adapted Web sites and to test the proposed framework by assessing the level of cultural adaptation reflected between two countries Indonesia and Taiwan of global brands. Besides comparison between two countries, this study examines the cultural value adaptation by the brands category between two countries. This study focused on Indonesia and Taiwan Web sites from Top 100 Most powerful Brands by MilwardBrown Optimor (2007). To analyze the depiction of cultural values on the web this study used the cultural value framework for website analysis proposed by Singh and Baack (2004) and Singh et. al. (2005).

Even though Indonesia and Taiwan represent same Asian countries, according to the culture value orientations between two countries was differ in the several dimension. For example, it has been found that Taiwan is relatively high uncertainty avoidance, with a moderate power distance structure, and with a relatively high collectivism, while the Indonesia is relatively high power distance, collectivism and masculinity, and moderate on tolerance for uncertainty (Hofstede, 1980, 1991). Besides, Indonesia and Taiwan represent different ethnic, Indonesia represents Malay ethnic and Taiwan represents Chinese ethnic. The significance of this study is to help managers to recognize that online globalization is not just translating web pages into multiple languages, but also involves many issues relating to website internationalization and localization.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies by Hofstede (1980, 1991), and Trompenaars (1994), provide evidence that cultural value orientations differ significantly across cultures and countries. For example, a study by Caillat and Mueller (1996) found that Americans and British commercials have different illustration styles, because of different cultural values. Differences in cultural values appeal have also been found across various countries like Brazil, China (Cheng and Schweitzer, 1996), Hong Kong, Taiwan (Tse et al., 1989), and Japan (Mueller, 1987). Several researchers, therefore, have emphasized the use of country-specific cultural values appeals when developing advertising campaigns and communication material for the host countries (Albers-Miller and Gelb, 1996; Han and Shavitt, 1994).

The need to understand cultural differences by multinational corporations and the impact of culture on global business through internet has been increasingly recognized in the information system literature (Myers and Tan, 2002). Studies have found that culturally sensitive web content enhances usability, accessibility, and website interactivity (Simon, 2001). To develop the cultural categories to be used for the content analysis, an extensive review was completed of the major cultural typologies applied in the business literature (Singh and Baack, 2004). All of the major cultural typologies were closely evaluated in the context of Web communication.

Singh et al. (2005) mentioned that to develop cultural-coding categories based on the four cultural dimensions of Hofstede (1980) and to generate effective cultural value categories reflective of the web content, a list

was created of all of the major interactive or multimedia features commonly present on Web sites (clubs, newsletters, FAQs, security policy, privacy policy, "free stuff," downloads, graphics, hyperlinks, and others). Each cultural typology was operated in the context of Web communication, and its applicability to studying Web communications was explored through content analysis of Web sites. Thus, consistent with the literature, four cultural value dimensions proposed by Hofstede (1980) (individualism–collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity–femininity) were incorporated in the study.

III. HYPOTHESIS

This study analyzes the Web sites based on the different brand category according with MilwardBrown Optimor categorization. MilwardBrown Optimor is the brand finance and ROI arm of leading market research and consultancy in the international scope. It offers an integrated approach to brand and marketing analytics and accountability, which links market research, customer and financial data (MilwardBrown Optimor, 2007). This study analyzes the Web sites based on the different national cultures. Using the cultural value framework for website analysis proposed by Singh and Baack (2004) and Singh et. al. (2005), this study develop hypothesis of four cultural value dimensions. To build understanding into four dimensions, the explanation about each dimension is provided in the appendix.

A. Individualism–collectivism

This cultural dimension focuses on an individual's relationship with society or other individuals. In individualist societies, ties between individuals are loose, personal freedom is valued, and individual decision-making is encouraged. On the contrary, in collectivist societies, in-group ties are strong, following societal norms is valued, and group decision-making is encouraged (Hofstede, 1980). On this dimension, the Taiwan scores the highest (17), while Indonesia scores lower (14) as Indonesia society is more collectivist in orientation (Hofstede, 1991). Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H1: The Indonesia Web sites from the Top 100 of Milward Brown Optimor list of companies will depict higher level of collectivism than the Taiwan Web sites.

B. Uncertainty avoidance

According to Hofstede (1980), the degree to which societies can tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity differs among cultures. Some cultures are high on the avoidance of uncertainty, in that their value security and low-risk situations, while other cultures are low on the avoidance of uncertainty and have a greater tolerance for ambiguity and risky situations. Hofstede's (1991) study found that the Indonesia scores much lower (48) on this cultural dimension compared to Taiwan (69), which is comparatively a more high-risk avoidance culture. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H2: The Taiwan Web sites from the Top 100 Brands Milward Brown Optimor list of companies will show higher levels of uncertainty avoidance compared to the Indonesia Web sites.

C. Power distance

According to Hofstede (1980), the bipolar power distance dimension explains how different societies treat inequalities in social structure. Societies like Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, China, and India that are high on power distance accept power and hierarchy in the society and do not exhibit egalitarianism. The emphasis in high-power distance societies is on status, referent power, authority, and legitimacy. The Taiwan score of 58 is lower than Indonesia score of 78 on power distance. Thus, we hypothesize that:

H3: The Indonesia Web sites from the Top 100 Brands Milward Brown Optimor list of companies will depict higher levels of power distance compared than the Taiwan web sites.

D. Masculinity–femininity

The masculinity–femininity dimension proposed by Hofstede (1980) explains how gender roles are allocated in different cultures. Masculine cultures value assertiveness, ambition, success, and performance. To such cultures, "big and fast" is beautiful, machismo ideal is acceptable, and emphasis is on clear gender roles. Indonesia and Taiwan has almost similar score, but Indonesia a little higher (46) on masculinity compared to Taiwan (45). Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H4: The Indonesia Web sites from the Top 100 Milward Brown Optimor list of companies will depict higher levels of masculinity compared than the Taiwan Web sites.

IV. METHODS

This study used content analysis to investigate the culture value in the Web sites of global brands. Since content analysis is regarded as an appropriate technique for analyzing values, norms of behavior, and other elements of a culture (Cheng and Schweitzer, 1996) from verbal communication, it used to systematically analyze the cultural values depicted on the web pages of global brands in Indonesia and Taiwan Web sites. The degree of depiction of each cultural value category is evaluated as "not depicted" to "prominently depicted" on a five-point Likert scale. Two Taiwan master students coded the Taiwan web sites and two Indonesia students coded the Indonesia web sites. All four coders are students at the Information Management System of business school then they were trained in the coding scheme.

A. Sample

The sample for this study was generated from Milward Brown Optimor list of the top 100 global brands. To control for the industry, only Information technology, electronics, financial services and automotive of the brand Web sites were selected for analysis. Only the brands which have Web sites operations both in Indonesia and Taiwan selected for analysis. In total, 28 global brands of Web sites were found for Indonesia and also 28 global brands Web sites were found for Taiwan. Thus, there were 56 global brands Web sites must be analyzed. On average, each website had 15–20 relevant web pages, and the unit of analysis was the entire number of web pages on each website.

B. Reliability

The percentage of agreement method (Kassarjian, 1977) was used to determine the coefficient of intercoder reliability for 28 category items used in the framework. The intercoder reliability for the Taiwan Web sites was 81% and for the Indonesia web sites it was 79%. To check the intrajudge reliability, the coders coded a random sample of 25% of each of the Taiwan and Indonesia web sites again after a month. An intrajudge reliability score of 85% and 80% was achieved for Taiwan and Indonesia web sites, respectively. The internal consistency of the five cultural dimensions was further tested using Cronbach's alpha. These alphas ranged between 0.53 and 0.73 which are considered adequate for an exploratory study (Nunnally, 1978).

V. RESULTS

The content analysis of Taiwan and Indonesia Web sites revealed that overall there were significant differences in the depiction of cultural values between the Web sites of these two cultures (Table 1). One-way ANOVA and descriptive statistics were used to test the postulated hypotheses about country-wise differences in the depiction of cultural values. As hypothesized, the Indonesia Web sites showed higher levels of collectivism (mean: Indonesia : 3.57 vs. Taiwan : 3.09, $F = 14.2$, $P < .01$), individualism (mean: Indonesia : 2.86 vs. Taiwan : 3.35, $F = 11.8$, $P < .01$), uncertainty avoidance (mean: Indonesia : 3.12 vs. Taiwan : 3.71, $F = 27.8$, $P < .01$), power distance (mean: Indonesia : 3.48 vs. Taiwan : 2.97, $F = 11.0$, $P < .01$), lastly the masculinity dimension also significant differences between Taiwan and Indonesia Web sites (mean: Indonesia : 3.46 vs. Taiwan : 3.14, $F = 7.4$, $P < .05$). Thus, all hypotheses 1 to 4 were supported.

Table 1. Descriptive statistic and Oneway ANOVA

Dimensions/ Features	Indonesia Web sites (n=28)		Taiwan Web sites (n=28)		F value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Collectivism	3.57	0.39	3.09	0.53	14.23**
Community	3.79	0.99	3.46	1.20	1.18 ^{ns}
Clubs	3.64	1.19	3.0	1.15	4.20*
Newsletter	4.32	0.72	3.93	0.94	3.07*
Family	3.18	0.90	2.71	0.94	3.56*
Symbols	3.04	0.99	2.46	0.64	6.51**
Loyalty	3.68	0.95	3.29	1.01	2.25 ^{ns}
Local Web sites	3.32	0.90	2.82	0.98	3.92*
Individualism	2.87	0.48	3.35	0.56	11.83**
Privacy	3.04	0.79	3.71	0.97	8.16**
Independence	2.68	0.81	3.07	0.81	3.24*
Uniqueness	3.21	0.78	3.57	0.87	2.57 ^{ns}
Personalization	2.54	0.92	3.04	0.92	4.12*
Uncertainty Avoidance	3.11	0.30	3.71	0.52	27.87**
Customer services	3.79	0.87	4.21	0.91	3.20*
Navigation	3.96	0.84	4.36	0.95	2.69 ^{ns}

Local stores	3.39	0.96	3.89	1.06	3.41*
Local terminology	2.57	0.63	3.50	0.84	21.83**
Free trail	3.11	1.16	3.64	1.02	3.33*
Testimonial	2.25	0.75	2.89	0.78	9.78**
Tradition	2.75	0.75	3.54	1.14	9.29**
Power Distance	3.48	0.49	2.97	0.65	11.0**
Hierarchy	3.14	0.97	2.61	0.83	4.92*
Pictures of CEO	3.36	1.25	2.79	1.26	2.90 ^{ns}
Quality	4.07	0.81	3.64	0.91	3.45*
Vision	3.89	0.99	3.50	1.0	2.17 ^{ns}
Pride of ownership	3.54	0.64	3.11	0.87	4.39*
Titles	2.89	0.87	2.18	0.55	13.40**
Masculinity	3.48	0.49	2.97	0.65	11.0**
Games	2.43	0.84	2.25	0.65	0.80 ^{ns}
Realism	3.96	0.88	3.57	0.96	2.55 ^{ns}
Effectiveness	4.43	0.50	4.07	0.90	3.36*
Gender Roles	3.04	0.84	2.68	0.90	2.35 ^{ns}

* $P < .05$

** $P < .01$

This study conducted a one-way ANOVA on all of the cultural categories. The findings suggest that under the collectivism dimension, Indonesia web sites scored significantly higher than Taiwan Web sites on the depiction almost all of features, like clubs, family themes, cultural symbols, and links to local Web sites, except community features and loyalty programs. Also under individualism dimension Taiwan Web sites depicted significantly higher than Indonesia Web sites on depiction all of features, except uniqueness features. Under uncertainty avoidance dimensions, Taiwan Web sites scored higher on all the feature items compared to Indonesia web sites, except navigation. Especially, in local terminology, testimonial and tradition showed prominently depict between two countries ($P < .01$). Further, under the power distance dimension, Indonesia web sites scored significantly higher than Taiwan Web sites on depiction almost all of features, like hierarchy, quality, pride of ownership and titles, except pictures of CEO and vision. Especially the titles feature appear very significant ($P < .01$). However, on the masculinity dimension, Indonesia Web sites were also significantly higher on the depiction of features even though only different one point than Taiwan according with Hofstede cultural dimension (1991). Exception on the games and gender feature were not significantly difference. Thus, a detailed cultural category level analysis clearly shows how the Web sites of the two countries differ on each cultural category item used in the framework.

For more insight, this study also examined the differences of brand category between two countries. This study provided comparison of each brand category between two countries; there were information technologies, electronics, financial services and automotive (Table 2). In the information technology category, appear very significant

difference under the uncertainty avoidance and power distance dimension ($P < .01$). Then, significantly differ under the collectivism and masculinity ($P < .05$), but not significant under the individualism dimension. In the electronics category, there were significantly difference in the individualism and masculinity but not significant in the power distance and uncertainty dimension. Further, in the financial services appear very significant difference between two countries under four dimensions ($P < .01$), except masculinity have significantly ($P < .05$). However, in the last category was automotive, there were not significantly difference under three dimension were individualism, power distance and masculinity ($P < .05$).

Table 2. Oneway ANOVA for each Brand Category

Brand Category	Indonesia Web sites (n=28)		Taiwan Web sites (n=28)		F value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Information Technology					
Collectivism	3.47	0.32	3.06	0.45	3.87*
Individualism	3.04	0.59	3.36	0.48	1.27 ^{ns}
Uncertainty Avoidance	3.16	0.27	3.82	0.56	7.80**
Power Distance	3.62	0.36	3.07	0.42	6.99**
Masculinity	3.50	0.38	3.50	0.38	4.37*
Electronics					
Collectivism	3.45	0.21	3.14	0.41	2.74 ^{ns}
Individualism	2.67	0.26	3.25	0.46	7.66**
Uncertainty Avoidance	3.17	0.38	3.60	0.64	1.98 ^{ns}
Power Distance	3.53	0.51	3.28	0.79	0.42 ^{ns}
Masculinity	3.33	0.26	2.75	0.55	5.57*
Financial services					
Collectivism	3.69	0.31	3.20	0.26	7.28**
Individualism	2.80	0.59	3.85	0.28	12.60**
Uncertainty Avoidance	2.97	0.26	3.88	0.31	25.77**
Power Distance	3.86	0.55	3.86	0.54	16.46**
Masculinity	3.35	0.14	3.35	0.14	4.23*
Automobile					
Collectivism	3.64	0.55	3.04	0.75	4.14*
Individualism	2.90	0.48	3.15	0.68	0.91 ^{ns}
Uncertainty Avoidance	3.13	0.31	3.64	0.55	6.59**
Power Distance	3.17	0.41	2.93	0.72	0.79 ^{ns}
Masculinity	3.58	0.41	3.50	0.51	0.13 ^{ns}

* $P < .05$

** $P < .01$

VI. DISCUSSION

Based on the results above, this study can conclude that Indonesia's Web sites significantly differ from the Taiwan's Web sites for the entire cultural dimension. In the Indonesia's Web sites, features like clubs, newsletter, family, symbols, loyalty and local Web sites showed higher score than Taiwan

Web sites. Even though community and loyalty were not difference but showed higher score than Taiwan. Community reflects presence or absence of community policy, giving back to community, social responsibility policy. Then, loyalty reflects customer loyalty program, company credit cards and special membership programs. This result shows that between two countries were not differences about community and loyalty conditions.

Societies high on uncertainty avoidance tend to be more risk-averse, avoid ambiguous situations, and value security than adventure or risk. In the Taiwan's Web sites, all of features like customer services, navigation, local stores, local terminology, free trial, tradition and testimonial showed higher score than Indonesia's Web sites. Almost all of features showed the significantly differences except navigation. Navigation reflect site map, well displayed link, links in form of pictures or buttons. The results show that the Web sites navigation has same condition between two countries.

People in high power distance societies tend to obey the elderly and show respect towards authority figures. In the Indonesia Web sites, features like hierarchy, pictures of CEO, quality assurance, vision, pride of ownership and titles showed higher score than Taiwan Web sites. This result showed that Indonesia still represents power distance's cultures than Taiwan's Web sites. Almost all of features revealed significantly differences between two countries except pictures of CEO and vision.

Masculinity dimension explains how gender roles are allocated in different cultures. Appeals emphasizing a product's superior performance and capacity to accomplish goals are common in masculine cultures (Cheng and Schweitzer, 1996). In the Indonesia's Web sites features like games, realism, effectiveness and gender roles showed higher score than Taiwan but were not showed significantly differences except effectiveness. The result showed that Indonesia still reflect masculinity countries but not too differ than Taiwan.

This study found that among four brands category, information technologies and financial services showed differences very clear between two countries. The result showed that the information technologies industry and the financial services were impregnated with cultural values of the countries than the others industry.

VII. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study provides insight into globalization trends across countries and industries that could aid managers in determining in which countries, and in what brand category, they should focus their online globalization efforts. Such country-industry comparisons would also help decision makers to set their global priorities for different regions and sectors. The study of Indonesia and Taiwan Web sites will specifically be useful for marketers when designing web sites for the respective cultures. For example, the results of this study provide evidence that when designing web sites for the Indonesia audience marketers need to emphasize power

distance and masculinity features, while for the Taiwan audience marketers need to emphasize uncertainty avoidance.

This study found that among four brands category, information technologies and financial services showed differences very clear between two countries. This finding will help marketers to pay more attention in the information technology and financial services category when designing their Web sites in order to more culturally impregnate. In this study brand category main effect seemed to be not all that significant, except power distance in Indonesia and masculinity in Taiwan. But possibly expanding this study to more other brand category segments could reveal brand category-wise differences in the depiction of cultural values. Therefore, the future research must be addressed to compare more brand category whether there were differences in the depiction of culture values.

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Appendix.

Cultural categories for the framework (Singh and Baack (2004) and Singh et. al. (2005).

Dimension: collectivism

- Community relations. Presence or absence of community policy, giving back to community, social responsibility policy.
- Clubs or chat rooms. Presence or absence of members club, product-based clubs, chat with company people, chat with interest groups, message boards, discussion groups, and live talks.
- Newsletter. Online subscriptions, magazines, and newsletters.
- Family theme. Pictures of family, pictures of teams of employees, mention of employee teams and emphasis on team and collective work responsibility in vision statement or elsewhere on the web site, and emphasis on customers as a family.
- Symbols and pictures of national identity. Flags, pictures of historic monuments, pictures reflecting uniqueness of the country, country specific symbols in the form of icons, and indexes.
- Loyalty programs. Frequent miles programs, customer loyalty programs, and company credit cards for specific country, special membership programs.
- Links to local web sites. Links to country locations, related country specific companies, and other local web sites from a particular country.

Dimension: individualism

- Good privacy statement. Privacy policy and how personal information will be protected or used.
- Independence theme. Images and themes depicting self-reliance, self-recognition, and achievement.
- Product uniqueness. Unique selling points of the product and product differentiation features.
- Personalization. Features like gift recommendations, individual acknowledgements or greeting, and web page personalization.

Dimension: uncertainty avoidance

-*Customer service*. FAQ's, customer service option, customer contact or customer service e-mails.

-*Guided navigation*. Site maps, well-displayed links, links in the form of pictures or buttons, forward, backward up and down navigation buttons.

-*Tradition theme*. Emphasis on history and ties of a particular company with a nation, emphasis on respect, veneration of elderly and the culture, phrases like "most respected company", "keeping the tradition alive", "for generations", "company legacy".

-*Local stores*. Mention of contact information for local offices, dealers, and shops.

-*Local terminology*. Like use of country specific metaphors, names of festivals, puns, and a general local touch in the vocabulary of the web page not just mere translation.

-*Free trails or downloads*. Free stuff, free downloads, free screen savers, free product trails, free coupons to try the products or services, free memberships, or free service information.

. *Toll free numbers*. To call at any time around the clock.

Dimension: power distance

-*Company hierarchy information*. Information about the ranks of company personnel, information about organizational chart, and information about country managers.

-*Pictures of CEO's*. Pictures of executives, important people in the industry or celebrities.

-*Quality assurance and awards*. Mention of awards won, mention of quality assurance information and quality certification by international and local agencies.

-*Vision statement*

-*Pride of ownership appeal*. Web sites depict satisfied customers, fashion statement for the use of product, and the use of reference groups to portray pride.

-*Proper titles*. Titles of the important people in the company, titles of the people in the contact information, and titles of people on the organizational charts.

Dimension: masculinity

-*Quizzes and games*. Games, quizzes, fun stuff to do on the web site, tips and tricks, recipes, and other fun information.

-*Realism theme*. Less fantasy and imagery on the web site, to-the-point information.

-*Product effectiveness*. Durability information, quality information, product attribute information, and product robustness information.

-*Clear gender roles*. Separate pages for men and women, depiction of women in nurturance roles, depiction of women in positions of telephone operators, models, wives, and mothers; depiction of men as macho, strong, and in positions of power.

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