

CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES OF
INDIVIDUALS

by

Julia Carrion-Rivera

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

There is a prominent gap in investigations on cultural experiences outside the Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic societies (WEIRD) context. The significance of this study lies in its potential to expand our understanding of cultural influences on decision-making, encouraging intercultural relations, and inclusion, and offering positive social changes in our global society. This phenomenological study explored the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals from non-WEIRD cultures, identifying the significant role culture plays in forming human behavior and cognitive processes when making decisions. The research questions explored the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals framed within Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory. The sample included 13 participants from six non-WEIRD countries: Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Bolivia, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Nigeria, who are 18 years or older, speak English as a second language, born and raised in their country of origin, at least until they were 18 years old, and have lived in the United States for less than 5 years. Interviews with participants identified three key themes: growth mindset, consciousness, and empowerment. Findings indicated key barriers, such as language and prejudice. Favorable factors included resilience and a growth mindset which influenced the participant's decision-making process. The findings demonstrate the significant cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. The implications affect several domains including theoretical perspectives, psychological practice, social attitudes, and the church. By conducting further research, a better understanding at a global level of the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals can be gained.

Keywords: Culture, decision-making, cultural dimensions, WEIRD, cognitive processes, cross-cultural perspectives

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, a veteran who served this country with pride, and who encouraged and supported me through this journey. He embodies the topic of this study as he has faced hard challenges throughout his life and has relied upon his cultural background, values, and belief system to make life-changing decisions. I am grateful for you and your relentless belief in me when I thought I could not continue. This accomplishment is yours as much as it is mine. I will forever be grateful.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my mother who believed in me with fierce faith, and to my father who always called me Dr. years before now.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Ogburn, my dissertation chair, for your invaluable support and patience. I am grateful for you. I want to thank Dr. Beiler for her feedback and most of all her kindness during this process.

I would also like to acknowledge the many immigrants worldwide who for various reasons have made the brave, challenging, and life-changing decision to migrate to other countries. In particular, I am grateful to the individuals who participated in this study and kindly shared their experiences through the interviews. You have encountered many difficulties including unfamiliar cultures, belief systems, religious traditions, and values. Although you face prejudice, racism, discrimination, and language barriers each day, you continue to reach out for your dreams encouraged by your cultural backgrounds and values instilled in you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
Dedication	v
Acknowledgments	vi
List of Tables	x
List of Figures	xi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
Introduction	1
Background	1
Problem Statement	6
Purpose of the Study	8
Research Questions and Hypotheses	8
Assumptions and Limitations of the Study	8
Definition of Terms	11
Significance of the Study	12
Summary	13
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	15
Overview	15
Description of Research Strategy	15
Review of Literature	30
Biblical Foundations of the Study	40

Summary	44
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD	46
Overview	46
Research Questions and Hypotheses	46
Research Design	46
Participants	46
Study Procedures	48
Instrumentation and Measurement	49
Data Analysis	54
Delimitations, Assumptions, and Limitations	56
Summary	57
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS	59
Overview	59
Descriptive Results	60
Study Findings	66
Summary	75
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	77
Overview	77
Summary of Findings	77
Discussion of Findings	79
Implications	83
Limitations	86
Recommendations for Future Research	87

Summary	88
REFERENCES	91
APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT FLYER	112
APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM	113
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE	117
APPENDIX D: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER	119
APPENDIX E: CODING SAMPLE	120

List of Tables

Table 1	61
---------------	----

List of Figures

Figure 1	71
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

Culture shapes human behavior and cognitive processes, including decision-making (Brodhead, 2019; Chernyak et al., 2019; Rossi et al., 2023). Understanding how cultural elements influence decision-making is critical for comprehending, identifying, and respecting diversity. This understanding also fosters effective communication and cooperation across cultures and develops comprehensive decision-making and problem-solving approaches in different contexts (Ratts et al., 2016; Spohn et al., 2022). However, studies regarding cultural influence on decision-making processes have focused on individualistic versus collectivistic cultures, with a gap in research on cultural experiences outside of the Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic societies (WEIRD) framework.

According to Glazer and Karpati (2014), most cross-cultural decision-making research has concentrated on individualism-collectivism values to describe cultural differences in decision-making processes. There is a need to incorporate more diverse samples in cross-cultural psychology research, including non-WEIRD cultures, to increase the generalizability of outcomes and provide a more thorough knowledge of cultural differences in decision-making processes (Glazer & Karpati, 2014).

Background

The role of culture in the decision-making processes of the individual is extensive since culture affects the decisions individuals make in their lives. Cultural identity allows the individual to shape a perception of himself and the surroundings. According to Podrug (2011), the decision-making process and style of the individual are linked to the individual's culture,

standards, and customs. The researcher added that the individual's culture completely influences every step in the decision-making process (Podrug, 2011).

Culture is a process in an individual's life that lasts their lifespan and involves beliefs, practices, traditions, values, norms, social standards, and language, among other factors. Culture comprises how people live and adds value to society, particularly fundamental qualities. Cultural involvement can be of huge benefit to individuals and influences them at a personal level. Culture provides pleasant and desirable experiences, increasing individuals' emotional and logical intelligence. Culture encompasses the societal moral principles or standards found in society and is the individual's way of life.

An individual's perception of himself or herself and the environment is one of the primary influences in his or her decision-making (Alavi & Azizi, 2021). Current research studies reveal that societies' cultural structure affects social information's influence on decision-making (Molleman & Gächter, 2018). According to Cohen (2009), religion and social class can separate individuals into distinctly recognizable cultures. Thus, understanding cultural influences is vital when exploring human behavior and relationships. It helps explain why individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds may display various behaviors, make different selections, and react to various circumstances.

Culture also plays a part in exhibiting values that are better applied in decision-making through dependence on interpretations (Edelson & Reyna, 2021). Individuals employ social principles that are affected by culture to determine the appropriate course of action and make decisions consistent with those social principles. People in a culture commonly interpret the significance of symbols, artifacts, and behaviors in the same or analogous ways (Banks & Banks, 1989). Individuals from dignity versus face cultures vary in how they ensure their moral

self-dignity. Individuals from face cultures are more likely to attach their moral self-dignity through the eyes of other individuals, while the opposite is true for individuals from dignity cultures (Seo et al., 2020).

Culture

The definition of culture has different variations and connotations for diverse individuals. For some individuals, culture is a group with a similar history and beliefs of behaviors, principles, morals, and attitudes. Individuals see the world from their background's viewpoint and thus respond according to their culture. Understanding the decision-making process involves considering individuals' personal experiences pertaining to their culture and how other significant factors influence their decision-making. The Center for Advanced Research and Language Acquisition at the University of Minnesota (2019) defines culture as collective patterns of behaviors and relations, cognitive constructs, and emotional understanding learned through socialization. These mutual patterns identify the individuals of a culture group while distinguishing those of another group (Center for Advanced Research and Language Acquisition, 2019).

According to Damen (1987), culture encompasses learned and shared patterns or models for living. Culture distinguishes individuals or groups of individuals who have distinctive characteristics in common and are passed on through generations. In agreement with Damen (1987), Smith (1997) has stated that culture refers to the many ways of living demonstrated by a specific group of people, ways that are transferred from one generation to the next and which differentiates that group from others.

Decision-Making

Decisions made by individuals are affected by their preconceptions, life experiences, feelings, and reasoning, which are all psychological processes. Glazer and Karpati (2014) define decision-making as processing information related to a dilemma and a state of affairs to reach a decision. They state that culture is the role of a group of individuals who share a common history and experience of proper standardizing behaviors, ideals, and attitudes. They also point out that to become a good decision-maker, the individual must be informed about practices, beliefs, and mindsets that exist in a culture and understand the thought processes of others prior to making a decision (Glazer & Karpati, 2014). According to Yates and Potorowsky (2012), the term decision refers to a commitment to a choice that is expected to serve the interests and values of specific individuals (Yates & Potorowski, 2012).

Biblical Foundations

The Bible says in the book of John, chapter 16, verse 15, that Jesus told His disciples to go all over the world and share the Gospel with all creation (*Amplified Bible*, 2015). God includes everyone regarding salvation and equality, demonstrating that God's love and treatment of everyone are the same, regardless of cultural background or ethnicity. It is essential to consider cultural diversity in research studies to ensure the validity and applicability of research findings to all individuals. Considering cultural diversity involves conducting research at a more global level, beyond Western society, and including diverse participants and researchers. God gave humanity the example of seeing everyone the same when He provided His only Son so we can have redemption through Him (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, John 3:16). By researching the role of culture and beliefs in the decision-making processes of individuals at a global level, the results would be more generalized and inclusive of diverse cultures and ways of life. There are instances

in the Bible where culture and decision-making are specified. For instance, when King Darius signed the injunction that anyone who prayed to any god or king besides him during the next thirty days would be thrown into the lion's den, Daniel continued to pray to his God as was his custom (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Daniel 3:39). Daniel decided to observe his culture regardless of the consequences. In another example, Ruth decided to leave her people and culture and follow Naomi to her country (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Ruth 1:17). In another example, Abram decided to obey God and leave his country and culture, believing God's promise that God would make Abram a great nation, and would bless him abundantly, and make his name great, and that through Abram all the nations of the earth would be blessed (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Genesis 12: 1-3).

Culture and beliefs are interconnected and sometimes protect individuals from detrimental beliefs, wrong decision-making, and unacceptable behavior. God knows how other cultures and beliefs can influence individuals and how they might affect their decisions and steer them on the incorrect path. Thus, Christians are called to seek God's direction and align decision-making with His values instead of cultural norms (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Romans 12:2). We are also called to engage with culture respectfully, consider others as more important than themselves, seek to make decisions that benefit others, and use it as a chance to share the gospel (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Acts 17:22). Paul engaged with the culture of Athens respectfully. He observed the cultural traditions and used them as an opportunity to share the gospel (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Acts 17:16-34). This approach demonstrates the importance of cultural sensitivity and understanding in sharing the message of Christ. We should seek to understand and respect the cultural backgrounds of others while also sharing the gospel's truth.

Paul emphasized the importance of renewing our minds to understand God's will for our lives, transforming our thinking, and rejecting the worldly values and customs that may influence our decision-making processes (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Romans, 12:22). As Christians, we are called to be set apart from the world and to live according to God's standards. The Bible stresses the importance of aligning our decision-making with God's values and not adapting to the patterns of this world. Christians should seek to understand and employ biblical principles in their decision-making processes while exhibiting cultural sensitivity and understanding in our relations with others.

Jesus used parables to transmit His teachings to His listeners. He spoke to them about their values and cultural beliefs that they understood. The parables were about their agriculture, social background, and values. He communicated His message in a way that they found significant and applicable to their social settings, cultural and spiritual needs (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Matthew 13:18; Luke 14:7; Mark 4:14; Matthew 13:19).

Problem Statement

Damen (1987) defines culture as an acquired behavior influencing social interaction and adaptation. Current research has shown that cultural influence significantly shapes the decision-making processes of individuals (Bullock, 2011; Le Fevre & Frankl, 2013). Cultural differences in communication, decision-making formations, and risk perceptions impact choices in different societies (Oyserman et al., 2008). Furthermore, researchers have concluded that each step in the decision-making process is influenced by culture and linked to the individual's culture, standards, and norms (Ohr et al., 2017; Podrug, 2011; Rhee & Jang, 2020; Wang et al., 2015).

There is a gap in this research field regarding Western researchers' generalization when conducting research in WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic)

countries, as past studies have focused on East Asian and North American Caucasian cultures with little or no attention to other cultures (Baess et al., 2023). The omission of cultures outside of WEIRD countries has resulted in a focus on individualistic societies, thereby overlooking the complexities of non-Western cultures (Lomas et al., 2023; Nielsen et al., 2017; Yates & De Oliveira, 2016; Yilmaz & Alper, 2019).

Researchers frequently draw on past experiences to respond adaptively through generalization (Seo et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2018). Thus, when considering cross-cultural generalizability, concerns are often treated subjectively (Wiernik et al., 2022). This Western-centric preference has resulted in generalized outcomes that may not represent the decision-making behaviors of individuals from diverse cultural contexts (Rad et al., 2018). It limits the applicability of results, disregards potential origins of diversity, and obstructs the comprehension of human cognition (Ghai, 2021; Gutchess & Ramjaram, 2022; Hansen & Heu, 2020). Henrich et al. (2010) indicated that the samples regularly utilized in psychology research studies are primarily from WEIRD cultures, representing only 15% of the world population. Therefore, the samples in most psychology studies are prejudiced and not demonstrative of the mainstream of the world population, mainly non-WEIRD (Muthukrishna et al., 2018). This bias can lead to misconceptions and assumptions about non-Western societies' decision-making behaviors. Cultural dimensions, such as individualism-collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance, contribute to the intricacy of cross-cultural research and require a more aware method (Brosch et al., 2020; Deffner et al., 2022; Hofstede, 1980).

To gain a comprehensive understanding, researchers must incorporate diverse cultural experiences in their studies (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). To overcome the Western bias, researchers must expand study samples to include participants from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Incorporating diverse cultural experiences in the study will provide a more comprehensive understanding of decision-making processes.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to explore how culture impacts decision-making behavior. The study investigated how individuals from diverse cultures other than WEIRD cultures describe the impact of their cultural backgrounds on decision-making and decision preferences. Furthermore, the mechanisms through which culture influences decision-making were examined.

Research Question(s)

Research Questions

RQ 1: How do individuals explain the influence of their cultural background on their decision-making?

RQ 2: How do cultural norms, values, and beliefs influence an individual's decision-making processes?

RQ 3: How does the understanding of cultural influences on decision-making processes promote efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts?

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

Assumptions

In this study, several assumptions were made about the topic of cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. One assumption was that cultural norms, values, and beliefs significantly shape an individual's decision-making processes. Additionally, the study assumed that understanding cultural influences on decision-making processes led to more effective cross-cultural communication and cooperation. Another assumption was that those

cultural dimensions such as individualism-collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance are key factors that influence decision-making processes. The study also assumed that the sample population was diverse enough to provide a comprehensive understanding of how culture shapes decision-making behaviors. Furthermore, the study assumed that the participants were honest and accurate in describing the influence of their cultural background on their decision-making processes.

Limitations

Several limitations were identified. The first limitation was that the study's findings may not be generalizable to all cultural groups due to the limited sample size and cultural diversity. The study's sample size may not be representative of the entire population, and the cultural diversity of the sample may not be sufficient to provide a comprehensive understanding of how culture shapes decision-making behaviors. This limitation could have impacted the external validity of the study's findings, as the results may not be applicable to other cultural groups or contexts (Shadish et al., 2002).

My cultural biases and assumptions may have also limited the study, which could have influenced the research outcome. My prior experiences might have limited my knowledge or beliefs on the topic. Thus, my cultural background could have impacted the data interpretation and understanding of the cultural dimensions that shape decision-making behaviors. This fact could have led to a biased or incomplete understanding of how culture shapes the participant's decision-making behaviors.

Moreover, the study may have been limited by the complexity of cultural dimensions and the difficulty of measuring them accurately. Cultural dimensions are multifaceted and may have been difficult to measure accurately and operationalize, which could have impacted the validity of

the study's findings (Maxwell, 2010). Moreover, cultural dimensions may vary across diverse cultural groups and contexts, which could have impacted the generalizability of the study's findings.

The validity of the study's findings may have been impacted by the potential for participants to offer socially desirable responses or to be influenced by the research background (Edwards, 1953). These biased responses could have led to prejudiced results that incorrectly exhibit the participants' true experiences. Additionally, the research context, for instance, the wording of survey questions, could have impacted participants' responses and led to biased outcomes.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory provided a theoretical foundation for the study of cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. Previous research has shown that Hofstede's cultural dimensions can influence decision-making processes (Strohschneider, 2002). For instance, Podrug (2011) found that cultural values impact decision-making styles. The cultural dimensions are a framework that illustrates culture's influences on its members' values and how they relate to behavior. These dimensions offer a lens to understand how culture influences decision-making within diverse social backgrounds (Burr & Dick, 2017; Hofstede, 1980; Orr & Hauser, 2008).

The importance of Hofstede's theory rests in its ability to give a structured vocabulary for investigating cultural influences on decision-making. Within this model, Hofstede determined and defined several dimensions that capture the various cultural traits across societies, including power distance, which refers to the extent to which people in a culture accept unequal power distribution. Another one of Hofstede's cultural dimensions is individualism-collectivism, which

he defined as the degree to which people in a culture prioritize individual goals over group goals. Moreover, masculinity-femininity is the degree to which people in a culture value assertiveness and competitiveness versus nurturing and caring. The uncertainty avoidance cultural dimension is the extent to which people in a culture are comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty (Hofstede, 1980; Yates & de Oliveira, 2016). These cultural dimensions are essential to understanding how culture shapes decision-making processes and how cultural diversity affects decision-making styles.

The Bible provides guidance on decision-making, and it is critical to consider the biblical viewpoint when studying decision-making processes. In Proverbs 24:6, King Solomon urged individuals to seek God's guidance when making decisions. Christians should involve prayer, reading the Bible, and seeking wise counsel from others when facing situations and making difficult decisions (*Amplified Bible*, 2015). In Proverbs 3:5-6, we read that individuals should follow God's will and align their decisions with God's values and principles. They are encouraged to think about the consequences of their decisions and how they will affect themselves and others. Furthermore, in Romans 12:2, the Apostle Paul instructed us not to follow the pattern of behavior and thinking of this world but to be transformed and align our decision-making with God's values by renewing our minds (*Amplified Bible*, 2015).

Definition of Terms

The following is a list of definitions of terms used in this study.

1. **Culture:** Culture is defined as a complex and multifaceted concept that influences human behavior in several ways, including decision-making processes (Kim et al., 2022).
2. **Cultural context:** Cultural context refers to the cultural environment in which individuals make decisions (Strohschneider, 2002).

3. **Cultural dimensions:** Cultural dimensions are defined as the factors that influence decision-making processes, such as uncertainty avoidance, masculinity-femininity, individualism-collectivism, and power distance (Hofstede, 1980).
4. **Cultural diversity:** Cultural diversity is the differences in cultural backgrounds, values, and beliefs among individuals (Weber & Morris, 2010).
5. **Cultural norms:** Refers to the unwritten rules and expectations that guide behavior in a particular culture (Zhang et al., 2023).
6. **Cultural values:** Cultural values are the beliefs and attitudes considered important in a particular culture (Gelfand & Realo, 2018).
7. **Decision-Making:** Decision-making refers to how individuals make decisions based on their cultural background, values, and beliefs (Yates & Potorowski, 2012).
8. **Generalization:** Generalization refers to the ability to apply research findings based on a sample to the entire population or to transfer the findings of one study to another comparable situation (Baess et al., 2023).
9. **Social desirability bias:** Social desirability bias refers to the tendency of individuals to provide socially acceptable responses or to align with the researcher's expectations, which could impact the validity of the study's findings (Weber & Morris, 2009).
10. **WEIRD:** Refers to the Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic countries (Baess et al., 2023).

Significance of the Study

This study on the topic of cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals had significant value in both theoretical and practical domains. Furthermore, it is significant for the research literature and the global community. This study's significance lies in

its potential to contribute to the theoretical understanding of the cultural influence on decision-making processes and its capacity to provide practical insights that can be applied in various fields to improve cross-cultural interactions and outcomes.

By considering diverse cultural experiences, study results provided a more complete understanding of how culture forms decision-making behaviors. This approach challenged the prevalent Western-centric bias in existing research and provided fresh perspectives on how cultural dimensions like individualism-collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance affect decision-making processes. The findings of this study provided a platform for further research into the influence of other cultural dimensions on decision-making, thus expanding the theoretical framework of cross-cultural decision-making.

From a practical standpoint, the study's findings significantly affected several fields, including international business, organizational behavior, health, public policy, transportation, and education. Understanding how cultural differences influence decision-making improved cross-cultural communication and cooperation, leading to more efficient decision-making and problem-solving strategies in different contexts. Theoretically, this study contributed to the existing body of knowledge in cross-cultural psychology and decision-making. It addressed the current gap in research that overlooked the influence of non-Western, non-WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) cultures on decision-making processes.

Summary

This study aimed to explore the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals using a qualitative phenomenological design study. Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is a framework for cross-cultural communication that shows the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members and how these values relate to behavior (Hofstede, 1980;

Podrug, 2011; Strohschneider, 2002). Although current research has demonstrated that cultural influence significantly shapes the decision-making processes of individuals, there is a gap in this research field regarding Western researchers' generalization when conducting research in WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) countries (Bullock, 2011; Correia et al., 2017; Le Fevre & Frankl, 2013).

Chapter two provides an overview of the topic, a description of the search strategy, the theoretical framework, and the theory's practical applications. It also provides the model's rationale, a literature review, and the biblical foundation of the study. The chapter ends with a summary and an introduction to Chapter three.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The topic of this research study was the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. Culture plays a fundamental role in shaping human behavior and cognitive processes, including decision-making. As a complex construct, culture significantly impacts an individual's behavior and intellectual processes, thus influencing decision-making mechanisms (Brodhead, 2019; Chernyak et al., 2019; Rossi et al., 2023). This research aimed to understand the dynamics of this interaction to gain broader and deeper knowledge of how cultural elements shape individual choices and behaviors, and how culture influences the decision-making processes. Examining cultural influences on decision-making is vital for identifying, understanding, and respecting diversity. It is also vital for promoting inclusivity, efficient communication, harmonious collaboration, and problem-solving among culturally diverse individuals (Ratts et al., 2016; Spohn et al., 2022).

This qualitative study explored the role of unique cultural values, beliefs, norms, and socialization in shaping decision-making behaviors (Awiti & Orwa, 2018). It also provided valuable insights into how cultural contexts impact individual choices. The study intended to investigate how individuals from diverse cultures described the impact of their cultural backgrounds on decision-making, the role of cultural factors like norms and values in shaping decision behaviors, and how cultural backgrounds influenced risk-taking behaviors and decision preferences.

Description of Search Strategy

The literature search comprised (1) studies mostly published between 2018 and 2023, (2) articles written in English, (3) articles focusing on the influence of culture on decision-making

processes, and (4) articles using qualitative and quantitative research methodologies such as interviews, focus groups, and investigating cultural influences on decision-making. The search process involved a systematic methodology using the Jerry Falwell Liberty University Library online. The databases used were PsycINFO, PsyArticles, JSTOR, PubMed, and ProQuest. These databases were selected for their thorough coverage of the applicable disciplines and the accessibility of peer-reviewed academic literature. Keywords and phrases used for the search included “culture,” “decision-making,” “cross-cultural,” “Western research,” “bias on culture,” “Western generalization,” “cultural factors,” and “organizational behavior.” The Boolean operator "AND" was utilized to filter and develop the search findings.

A 2015 version of the Amplified Bible to locate relevant scripture was also used. The goal of the search strategy was to obtain biblical narratives, principles, and teachings depicting how culture influences individuals' choices and behaviors from a spiritual perspective. Keywords and phrases used for the search included “culture AND Decision-making AND Bible,” “cultural values AND biblical narratives,” and “faith AND cross-cultural choices.” The inclusion criteria for the biblical literature selection were: (1) scriptural references that address the influence of cultural factors on decision-making and (2) theological and scholarly works that offer insights into the cultural frameworks of biblical narratives.

Theoretical Framework

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory Model

Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions theory served as a foundation, allowing an in-depth investigation of the cultural dynamic forces linked with individual decision-making processes. By investigating these dimensions within the framework of varied social backgrounds, Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory posed a thorough context for understanding the deep influence of

culture on human behavior and decision-making. Within this model, Hofstede determined and defined several dimensions that captured the various cultural traits across societies, including individualism-collectivism, power distance, masculinity-femininity, and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 1980).

The importance of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory rests in its capacity to give a structured vocabulary for exploring cultural influences on decision-making. These dimensions explain how culture influences decision-making within different societal backgrounds (Hofstede, 1980). Hofstede's theory gave a theoretical foundation and is a functional tool for cross-cultural exploration across different frameworks. As research by House et al. (2004) demonstrated, cultural dimensions empower investigators to evaluate decision-making processes within and across different populations, thus understanding how culture forms the values individuals bring to their choices.

Model Propositions (Assumptions)

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory suggests a series of assumptions that highlight the central role of culture in influencing decision-making processes (Hofstede, 1980). These assumptions emphasize the interconnection of cultural dimensions with individuals' intellectual processes and lead to their selections. By accepting these assumptions, researchers obtained significant understandings of the “why” and “how” of cultural influences on decision-making, offering a solid basis for understanding the complex interaction connecting culture and preferences. This theory suggests the presence of central cultural dimensions that complexly form individuals' core values, behaviors, and the complex fabric of their decision-making processes. It assumes that individuals' behaviors and selections are developed by their societies' cultural norms and values. Additionally, the theory indicates that cultural dimensions influence their implicit and

explicit cognitive processes that lead to choices and their explicit decision-making as well.

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory identifies four major cultural dimensions: power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, and uncertainty avoidance.

Assumption 1: Culture as a Primary Influencer. The theory suggests that a society's cultural norms, values, and beliefs significantly shape the cognitive frameworks through which individuals perceive and evaluate choices. This assumption supports the view that individuals are social organisms rooted within cultural frameworks, and their selections are innately interlinked with the cultural scripts that lead to their understanding of the world (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Hofstede's theory argues that one must consider the cultural foundations that set individuals' mental patterns to understand decision-making.

Assumption 2: Cultural Norms and Values as Developmental Factors. The theory assumes that individuals' behaviors and choices are shaped by their societies' cultural standards and values (Hofstede, 1980). Cultural standards and norms function as guiding standards that impose proper behaviors within a specific society, forming individuals' views of what is proper or improper (Oyserman et al., 2002). These standards and norms influence individuals' values, which inform their decision-making principles (Triandis, 1995). In cultures valuing interdependence and group agreement, decisions could be led by seeking group well-being instead of individual benefits. Hofstede's theory proposes that researchers can interpret the complex fabric of individuals' selections by understanding cultural standards, norms, and values.

Assumption 3: Influence on Implicit and Explicit Decision-Making. The theory indicates that cultural dimensions influence the implicit cognitive processes that lead to choices and explicit decision-making (Hofstede, 1980). This assumption is founded on the view that culture functions at both conscious and subconscious levels, influencing individuals' automatic

judgments and cognizant thought (Nisbett & Miyamoto, 2005). Cultural dimensions could unconsciously lead to individuals' views of danger, affecting their inclinations for careful or daring decision-making (Leung & Bond, 2004). Hofstede's theory proposes that by incorporating an understanding of these dimensions into the consideration of both implicit and explicit decision-making, a more thorough display of the role of culture in forming selections can be revealed.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory Applications

The adaptable and flexible nature of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory has persistently offered awareness of the complex interaction between culture and decision-making processes across various areas, populations, and research backgrounds. Through an exhaustive assessment of qualitative and quantitative studies, it is obvious that the theory's applicability encompasses far outside its foundational paradigms, steadily contributing to a complete understanding of the complex relationship between culture and decision-making processes. Hofstede's theory has found extensive applications in international business studies, cross-cultural psychology, organizational behavior, health, government and public policy, transportation, and education, among others.

International Businesses. Gherardi and Perri (2019) utilized a regression statistical analysis to identify patterns and associations between cultural dimensions and branding approaches to align with cultural differences across various countries. This quantitative study showed that Hofstede's cultural dimensions impact global branding strategies. The researchers also found that cultural dimensions influence several aspects of global branding strategies, such as brand positioning, personality, and communication. They concluded that Hofstede's cultural dimensions provide a useful framework for understanding the relationship between culture and global branding strategies. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of understanding

cultural dimensions in developing effective global branding strategies and emphasizes the need for culturally sensitive approaches to branding.

While Gherardi and Perri (2019) focused on identifying the patterns and relationships between cultural dimensions and branding methods to align with cultural differences across different countries, Leonavičienė and Burinskienė (2022) explored the influence of internationalization on the cultural dimensions of global companies. They investigated how internationalization processes speed up changes in cultural dimensions within these companies. The study demonstrated statistical results involving the significance and tendency of these changes. Only four out of six cultural dimensions have at least one significant link in the cross-cultural landscape of internationalization, power distance, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism-collectivism (Leonavičienė & Burinskienė, 2022).

Similar to the study conducted by Gherardi and Perri (2019), cultural differences also seem to impact how individual differences are shown in newsvendor decisions. Li et al. (2019) gathered numerical data to evaluate and examine the differences in decision-making behaviors between Chinese and American subjects and how these behaviors relate to individual differences. Chinese subjects, compared to American subjects, tend to participate in more demand chasing, order quantities nearer to the mean demand, have lower anticipated revenues, and show a greater discrepancy in order quantities (Li et al., 2019). The theory's incorporation into international business frameworks has enabled organizations to explore cultural mechanisms. They can also adjust their methods to reverberate with local preferences, emphasizing the practical connotation of cultural dimensions in real-world experiences. The theory has also shown its benefit in global business operations, aiding organizations to explore cultural traits and improving decision-making strategies in various markets (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010).

Cross Cultural-Psychology. Analogous to the business field, researchers in cross-cultural psychology have utilized Hofstede's dimensions theory to investigate how cultural influences affect decision-making processes among different populations (House et al., 2004). Researchers have shown how these dimensions are exhibited throughout cultures. Thus, offering an understanding of how culture influences individual decision-making patterns. In a quantitative study known as the GLOBE, the researchers stressed the complexity of leadership across diverse cultural backgrounds and the need for culturally informed leadership methods. House et al. (2004) gathered data through surveys and questionnaires administered to individuals and utilized statistical analyses to investigate the relations between cultural dimensions, leadership behaviors, and organizational results across various cultures. The outcomes of this study comprised understanding the cultural dimensions that impact leadership practices, identifying leadership models in diverse cultures, and expanding a universal leadership theory that recognizes cultural differences.

In contrast to the GLOBE study conducted by House et al. (2004), Seo et al. (2020) focused on assessing an individual's moral appropriateness and not leadership practices. They conducted two cross-cultural studies to explore how individuals from face and dignity cultures assess their moral appropriateness based on their viewpoint and whether cultural differences exist in the prominence of these assessments. Their study differs from the GLOBE study by House et al. (2004) because they focused on assessing individual's moral appropriateness and not leadership practices. House et al. (2004) studied 62 diverse societies, while Seo et al. (2020) focused on individuals from only two different cultural backgrounds. Face-culture individuals are inclined to prioritize the perspective of others, while dignity-culture individuals prioritize their perspective (Seo et al., 2020).

In a similar study to that of House et al. (2004), where researchers emphasized the intricacy of leadership across diverse cultural backgrounds and the need for culturally informed leadership approaches, Ibrahim (2022) investigated the dynamic decision-making forces within cross-cultural teams participating in international volunteerism, specifically concentrating on the junction of UK and Ghanaian volunteers. The researcher wanted to investigate how cultural differences affect these teams' decision-making processes and leadership management. Ibrahim (2022) uncovered several leadership styles and approaches leaders utilize to manage decision-making in international volunteerism.

Similar to the study conducted by Seo et al. (2020), Ibrahim (2022) focused on individuals from only two different countries. The sample consisted of UK and Ghanaian volunteers participating in the International Citizen Service (ICS) program. This mixed-method study showed that cultural differences impact decision-making in international volunteerism, including differences in leadership styles and preferences for decision-making. Specifically, the study found that UK volunteers tend to prioritize individual autonomy and value evidence-based decision-making, while Ghanaian volunteers tend to prioritize group harmony and value consensus-based decision-making. The study outcomes explain how cultural differences impact decision-making within cross-cultural volunteer teams (Ibrahim, 2022).

Organizational Behavior. Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory has been critical in developing organizational strategies in global business operations. The theory's dimensions impact leadership methods, communications procedures, and negotiation strategies within international business organizations (McSweeney, 2002). Within organizational behavior, Hofstede's theory has granted an understanding of leadership and decision-making approaches across diverse cultural frameworks. Riggio et al. (2018) conducted a quantitative field test with

multinational teams to explore the influence of cultural dimensions on leadership efficacy in international teams. Statistical analyses explored the relationships between cultural dimensions, team dynamics, and performance. The outcome of this study showed the effect of specific cultural dimensions on team dynamics and performance in multinational teams. The findings also showed that these effects change across diverse cultural backgrounds (Riggio et al., 2018).

In a different quantitative study, Chenyang Li (2023) utilized a meta-analysis of 47 studies with a total of 16,078 participants from 16 countries to explore the relationship between organizational identification (OID) and unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), as well as the regulating effect of culture on this relationship. The results showed that OID is positively correlated to UPB, and this relationship is moderated by culture, explicitly individualism, power distance, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and indulgence. Consistent with the outcomes in the study conducted by Riggio et al. (2018), where they found that there is an impact of specific cultural dimensions on team dynamics and performance in multinational teams, Chenyang Li (2023) concluded that OID can lead to UPB, and this relationship is affected by cultural factors. The study has significant implications for organizations and policymakers in understanding the potential negative consequences of OID and the importance of considering cultural differences in managing UPB.

In a study that has important implications for organizations and policymakers in promoting diversity and inclusion in teams and enhancing team performance across cultures, Feitosa et al. (2018) conducted a literature review and qualitative analysis of existing research on teams and culture to argue some of the key assumptions about teams and emphasize the significance of culture in team dynamics. Culture impacts team processes and outcomes in different ways, such as communication, conflict resolution, decision-making, and leadership (Feitosa et al., 2018). In

agreement with the study conducted by Chenyang Li (2023) and Riggio et al. (2018), the researchers in this study concluded that culture is a vital factor in team dynamics and that researchers and practitioners need to consider cultural differences when studying and managing teams.

Health. As in the business, cross-cultural, and organizational fields, Hofstede's theory has informed public health approaches focusing on cultural factors in recent years. In a study conducted by Schaller et al. (2021), the researchers aimed to investigate the relationship between the influence of cultural dimensions and the intent to get immunized against COVID-19 across diverse countries. The results of this quantitative study demonstrated that cultural dimensions are associated with the intent to get vaccinated against COVID-19, and this relationship differs across diverse countries. In particular, individualism, masculinity, and indulgence are positively related to the intention to get vaccinated, while power distance and uncertainty avoidance are negatively related to the intention to get vaccinated. Cultural dimensions have a substantial role in the intention to get vaccinated against COVID-19, and legislators and health professionals need to consider cultural variations when advocating vaccination (Schaller et al., 2021).

Bond and Bond (2010) utilized a literature review and qualitative evaluation of previous research on the Big Five personality factors, health, and social behavior to examine how the Big Five personality factors influence health decisions and social behavior. The results of this qualitative study indicated that the Big Five personality factors are associated with social behavior in several ways, such as communication, interpersonal relationships, and group dynamics. As in the study conducted by Schaller et al. (2021), (Bond and Bond (2010) concluded that the Big Five personality factors play a considerable role in social behavior and that researchers and specialists need to consider personality variations when analyzing and managing social behavior.

In another quantitative study, Blanton et al. (2019) utilized a survey of 1,000 young adults in the United States to investigate the relationship between cultural values and health decisions among young adults. Cultural values play a significant role in health decisions among young adults in the United States, and health professionals need to consider cultural differences when encouraging healthy behaviors (Blanton et al., 2019). Similar to the study conducted by Schaller et al. (2021), where they concluded that cultural dimensions have a significant role in the intent to get vaccinated against COVID-19, and Bond and Bond (2010), who found that the Big Five personality factors play a substantial role in health and social behavior, the results in this study showed that cultural values are related to health decisions among young adults in the United States and that their interaction impacts health decisions.

Public Policy. Hofstede's theory has also been applied in government policy and diplomacy. Kostopoulos et al. (2019) utilized a survey of 197 business professionals from 25 countries with experience in international negotiations to explore how national culture influences negotiation behavior and social outcomes in international business settings. The results of this quantitative study indicated that national culture is linked to negotiation behavior and outcomes in international business settings and that cultural variations can lead to misunderstandings and disagreements in negotiations. Power distance, individualism, and uncertainty avoidance are the most significant cultural dimensions that impact negotiation behavior and outcomes. By recognizing these dimensions, governments can modify their diplomatic methods and approaches to agree with the cultural values of their equivalents (Kostopoulos et al., 2019). Recognizing these dimensions promotes increased collaboration and efficient decision-making in international matters.

Beugelsdijk and Welzel (2018) utilized a literature review and analysis of previous research on cultural dimensions and dynamics to combine Hofstede's cultural dimensions with Inglehart's cultural dynamics. The outcomes of this qualitative study indicated that synthesizing Hofstede's cultural dimensions with Inglehart's cultural dynamics can offer a more comprehensive context for understanding national culture and that cultural dimensions and dynamics interrelate to impact social and political results. In agreement with the previous research conducted by Kostopoulos et al. (2019) in the area of public policy, the researchers concluded that understanding cultural dimensions and dynamics is critical for successful policymaking and public management.

In the same area of policymaking, Galariotis and Karagiannis (2021) explored if culture and economic policy uncertainty influence style investing and popular momentum investing. They utilized other cultural dimensions, not only individualism, such as power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity, and long-term orientation, as part of the study by Hofstede (1980). The researchers noted that current results on policy uncertainty show that uncertainty-averse market individuals are willing to take higher asset prices for securities that have a positive slope to uncertainty factors (Bali & Zhou, 2016) and that the economic policymaking of government vagueness has a substantial influence on financial markets (Brogaard & Detzel, 2015). There is a robust relationship between the cultural dimension, economic policy uncertainty, and momentum investing policies in international financial markets (Galariotis & Karagiannis, 2021). The researchers also found that in addition to individualism, there are other cultural factors (power distance, masculinity, long-term orientation, and uncertainty avoidance), which impact the presence of momentum gains. In agreement with the findings in the previous study conducted by Kostopoulos et al. (2019) in the field of public policy, the researchers concluded that

understanding cultural dimensions and dynamics is essential for effective policymaking and public management.

Transportation. Social environment involves social relations, the physical and cultural setting where individuals interrelate (Barnett & Casper, 2001). Hence, social environment as an idea is analogous to what is identified as the culture of a society that is obtained from various sources (Spencer-Oatey, 2012). The transportation field is one of the areas impacted by the social environment and its effect on physical activities, which influences the nation's health and environmental elements (Hernandez & Blazer, 2006). Hasan et al. (2019) aimed to identify the sociocultural dimensions that impact how individuals utilize active transportation daily in Samarra, Iraq. They found that women do not walk or use bicycles because they feel embarrassed due to societal norms. Men indicated that they do not walk or cycle because of their societal status. The researchers recommended that information through education must particularly focus on women whose social standards impede their use of active transportation.

In another study, Chen et al. (2020) utilized a survey of 300 airline pilots from Taiwan, China, and the United States to explore how national culture influences safety behaviors among airline pilots and offer awareness of how cultural variations can be managed to upgrade safety outcomes. The findings in this quantitative study indicated that national culture is associated with safety behaviors among airline pilots and that their interaction can substantially influence safety outcomes. National culture plays a significant role in airline pilots' safety behaviors and understanding cultural differences is fundamental for improving safety outcomes (Chen et al., 2020). By identifying these cultural influences, airlines can develop training programs that resound with pilots' cultural backgrounds, thus improving safety practices and decision-making within the aviation industry (Chen et al., 2020).

In agreement with the study conducted by Chen et al. (2020), Zhang and Zhang (2022) concluded that national culture plays a significant role in the behavior and decision-making processes of individuals. They conducted a cross-sectional assessment of electric vehicle acceptance and Hofstede's cultural dimensions in 50 countries to explore how national culture influences the embracing of electric vehicles and to offer an understanding of how cultural differences can be managed to encourage maintainable transportation. Power distance, individualism, and masculinity are negatively related to the adoption of electric vehicles, while uncertainty avoidance is positively related to the adoption of electric vehicles (Zhang & Zhang, 2022).

Policymakers must consider cultural differences when developing policies to improve road safety (Van Den Berghe et al., 2022). Consistent with the two previous study findings, the outcomes of this quantitative study conducted by Van Den Berghe et al. (2022) indicated that cultural dimensions are related to road safety behavior, performance, and support for policy measures and that their interaction can considerably influence road safety outcomes. Moreover, the researchers found that power distance, individualism, and masculinity are negatively related to road safety performance, while uncertainty avoidance is positively related to road safety performance.

Educational Settings. In the education framework, knowledge about cultural dimensions is vital for developing inclusive and efficient educational settings. Alfaro and Boudreau (2019) have noted that cultural dimensions play a key role in the acculturation and identity of Latino community college students. The researchers indicated that recognizing the relationship between acculturation and identity formation is critical for improving educational outcomes among Latino community college students.

Similar to the previous study conducted by Alfaro and Boudreau (2019), Gao and Zhang (2021) concluded that cultural dimensions significantly influence English learning motivation among Chinese college students. The researchers conducted a study to examine how cultural dimensions, as defined by Hofstede, influence English learning motivation among Chinese college students. They found that cultural dimensions are associated with English learning motivation among Chinese college students and that their interaction impacts English learning outcomes.

Tlili et al. (2021) conducted a study to gain insight into the behavioral patterns of students from diverse cultures in an online six-week course and investigate the influence of cultural diversity on their learning outcomes. Congruent with the study conducted by Gao and Zhang (2021), the researchers found that students from diverse cultures display different learning behavioral patterns and are influenced by cultural diversity. Cultural diversity positively impacts students' learning results, encouraging cross-cultural communication, and understanding (Tlili et al., 2021).

Model Rationale

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory aligned appropriately with the topic of this dissertation, which intended to explore the role of culture in influencing decision-making processes. Due to its broad applications in varied backgrounds and contexts, the theory offered a strong framework to understand how individuals from distinct cultural upbringings make choices. The dimensions granted a systematic way to classify and examine cultural influences, and they associated greatly with the research goals to investigate how cultural standards, values, and socialization influence decision-making behaviors (Schwartz, 1999). The framework for this dissertation was founded in its intrinsic appropriateness to systematically investigate the cultural

influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. This theory is widely accepted and provides a framework for studying cultural factors.

Unfolding Cultural Intricacy. Hofstede's theory granted a methodical organization to peel off the complex levels of cultural intricacy that influence decision-making. By presenting cultural dimensions such as Individualism-Collectivism, Power Distance, and Uncertainty Avoidance, the theory provided a complete toolset to investigate how cultural norms and values form cognitive processes implicit in choices (Oyserman et al., 2002). This method aligned with the dissertation's intention to systematically, consistently, and rationally understand the interaction between culture and decision-making.

Global Importance. The global applicability of Hofstede's theory aligned with the dissertation's attention on understanding cultural influences on decision-making processes across diverse cultural backgrounds (Hall & Hall, 1990). As globalization progressively blurs geographical frontiers, understanding how culture influences choices becomes vital (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Hofstede's theory supplied this dissertation with instruments to explore these influences on a global level, adapting to the actualities of a connected world.

Review of Literature

Cultural Dimensions

Cultural dimensions refer to the values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors shared by a group of individuals who belong to a specific culture (Hofstede, 1980). These dimensions are utilized to describe and compare diverse cultures and to understand how cultural variations can influence communication, behavior, and attitudes. Cultural dimensions are frequently used in cross-cultural research and management to help individuals understand and work efficiently with people from diverse cultures. These dimensions are used to understand how people from diverse cultures

think, behave, and communicate and how these variations can be managed to encourage efficient communication and cooperation.

Children understand and use the four dimensions of social status: wealth, race, gender, and age daily. Children's social status impacts their understanding and use of these dimensions of social status (Enright et al., 2020). Cultural dimensions impact decision-making styles in the United States and China, but the relationship between cultural dimensions and decision-making styles varies between the two cultures. Power distance, collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance are positively associated with intuitive decision-making styles in China, while masculinity is positively associated with rational decision-making styles in the United States (Liu & Li, 2020).

Although both Enright (2020) and Liu and Li (2020) conducted studies focused on cultural dimensions, there are several differences between the two studies. One difference is the population sample and size. While Enright (2020) focused on children's population and their understanding of social status, Liu, and Li (2020) concentrated on adults and their decision-making processes. A limitation of Liu and Li's (2020) study is that it only included individuals from two cultures, and both cultures are part of the Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic societies (WEIRD). As stated in Chapter one, there is a gap regarding the generalization of data from WEIRD countries.

Congruent with the previous study conducted by Liu and Li (2020), Seno et al. (2021) noted that cultural dimensions impact practitioners' decision-making styles and behavior. In contrast to the study of Seno et al. (2020), who utilized a survey instrument in a qualitative study, Clark (2020) utilized a case study approach to investigate the role of cultural dimensions in the marketing approaches of for-profit higher education institutions. Cultural dimensions impact for-profit higher education institutions' marketing strategies and student enrollment and retention

(Clark, 2020). Although the researchers in these two studies employed different instruments and study designs, they concluded that cultural dimensions impact the participant's behavior and decision-making.

In another important study regarding cultural dimensions, Cala, and Soriano-Ayala (2021) aimed to provide insights into how cultural differences influence the occurrence of teen dating violence among immigrant teens. Family values and expectations, such as parental control and the importance of family honor, contribute to the occurrence of teen dating violence. Furthermore, they found that gender roles and expectations, such as the belief in male dominance and female submission, contribute to the occurrence of teen dating violence (Cala & Soriano-Ayala, 2021). These findings support the concept that cultural dimensions influence the decision-making processes of individuals.

In the area of health, Andrea et al. (2016) indicated that healthcare providers should consider socio-cultural dimensions when developing interventions to improve adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) for HIV/AIDS in public healthcare centers in Chile. Although the size and the sample population in their study differ from the study conducted by Cala and Soriano-Ayala (2021), the outcomes of both studies are similar. Cala and Soriano-Ayala (2021) found that cultural dimensions, like gender roles and expectations, such as the belief in male dominance and female submission, contribute to the occurrence of teen dating violence. Similarly, this study conducted by Andrea et al. (2016) demonstrated that socio-cultural dimensions, including stigma, social support, and cultural beliefs, were significant predictors of adherence to ART.

Individualism-Collectivism

Individualism and collectivism are cultural dimensions that describe the values, beliefs, and attitudes of people from diverse cultures. Individualistic cultures prioritize the needs of the individual over the needs of the group. In this type of culture, individuals are seen as independent and self-sufficient, and social behavior tends to be determined by the attitudes and preferences of individuals. Research has revealed that cultures categorized by high levels of individualism tend to prioritize personal independence and self-expression in decision-making, while collectivist cultures emphasize common agreement and group harmony (Triandis, 1995). Collectivist cultures prioritize the needs of the group over the needs of the individual. In this type of culture, individuals are seen as interdependent, and social behavior tends to be determined by the norms and expectations of the group.

Perez-Nebra et al. (2023) aimed to explore how cultural differences influence individualism and collectivism and provide insights into how cultural differences can be measured and managed. They indicated that the horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism scale (HVIC) scale is a reliable and valid measure of individualism and collectivism in Brazil and that the structure of these constructs is consistent with previous research. The HVIC scale can measure cultural differences in individualism and collectivism. Cultural dimensions and understanding cultural differences are essential for managing cultural diversity (Perez-Nebra et al., 2023). In another study on individualism-collectivism, Kim, and Markus (2018) similarly agreed with Perez-Nebra et al. (2023) that understanding cultural differences is essential for managing cultural diversity. They aimed to explore how cultural differences influence the tendency to deviate from or conform to social norms and provide insights into how cultural differences can be managed to improve social outcomes. Individuals from individualistic cultures prioritize uniqueness and

deviance, while individuals from collectivistic cultures prioritize harmony and conformity (Bond & Smith, 1996). Cultural differences influence the tendency to deviate from or conform to social norms, and understanding cultural differences is essential for managing social diversity (Kim & Markus, 2018).

Cultural dimensions of individualism-collectivism impact COVID-19 prevention behaviors in young adults, and understanding cultural differences is essential for managing COVID-19 prevention behaviors (Bianchi et al., 2023). Conversely, in another study, Nartova-Bochaver et al. (2022) concluded that environmental identity and individualism-collectivism impact climate change denial and that understanding cultural differences and environmental identity is essential for managing climate change denial. The previous study conducted by Bianchi et al. (2023) focused on the relationship between individualism-collectivism and COVID-19 prevention behaviors in young adults. This study by Nartova-Bochaver et al. (2022) focused on how cultural differences and environmental identity influence climate change denial and provide insights into how individualism-collectivism affects these attitudes. While the research topics were different, the researchers in both studies agree that the individualism-collectivism cultural dimensions influence individual behaviors.

Confucianism and collectivism were the cultural dimensions that shaped the insights into death and suicide, shaping South Korean emerging adults' perceptions of death and suicide. They perceive death and suicide as forbidden themes not publicly discussed in their culture. They also hold the belief that suicide is an egoistic act that brings humiliation and embarrassment to the family (Prinsloo & Prinsloo, 2021). Although the previous studies conducted by Nartova-Bochaver et al. (2022) and Bianchi (2023) focused on different topics and investigated different sample sizes and populations, they agreed with Prinsloo and Prinsloo (2021) and concluded that

cultural dimensions play a significant role in the behavior and decision-making processes of individuals.

Similar to the previous study conducted by Prinsloo and Prinsloo (2021), Hanssen and Tran (2019) found that the individualistic-collectivistic cultural dimension influences the decision-making process of individuals. Family care morality may create a significant barrier against pursuing professional assistance for individuals with dementia, grounded on the expectancy that the family will care for their elderly Hanssen and Tran (2019). In the area of women in leadership, Jasmin (2018) concluded that cultural background plays a vital role in women's experiences in leadership positions and their work-life balance. This study is congruent with the previous research conducted by Prinsloo and Prinsloo (2021) and Hanssen and Tran (2019). These studies highlight the considerable influence of cultural values on decision-making and work-life balance, specifically in the framework of family caregivers of dementia patients and women in leadership positions.

In another study different in sample population and size from the previous research conducted by Hanssen and Tran (2019) and Jasmin (2019), Baker (2021) utilized and gathered data through surveyed and interviewed ministers and church members from churches undergoing revitalization to examine the effect of American individualism on discipleship in church revitalization. The individualistic cultural dimension influences how churches approach discipleship, emphasizing individual development rather than communal building (Baker, 2020). This study is also different from the previous study since the focus of the investigation was solely on a sample population from an individualistic culture. Since the study only focuses on a population from a WEIRD country, the researchers might not be able to generalize the results.

Power Distance

Power distance is a cultural dimension that describes how individuals in a society accept an unequal distribution of power and status benefits (Hofstede, 2011). In high power distance cultures, there is regard for age and titles, individuals are expected to observe rules, and there is more leniency for concentrated power. Low power distance cultures tend to have less respect for authority, and more importance is given to equality and individual rights.

Cultural disposition impacts group involvement in workgroups, and understanding cultural differences is essential for improving group outcomes (Hinsz et al., 2023). In contrast to the previous study conducted by Hinsz et al. (2023), Adamovic (2022) explored how cultural differences and beliefs about telework affect the relationship between telework and job stress. Employee cultural background impacts the relationship between teleworking and job stress, with individuals from high power distance cultures being more likely to experience job stress when teleworking. Cultural differences must be understood and beliefs about telework are essential for managing the effects of telework on job stress (Adamovic, 2022).

Understanding cultural differences and moral foundations is essential for managing ethical decision-making behaviors and culture (Cantarero et al., 2021). Contrary to the previous studies by Adamovic (2022) and Hinsz et al. (2023), Cantarero et al. (2021) focused their research on the moral aspect of individuals in relationships with their supervisors. They found that moral foundations impact attitudes towards lying to one's supervisor, with individuals from high power distance cultures being more likely to justify lying to their supervisors. This finding supports the concept that power distance belief mediates the relationship between culture, moral foundations, and attitudes toward lying to one's supervisor (Lee, 2022).

According to Liu (2018), power distance impacts organizational change in a multicultural organization and influences communication patterns, decision-making processes, and the implementation of organizational change. Power distance affects how people perceive and respond to authority in the context of organizational change (Nkando, 2021). In agreement with the previous studies conclusions conducted by Adamovic (2022), Heinsz et al. (2023), and Cantarero et al. (2021), Nkando (2021) concluded that power distance plays a significant role in organizational change in a multicultural organization.

Although a study conducted by Salin et al. (2019) is related to the workplace and power distance, it is different from the previous studies conducted by Adamovic (2022), Heinsz et al. (2023), Cantareo et al. (2021), and Nkando (2021) in the sample population and the focus of the research. There are cross-national and cross-cultural similarities and differences in perceptions and conceptualizations of workplace bullying among human resources professionals (HRPs). Personal harassment and physical intimidation are largely seen as bullying across different countries, but work-related negative acts are more context-dependent (Salin et al., 2019). Salin et al. (2019) also noted that workplace bullying is a complex and context-dependent phenomenon that requires a culturally sensitive approach.

Masculinity-Femininity

Many societies assign sharply distinguished roles to men and women (Spence & Helmreich, 1981). Culture influences how masculinity and femininity are perceived and expressed, affecting decision-making processes. Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory recognizes masculinity and femininity as one of the dimensions that define cultural variations. Masculine cultures stress achievement, ambition, and material success, while feminine cultures highlight nurturing, caring, and quality of life. The degree to which a culture supports traditional views of

masculine and feminine traits affects decision-making processes. Understanding the cultural influences on masculinity and femininity can help individuals make decisions that align with God's values rather than cultural norms.

Loehlin and Martin (2000) aimed to explore the extent to which the psychological dimensions of masculinity and femininity in adult twins from opposite-sex and same-sex pairs are influenced by genetic and environmental factors. They found that male and female twins from opposite-sex pairs are more similar in their psychological dimensions of masculinity and femininity than twins from same-sex pairs. This finding indicates a genetic influence on masculinity-femininity dimensions (Loehlin & Martin, 2000).

In a different study, and unlike Loehlin and Martin (2000), Vunderink and Hofstede (1998) investigated the experiences of American students studying abroad in the Netherlands and the impact of cultural differences on their perceptions of masculinity and femininity. The students' perceptions of masculinity and femininity were influenced by cultural factors such as power distance, individualism, and uncertainty avoidance. The experience of studying abroad can lead to a shift in individuals' perceptions of gender roles and can challenge their preconceived notions of masculinity and femininity (Vunderink & Hofstede, 1998).

The gendered aspects of mourning in Akan death culture reflect the culture's ideas about gender roles and the importance of maintaining social order (Adjei et al., 2023). In agreement with the previous study conducted by Vunderink and Hofstede (1998), where they found that the student's perceptions of masculinity and femininity were influenced by cultural factors, Adjei et al. (2023) noted that mourning in Akan death culture is highly gendered and reflects the culture's ideas about gender. Women are expected to express their grief more openly and publicly than men, while men are expected to be stoic and reserved in their mourning.

Uncertainty-Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance is a cultural dimension that reflects the degree to which members of a society attempt to cope with anxiety by reducing uncertainty. Cultures with high uncertainty avoidance tend to have little patience for vagueness and prefer formal rules, policies, and procedures to reduce uncertainty. Cultures with low uncertainty avoidance tend to have a high acceptance of ambiguity and are more tolerant of risk and change.

Easterners and Westerners approach decision-making under uncertainty differently, with Easterners being more likely to rely on intuition and heuristics, while Westerners are more likely to rely on analytical reasoning. Cultural differences also impact decision-making behaviors when making decisions under uncertainty, and understanding cultural differences is essential for managing decision-making behaviors (Guo et al., 2022). In agreement with the conclusions of Guo et al. (2022), Lu (2023) concluded that cultural differences impact decision-making behaviors when making uncertain decisions and that understanding cultural differences is essential for managing decision-making behaviors. Cultural differences and uncertainty avoidance impact COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy, and understanding these factors is essential for managing vaccine hesitancy behaviors over time (Lu, 2023).

In agreement with Lu (2023), Huang et al. (2023) noted that individualism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance are positively associated with the speed of COVID-19 spread, indicating that countries with higher levels of these cultural dimensions experience faster transmission rates. Individualism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance mediate the relationship between COVID-19-related factors and the speed of virus transmission, suggesting that cultural dimensions play a crucial role in shaping the impact of these factors on the spread of the virus. Understanding the influence of cultural dimensions can help policymakers and public

health officials develop more effective strategies for managing future pandemics (Huang et al., 2023).

Biblical Foundations of the Study

The Bible provided guidance on the relevant constructs in the study of cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. The Scriptures include many examples of how culture and decision-making were significant and pivotal for individuals and the history of nations. The Scriptures are specific about the consequences of those decisions, and culture often played a significant role in the outcome (Genesis 12:1-4; Exodus 32:1-6; 1 Samuel 8: 4-22; Romans 12:2; Acts 15: 1-35) (*Amplified Bible*, 2015).

In the following biblical examples of how culture influenced individuals' decision-making in the past, one can also see the consequences of those decisions. These examples demonstrated the importance of being aware of cultural influences and making decisions that align with God's values rather than cultural norms. Understanding the wisdom in these stories can guide us in making morally sound choices in our present, culturally diverse world.

Culture, Decisions, and Consequences

In Genesis 12: 1-3, the Lord commanded Abram to leave his country, his culture, and his father's house to go to a land God would show him. Abram came from a pagan and idol worshiper's culture. God told Abram to leave everything he knew and follow God's instructions in faith. Abram had a decision to make. In Genesis 12:4, we read that Abram decided to obey God and left his world to go to an unknown land and culture (*Amplified Bible*, 2015). As a consequence of Abram's obedience, God greatly prospered and blessed him and his descendants to this day.

In the book of Exodus 32:1-6, when Moses was on the mountain receiving the Ten Commandments from God, the Israelites grew impatient while waiting for Moses and decided to create a golden calf to worship. This decision was influenced by the cultural practices the Israelites had learned in Egypt, where they worshipped gods made by men's hands. The Israelites had a slave mentality and grew impatient because they needed someone to tell them what to do. They thought that Moses was taking too long and made a decision that brought terrible consequences, which was God's anger and the punishment of those who decided to commit such terrible sin of idol worshiping (*Amplified Bible*, 2015). In the book of 1 Samuel 8:4-22, the people of Israel decided to demand a king other than God to lead them. This decision was influenced by the other nations' cultural norms. The Israelites wanted to be like other nations and rejected God as being their King. The decision to reject God as their king led to social inequality, the practice of sorcery, and the rejection of God's commandments, causing the Israelites to abandon God and worship other gods (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, 1 Samuel 8:11–17).

Women, Culture, and Decisions

In biblical times, women were not usually able to express their opinions or make important decisions. It was not culturally accepted. Nevertheless, a person can see how God protected and empowered women at the time. There were instances when women made decisions that impacted and changed their lives and the lives of others.

In the book of Joshua 2:1-21, we read how Rahab, who was a prostitute and was from an idol worshiper culture, hid the spies Joshua had sent to the city of Jericho, thus protecting them from certain death. Due to her decision, she saved herself and her family from being destroyed by the Israelites (*Amplified Bible*, 2015).

Another great woman in the Bible who made a difficult decision because she left her country and culture was Ruth. She was from a different culture and told Naomi, her mother-in-law, in Ruth 1:16, “Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God” (*Amplified Bible*, 2015). Ruth was a Moabite, a foreigner, and not included in the pact of the people of God. The Moabites were idol worshipers (1 Kings 11:33) who were cursed by God and despised by the Israelites (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Numbers 21:29). Because of her love for her mother-in-law, Ruth decided to follow her and eventually married Boaz, a rich man who provided for them.

The book of Esther 4:15 tells of how God saved the people of Israel from being destroyed by their enemies. The Persians were idol worshipers and had a different set of cultural beliefs than those of the Israelites. The Persians had a polytheistic religion whose sovereign god was Ahura Mazda, and they believed in other lesser gods and spirits under his authority. The Israelites had a monotheistic religion. They believed and worshipped one God who chose the Israelites to be His people. When the decree was sent regarding the slaughtering of the Israelites, Esther made the difficult decision to speak to the king on her people’s behalf. It was a difficult decision because there was a law that said that anyone who approached the king without being asked would be put to death unless the king would extend his scepter to them. She risked her life and could have been put to death by King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) for approaching the king without being called by the king first (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Esther 4:11). Because of her beliefs, consequently, the people of Israel were saved from destruction.

Culture and Decision-Making in New Testament

In John 7:45-52, the Pharisees rejected Jesus as the Messiah because they were influenced by their cultural beliefs of what the Messiah would be like. Jesus did not fit their cultural expectations of a powerful political leader who would take over and deliver them from the Roman

occupation (*Amplified Bible*, 2015). In the book of Acts 15:1-35, the early church decided whether Gentile believers needed to follow Jewish customs and practices, influenced by cultural variations between Jewish and Gentile believers. This decision resulted in the church's appreciation of the importance of unity, inclusion, and acceptance of Gentile believers. In Galatians 2:11-14, Peter was influenced by cultural norms that divided Jews and Gentiles. He withdrew from eating with Gentile believers when Jewish believers entered, even though he had formerly eaten with them. This decision was influenced by cultural expectations of Jewish purity laws (*Amplified Bible*, 2015).

In the book of Romans 12:2, the Apostle Paul instructed us not to follow the pattern of behavior or the way of thinking of this world but to be transformed and align our decision-making with God's values by renewing our minds (*Amplified Bible*, 2015). This verse stressed the importance of not adapting to cultural norms contrary to God's will. In the book of Acts 17:16-34, we read how Paul was intensely aggravated when he saw that the city of Athens was full of idols. Paul began to present to them the good news about Jesus and the resurrection using one of their altars, which read "To an unknown God" as an opening point to share the gospel with them. He engaged with Athens's culture respectfully, observed their cultural customs, and used them to share the gospel (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Acts 17:16-34).

These examples illustrate how cultural influences can impact decision-making and the consequences of those decisions. The cultural context influences how we understand the Bible, perhaps more than we realize. Christians are called to seek God's guidance and align decision-making with His values rather than cultural norms. We are also called to engage with culture respectfully, consider others as more important than themselves, seek to make decisions that benefit others, and use it as an opportunity to share the gospel.

Summary

Chapter two presented a literature review of existing research conducted on the topic of cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. Culture plays a fundamental role in shaping human behavior and cognitive processes, including decision-making (Brodhead, 2019; Cheng, 2020; Chernyak et al., 2019; Rossi et al., 2023). This qualitative study explored the role of unique cultural values, beliefs, and norms in shaping decision-making behaviors. Understanding cultural influence on decision-making promotes efficient communication and cooperation across cultures and develops comprehensive decision-making and problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts (Ratts et al., 2016; Spohn et al., 2022).

This study provided valuable insights into how cultural contexts and the cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede, such as individualism and collectivism, power distance, masculinity-femininity, and uncertainty avoidance, impact individual choices (Hofstede, 1980). The theory's assumptions underscored the fundamental significance of culture in shaping decision-making processes, emphasizing culture's primary role as a key influencer, developmental factors rooted in cultural norms and values, and its impact on both implicit and explicit decision-making. It contributed to understanding cross-cultural psychology and decision-making, with practical applications extending to international business, organizational behavior, health, public policy, transportation, and educational settings, among others.

A Christian worldview is a way of life relevant and applicable to all aspects of life, including decision-making processes. The Bible provides norms, commandments, principles, and laws that are significant and greatly influence many individuals' moral conscience. The cultural context influences the way we understand and interpret the Bible. In Romans 12:2, the Apostle Paul instructed Christians that they are called to seek God's guidance, be transformed by renewing

their minds, and align decision-making with His values rather than cultural norms (*Amplified Bible*, 2015).

In Chapter three, the emphasis of the study transitioned from theoretical foundations to the practical implementation of the research methodology. The chapter outlined the research design and questions, described the participants and procedures, instrumentation and measurement, data collection methods, and analysis procedures, which allowed for investigating the relationship between culture and decision-making in real-world settings.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

Overview

A qualitative phenomenological design was used to investigate the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. This chapter introduced the methods utilized to gather data through interviews and observations, the data evaluated through coding and thematic analysis, and ethical considerations. The study was guided by Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, which is a framework for cross-cultural communication that shows the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members and how these values relate to behavior (Hofstede, 1980).

Research Questions

RQ 1: How do individuals explain the influence of their cultural background on their decision-making?

RQ 2: How do cultural norms, values, and beliefs influence an individual's decision making processes?

RQ 3: How does the understanding of cultural influences on decision-making processes promote efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts?

Research Design

Participants

The desired number of participants was at least 15 from six cultures who speak English as a second language: Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Bolivia, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Nigeria. These particular countries are not part of WEIRD countries. The individuals selected for the study shared their experiences and contributed to the research. The final sample size was determined based on the concept of saturation and to ensure data saturation. Creswell (2012) and Boyd (1993) consider

that in a phenomenological research practice, the size of the participants can be between 2 and 25.

The inclusion criteria were as follows:

1. Participants must be 18 years or older.
2. Participants must speak English as a Second Language.
3. Must have been born and raised in their country of origin, at least until they were 18 years old. The participants who live in the US must have lived in the US for less than 5 years. Full assimilation usually happens within three to four generations; there is no set timeframe for the conclusion of the process. Some groups attained equality with the local culture by the third generation, while others took another generation to assimilate (Slasser, 2006).

After approval from the Institutional Review Board, the prospective participants were recruited from local community agencies and churches in Broward County, Florida (See Appendix D). The participants did not have to live in Broward County; rather, I chose to recruit from this county. Furthermore, I contacted the Global Trade Chamber of Commerce, which collaborates with individuals on a global scale to assist me in my recruiting efforts. I contacted these organizations to request approval to solicit advertisement flyers for prospective participants for my study (See Appendix A). My contact information was on the flyers for the interested potential participants to contact me via telephone or email. I also provided my contact information to the organization's representative to share it with the individuals interested in participating in the study. Once I contacted the interested potential participants, I set up a date, time, and place to meet with them face-to-face or via a video conference system such as Zoom or Teams to introduce and explain the purpose of the study.

Consent Form

During the meeting, the participants were provided with written and verbal information concerning the purpose and content of the study. Before the individuals agreed to be part of the study, they were provided with the consent form to read and sign confirming their agreement to participate (See Appendix B). The consent form comprised the following items:

1. The right of the participant to voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time.
2. The central purpose of the study and the procedures to be used in data collection.
3. The protection of the confidentiality of the respondents.
4. The known risks associated with participation.
5. The expected benefits to accrue to the participants.
6. The signature of the participant.

Study Procedures

I coordinated a date, time, and place to meet with the participants to introduce the purpose of the study, provided the consent form, and conducted the interview sessions with them. I selected the sample based on my judgment and the purpose of the study (Babbie, 1995; Greig & Taylor, 1999), looking for those who have had experiences associated with the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals (Kruger, 1988).

Once the study participants read, agreed, and signed the consent form, I conducted the interviews with the participants at an agreed safe place, date, and time at the participant's convenience. The interviews were conducted in a comfortable setting, free

from any potential disruptions and noise. The interviews were from 45 to 60 minutes long. No compensation was provided to the participants in the study. I began the interviews with open-ended, broad questions that concentrated on gaining insight into the topic of the study. The interviews were recorded and documented, and I took notes throughout the interview. After the interviews, the data was recorded and transcribed using the open and selective coding process. Moreover, I conducted and created the transcriptions in files utilizing Word and Excel. I also utilized the Nvivo software to organize, store, and analyze the data. The data was securely backed up on the computer for at least three years after completing the study. The information was password-protected to safeguard the data on the computer. The video, audio and/or taped recorded information was deleted after transcription for the security and protection of the participants (Alase, 2016).

Instrumentation and Measurement

The interview

The instrument that I utilized in this qualitative study was the interview. The interview questions aimed to obtain insight into the participants' decision-making processes and experiences and investigate the cultural factors influencing their decision-making. I conducted semi-structured in-person or video conference interviews utilizing an interview guide to receive comprehensive answers from the study participants (See Appendix C).

Semi-structured interviews promote a setting for additional conversations between the researcher and the participant to understand better the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals (Mojtahed et al., 2014). The semi-structured interview questions were developed based on the study's research questions and reviewed by the dissertation committee for

clarity and relevance. The questions were created to explore the participants' knowledge and lived experiences regarding the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals.

Recordings of the interviews were utilized to obtain the information of the answers correctly and were only recorded with the participant's authorization. All interviews were transcribed verbatim using NVivo. I used the video conference system's recording function to record the online interviews. Furthermore, the participant's identification and confidential data were eliminated from all the transcripts (Morse et al., 2015).

Validity

The validity of the study was demonstrated through the use of a thematic analysis method. Thematic analysis is a broadly used method for analyzing qualitative data to identify significant themes or patterns in the data and utilizing these themes to address the data that involves identifying themes (Boyatzis, 1998). A thematic analysis aims to recognize themes, i.e., patterns in the data that are valuable or appealing, and utilize these themes to address the study or say something concerning a matter. (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The method involved several steps, including the following: Data familiarization, coding, generating themes, theme refinement, defining and naming themes, and writing up (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Step 1: Data Familiarization

The first step refers to the researcher engaging in the data to understand the whole. This step involved reading and re-reading the data and writing down ideas (Goldsmith, 2021; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data Collection. I collected qualitative data through interviews to acquire the decision-making processes of individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

Data Transcription. After collecting the data, I transcribed it, ensuring that verbal and non-verbal indications were correctly obtained to maintain the value of the participant's experiences.

Data immersion. I immersed myself in the data by completely evaluating and familiarizing myself with the transcribed information to understand the cultural influences on decision-making.

Step 2: Generate Initial Codes

Next, I created codes that identified important data traits significant to answering the research question and organized the data into clusters.

Step 3: Search for Themes

In this step, I analyzed the codes and contemplated how different codes merged to form a major theme.

Step 4: Review Themes

Next, I evaluated the themes versus the dataset to ensure the themes worked in the framework of the complete dataset.

Step 5: Define Themes

In this step, I found the base of what each theme was about and determined definitions and labels for each theme.

Step 6: Write Up

In the final step, I brought together the analytic narrative and data extracts and put into context the analysis concerning existing literature. Using thematic analysis in this study ensured that the data was analyzed systematically and rigorously and that the study's research questions were adequately addressed.

Reliability

Reliability in qualitative research refers to the consistency, dependability, and replicability of the research findings over time (Carcaray, 2009; Grossoehme, 2014). Reliability is the degree to which outcomes are constant over time and a true portrayal of the population under study. If the results of a study can be replicated under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is deemed reliable (Joppe, 2000).

In the context of the study on the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals, the qualitative reliability was addressed utilizing a criterion sampling strategy, which guaranteed that participants met the inclusion criteria, thus enhancing the study's reliability. (Cresswell & Plano, 2007). Steps undertaken in qualitative research to guarantee the study's trustworthiness are four standards: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Katz & Tener, 2021; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Nowell et al., 2017).

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of a study means the level of certainty in data, interpretation, and methods utilized to guarantee the quality of a study (Polit & Beck, 2014). Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted that trustworthiness is one-way researchers can convince themselves and their readers that their research results are worthwhile. Trustworthiness is the researcher's total certainty in the results and assumptions of data gathering, analysis, and interpretation (Bonnie et al., 2022). I conducted the study precisely and systematically to demonstrate trustworthiness to obtain accurate outcomes. Furthermore, I showed that the data analysis had been conducted in an

exact, constant, and thorough manner through recording, systematizing, and revealing the analysis procedures with sufficient detail to allow the reader to decide if the procedure was trustworthy.

Credibility

Credibility addresses the match between respondents' views and the researcher's depiction of them (Tobin & Begley, 2004). According to Fear (2012), trustworthiness and expertise are primary credibility markers. The credibility of the study, or the certainty in the truth of the study and thus the results, is the most important criterion (Polit & Beck, 2014). Some strategies used to determine credibility involved continued interaction with participants, continual observation if applicable to the study, peer debriefing, member-checking, and reflective journaling. Evidence of iterative or repetitive questioning of the data was also shown, returning to assess it various times (Connelly, 2016). I established credibility by conducting member checking, observing, and spending time with the data, and developing a pleasant relationship with the participants (Birt et al., 2016). I also asked the participants to evaluate the content of the study based on accuracy, believability, and authenticity (Appleman & Sundar, 2015).

Transferability

Transferability indicates the generalizability of the investigation (Tobin & Begley, 2004). The researcher is accountable for presenting solid descriptions so those who want to transfer the results to their site can assess transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I demonstrated transferability by describing the cultural framework, the decision-making processes, and the participants' experiences. Furthermore, I showed descriptions enabling researchers to apply the findings to other times, situations, contexts, and populations. This method supports establishing

the transferability of the study's results to diverse cultural backgrounds and populations (Morse, 2015).

Dependability

Researchers must guarantee that the research procedure is rational, consistent, traceable, and documented accurately (Tobin & Begley, 2004). I accomplished dependability by describing variations noticed throughout the research and logging how the changes impacted the study. I documented the study procedures, the data gathering methods, and analysis approaches to determine dependability.

Confirmability

Credibility indicates that the researcher's explanations and conclusions derive directly from the data. The researcher must prove how conclusions and outcomes have been achieved (Tobin & Begley, 2004). According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), confirmability is validated when credibility, transferability, and dependability are all attained. I established confirmability by conducting peer debriefing. Peers reviewed the results and interpretations to confirm reliability and accuracy. Moreover, I conducted member checking, allowing the participants to review the results (Strohschneider, 2002).

Data Analysis

The analysis strategy selected for the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals study was justified by the need to understand the influence of cultural background on decision-making processes (Noble et al., 2003; Podrug, 2011; Strohschneider, 2002). The transcribed data was collected from the participants, coded, placed into categories, and confirmed (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996). The data included transcripts, codes, categories, and analytical summaries (Saldana, 2023). I created a list of their most repeated answers and chose

appropriate categories and themes. I created categories and the justification for why I created the categories. A chart was generated for their recurrence. I reviewed the participant's answers during the analytical process and provided the participants the opportunity to confirm data correctness. After the data was analyzed, it was shown to the participants to confirm that it was correct. I also asked the participants if they wanted to modify any of their interviews. This process helped to ensure transparency and that the participants accurately interpreted the data (Moravcsik, (2023). Lastly, a complete evaluation of the qualitative software provided the meaning of cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals through notes and analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Delimitations, Assumptions, and Limitation

Delimitations

I set two delimitations regarding the study's focus and scope to meet the research's objectives and goals. One delimitation was that the study focused on the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals from six different cultures: Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Bolivia, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Nigeria. I selected these cultures due to their diversity and being underrepresented in cultural research (Pelzang & Hutchinson, 2018). The other delimitation was that participants must know their cultural background and have had a personal experience of living in their cultural environment; therefore, they must have been born and raised until at least 18 in their country of origin.

Assumptions

Various assumptions were made about the topic of cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. One assumption was that cultural norms, values, and beliefs considerably model an individual's decision-making processes. Furthermore, the study assumed

that understanding cultural influences on decision-making can indicate more efficient cross-cultural communication and cooperation. Another assumption was that cultural dimensions such as individualism-collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance are significant factors that influence decision-making processes.

The study also assumed that the diversity of the sample population would offer a thorough understanding of how culture influences decision-making behaviors. Moreover, the participants would be authentic and accurate in explaining the influence of their cultural background on their decision-making processes. They would answer honestly and to the best of their knowledge. Another assumption was that the interpretation of the data would be accurate and unbiased.

Limitations

I identified several limitations in this study. One limitation was that the study's findings may not have been generalizable to all cultural groups due to the limited sample size and cultural diversity. The study's sample size may not have been representative of the entire population, and the cultural diversity of the sample may not have been enough to deliver a comprehensive understanding of how culture shapes decision-making behaviors. This limitation could have influenced the external validity of the study's outcome, as the results may not have applied to other cultural groups or backgrounds. To counter this limitation, the individuals must have spoken English as a second language, and if they currently live in the US, they must have lived in the US for at least five years.

My cultural biases and assumptions may have also limited the study, which could influence the research outcome. My prior personal experiences might have limited my knowledge or beliefs on the topic. Thus, my cultural background could have impacted the data interpretation and understanding of the cultural dimensions that shape decision-making behaviors. This fact

could have led to a biased or incomplete understanding of how culture shapes the participant's decision-making behaviors. Moreover, the study may have been limited by the intricacy of cultural dimensions and the complexity of measuring them correctly. Furthermore, cultural dimensions may have differed across diverse cultural groups and backgrounds, which could affect the generalizability of the study's findings.

The validity of the study's findings may have been influenced by the possibility for participants to provide socially desirable responses or to be affected by the research background. Socially desirable responses refer to the inclination of individuals to offer positive self-descriptions or to answer questions in a way that others perceive positively (Phillips & Clancy, 1972). This response type is grounded on cultural standards and may lead individuals to display themselves in a positive light, frequently mirroring characteristics, views, or conducts that are socially appreciated or seen as desirable (Paulhus, 2002). These biased responses could have led to prejudiced outcomes that did not accurately show the participants' true experiences. Additionally, the wording of survey questions could have swayed participants' responses and led to biased outcomes.

Summary

I introduced the study procedures and the method utilized to collect data through the measurement instrument, the interviews. I also provided the research questions and design utilized in the study and described in detail the recruitment process of the participants. I described the data, coding, and thematic analysis and defined the steps to obtain validity, such as data familiarization, coding, generating themes, themes refinement, defining and naming themes, and writing up. I discussed the reliability of the study, which refers to the consistency, dependability, and replicability of the research findings over time (Carcaray, 2009; Grosseohme, 2014). The four

standards to guarantee the study's trustworthiness were considered: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Bonnie et al., 2022; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Polit & Beck, 2014). Furthermore, I discussed the study's delimitations, assumptions, and limitations. Other topics presented in the chapter included an overview of the chapter and the sample demographics. The chapter concluded with a summary section. In Chapter 4, the descriptive results and the study's findings were presented and discussed.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to investigate how individuals from diverse non-WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, democratic) cultures describe the impact of their cultural backgrounds on decision-making processes. The data obtained from the interviews was recorded by transcription using the open and selective coding process. Moreover, I conducted and created the transcriptions in files utilizing Word and Excel. The process utilized to analyze the transcriptions from the 13 interviews conducted to develop codes and themes is explained in this chapter as well. The validity of the study was demonstrated through the use of a thematic analysis method. The data was securely backed up on the computer and will be saved for at least three years after completing the study. The information is password-protected to safeguard the data on the computer. The audio-recorded information was deleted after it had been transcribed for the security and protection of the participants (Alase, 2016).

This chapter comprises the findings of a qualitative phenomenological study conducted to answer the research questions. Furthermore, a discussion of how the analysis relates to the research questions is presented:

RQ 1: How do individuals explain the influence of their cultural background on their decision-making?

RQ 2: How do cultural norms, values, and beliefs influence an individual's decision-making processes?

RQ 3: How does understanding cultural influences on decision-making processes promote efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts?

The descriptive results section provides information about the participants and how culture impacts their decision-making. It also provides the requirements for the participants to be part of the study. In addition, this section contains the participant's cultural background, and the sample demographics, utilizing tables to supplement the summary. Also, the analytical process I conducted on the participant's responses to the interview questions is described.

Furthermore, the significant codes in the data and all themes developed are presented by research question. The results revealed the participant's experiences and perspectives concerning the study's research questions and the study findings. They shared their experiences regarding why and how they believe their cultural background has influenced their decision-making processes. The summary section provides a synopsis of the topics covered in the chapter, including the significant themes, the descriptive results, and the key research findings.

Descriptive Results

Thirteen individuals who met the inclusion criteria participated in the interviews in this study. The inclusion criteria is indicated in Appendix A. Two of the participants were from Puerto Rico, two participants were from Nigeria, two participants were from Haiti, three participants were from Jamaica, two participants were from Nicaragua, and two participants were from Bolivia. The initial aim was to interview fifteen participants, but two individuals declined to participate in the study due to lack of time on their part. Thus, thirteen participants took part in the study. This number of participants was adequate for data saturation. New data is inclined to be a surplus of data already gathered. When the researcher hears similar statements and remarks repeatedly, data saturation is achieved (Grady, 1988). I assigned pseudonyms instead of their actual names to safeguard the participants' confidentiality. The participant demographics are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1*Participants Demographics*

Name	Age	Gender	Country of Origin
Pluto	60	Male	Puerto Rico
Jupiter	59	Male	Puerto Rico
Neptune	46	Female	Jamaica
Venus	55	Female	Jamaica
Earth	42	Female	Jamaica
Saturn	55	Male	Nigeria
Uranus	39	Male	Nigeria
Mercury	48	Male	Haiti
Sun	36	Female	Haiti
Moon	36	Female	Nicaragua
Mars	56	Male	Nicaragua
Halley	42	Female	Bolivia
Ceres	39	Female	Bolivia

Pluto From Puerto Rico

Pluto stated that his cultural background and family had a significant impact on his decision-making throughout his life. He expressed that respect, hard work, and beliefs, including religion, are the foundation of who he is today. He pointed out that the family and the environment he grew up in absolutely shaped and formed who he is, how he thinks, and, how he acts.

Jupiter from Puerto Rico

Jupiter stated that when he came to this country, he did not have effective problem-solving strategies. He migrated to the United States because of economic reasons and had a hard time developing a strategy that would help him advance financially. Jupiter expressed that he felt he had a challenging time with the situation he found himself in. He started from zero and had to adjust his thought process to be able to function properly in his new life. He expressed that he had to look at things from a new perspective.

Neptune from Jamaica

Neptune expressed that although she lives in the United States, she often thinks about the beliefs, traditions, and religion she grew up in. Neptune considers her cultural beliefs a sounding board that guides her when making decisions. She also said that the way her parents taught her and the education she received in her native country influenced the way she behaves and the decisions she makes in this country.

Venus from Jamaica

Venus stated that her culture has shaped her decision-making process in several ways, such as being resilient and ambitious. Moreover, she stated that her parents were role models who worked hard and instilled in her the importance of obtaining a higher learning education because education opens doors. Her parents also instilled in her the importance of family, friends, work ethics, civic duty, and community involvement. Venus went on to state that some of the challenges that arise from cultural diversity are language barriers, systemic racism internalized transgenerationally, and cultural disparities and beliefs that can create barriers in how she approaches difficult situations. She believes it depends on how individuals were oriented in their nucleus family when prompted to utilize practical problem-solving skills. She pointed out that

unfortunately, in the Black culture, they are in survival mode and tend to be reactive as opposed to being proactive.

Earth from Jamaica

Earth expressed that culture has influenced how she thinks and acts and the decisions she has made in her life. She went on to say that culture even influences her relationships with others. Regarding cultural norms influencing our decision-making, she stated that because we internalize what we have learned, we learn to identify what is good or bad, right, or wrong. Also, we have learned to identify what is and what is not acceptable according to societal norms. Earth added that she has learned to view situations from different perspectives when confronted with difficulties and has relied on her parents and family for guidance on several occasions.

Saturn from Nigeria

Saturn pointed out that he comes from a rigid cultural background, and it has been somewhat difficult to adjust to another culture when he makes decisions. He stated that culture plays a significant influence in his decision-making. When he makes decisions, he considers the cultural beliefs, which include religion, and traditions, into account. He also noted that he is trying to instill his cultural beliefs in his children and that sometimes there is conflict between them due to the different perspectives in the United States culture. He added that sometimes he feels guilty because he thinks he should be stricter with his children but understands that the cultural norms in the United States are different from those of his culture in Nigeria.

Uranus from Nigeria

Uranus expressed that although his cultural background strongly influences his decision-making, he is open-minded and considers other perspectives when making decisions. He stated that he came to this country to improve his lifestyle and understands the importance of

acculturating to the different perspectives in this country. He said that despite the challenges he has encountered in the United States, such as miscommunication and stereotyping, he tries to look at situations from a different cultural perspective. He also believes that his faith gives him the strength and resilience to overcome any obstacles he might face.

Mercury from Haiti

Haiti stated that he left his country with his family due to financial and political reasons. He wanted a better way of life for his children and wanted them to have a good education. He expressed that his cultural background has significantly influenced the decisions he has made in his life. He said that sometimes it is hard to make some decisions in this country regarding his children but understands that they are now in a different country with different perspectives and expectations. He also stated that this country is too permissive with the youth but that he would rather be here, in the United States, than in his country of origin.

Sun from Haiti

Sun expressed that her culture is definitely an influencing factor in the decisions she makes. She stated that religion, beliefs, traditions, and cultural standards are always present when she has to make a decision. She said that her cultural background is a sounding board for her when she makes decisions. She added that she also embraces the perspectives and way of life in this country. She said that some individuals do not let go of past beliefs preventing them from getting ahead and improving their lives.

Moon from Nicaragua

Moon stated that since she came to this country, she has become aware of the cultural differences between her culture and the new culture she now lives in. This awareness inspired her to gain a new perspective in her new way of life. She decided to improve her life, and

immediately enrolled in school and became a nurse. She considers herself to be an open-minded, proactive individual, but also respects the cultural norms and values of her culture. She stated that her parents were her role models and instilled in her the importance of hard work and education. They were the grounding she needed when she came to this country.

Mars from Nicaragua

Mars expressed that it is because of his cultural background that he has been able to make good decisions in his life. He considers that his family, values, and work ethic have influenced his thought process and behavior over the years. His culture encourages faith, resilience, hard work, and perseverance when going through difficulties. Cultural pride is extremely important to him, and he shows his cultural pride by becoming a role model for others in the community.

Halley from Bolivia

Halley stated that in her culture, education, and hard work are highly valued. She is currently enrolled in college seeking a bachelor's degree in business administration and also works full-time while raising a family as a single mother. She pointed out that her religion has been a solid foundation and that her decision-making is closely tied to her cultural background.

Ceres from Bolivia

Ceres believes that her faith and resilience have been cultural influential factors regarding her decision-making processes. She stated that she has faced several challenges in her life such as prejudice and language barriers, but that she has not been deterred by such difficulties. When making decisions, she always looks at situations from different perspectives using her past experiences and knowledge and being open to other perspectives in this country.

Conclusion

The participant's responses to some of the interview questions were presented in this section. Their responses varied depending on their past experiences, cultural background, and individual different perspectives. Regardless of their varied responses, the findings demonstrate their agreement and understanding of the significant influence culture plays on their decision-making processes.

Study Findings

This study explored how culture impacts decision-making behavior utilizing a qualitative phenomenological analysis. The participants shared their individual lived experiences, thus providing insight into the cultural influence on their decision-making processes. The 13 interviews with the participants from non-WEIRD countries were the source of the study's data. Participant interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded by hand during the coding process. I reexamined the transcript to check for transcription inaccuracies. I gathered and structured the data, then conducted the coding process by labeling and organizing the data. I analyzed the data to find insights by developing a thematic framework to interpret the data, identify the themes, and begin to answer the research questions. The following are the codes utilized with brief descriptions and examples of statements from the interviews with study participants that present the meaning of each code (See Appendix E).

Code 1: Sounding Board

The participants mentioned the code of sounding board when describing how they confer with family about decisions they need to make or about considering their cultural beliefs for guidance when needing to make decisions. Sun said, "My cultural background is like a sounding

board for me when I make decisions.” Neptune said, “My cultural beliefs are a sounding board that guides me when making decisions.”

Code 2: Resilience

The participants expressed the code of resilience several times during the interviews. They believe faith is related to resiliency, endurance, and perseverance when facing adversity. Ceres stated, “My culture encourages having faith and being resilient when confronted with difficult situations or challenges.” Neptune also mentioned, “My parents were my role models, and they instilled resiliency and work ethics in me from childhood.”

Code 3: Self Awareness

The code of self-awareness emerged as the participants expressed their perceptions of the similarities and differences between different cultural beliefs and values in groups or individuals.

Moon stated:

When I first arrived in this country, I became self-aware of the differences between my culture and the culture in this country. I saw the opportunities women had in the area of education and began to think about how I could take advantage of this opportunity. In my country it was hard to go to school and obtain an education, so one of the first things I did was to enroll in school to be a nurse. I graduated with a nursing degree. I am very proud of my achievement. That was almost impossible to do in my country.

Code 4: Different Perspective

Most participants expressed that they had to change their perspectives or consider new and different perspectives regarding their decision-making. As they encountered decision-making situations, they learned to consider different points of view to accommodate the views of the new culture. Jupiter stated:

I had no control over my financial situation. I was homeless and did not know anyone who could help me. I just began to think differently and gained a new perspective on how things function in this country. I started from zero and changed my thought process. When I did that, everything began to change and get better.

Uranus stated, “I am open-minded and consider other perspectives when making decisions.”

Code 5: Challenges

The participants expressed that they have experienced several challenges that have surfaced from cultural diversity. Neptune expressed, “Some challenges I have experienced in my life are to decide if I should acculturate to the new culture or not. Also to agree or not with some of the new beliefs that might make me uncomfortable.” Venus said, “I have experienced challenges that have surfaced from cultural diversity, such as language barriers, stereotyping, and systemic racism.”

Code 6: Religion

The religion code is significant and a factor that influences many of the decisions made by the participants in the study. Halley said, “My religion has been a solid foundation in my decision-making. I always pray before making an important decision. I believe that the success I have in my life is because of my faith and trust in God.” Sun stated, “My religion and my faith, among other factors, are always considered when I have to make a decision.”

Code 7: Growth Mindset

The growth mindset code was expressed by the study participants regarding acculturation, understanding, and acceptance of cultural diversity. Uranus stated, “I migrated to this country to

better my life and recognize the importance of acculturating to the different viewpoints of individuals from other cultures.”

Code 8: Education

The education code emerged from the participants’ accounts of the influence of education on their decision-making. Moon stated, “My parents were my role models and taught me how important education is to improve my life to make informed decisions.” Neptune expressed, “The way my parents taught me and the education I received in my native country influence how I act and the decisions I have made in this country.”

Code 9: Family

The family code emerged from the participants regarding how family values and expectations relate to their decision-making. Pluto pointed out, “My family and the environment I grew up in shaped and formed who I am today, how I think, and how I act.” Earth stated, “I have depended on my family for support when facing difficulties several times.”

Code 10: Behavior

The behavior code emerged when participants shared that their cultural background gave them a sense of pride. Mars stated, “I try to project my cultural pride by behaving in a way that represents my culture.” Neptune said, “The teachings and education I received from my parents influence how I behave and the decisions I have made in my life.”

Code 11: Hard Work

The hard work code emerged when the participants expressed the importance of hard work that was instilled in them in their culture. They were hard workers in their country and migrated to this country to work hard and make a better life for themselves and their families. Venus stated,

“Respect, compassion, and hard work are always influenced by my cultural background.” Moon stated, “My parents instilled in me the importance of hard work and education.”

Code 12: Respect

The participants expressed the respect code regarding how their cultural values influence how they demonstrate respect for others. Pluto said, “Respect is one of the factors instilled in me growing up in my country. Especially respect for my elders.”

Code 13: Beliefs

The beliefs code emerged as the participants expressed the influence of culture in their decision-making. Sun stated, “My religion, beliefs, traditions, and cultural standards are always present when I make a decision.”

From these codes, three main themes and eight subthemes emerged, summarizing the study participant’s responses to the research questions regarding the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. The main themes were (a) growth mindset, (b) consciousness, and (c) empowerment. The following section will present the descriptive results, the themes, and sub-themes and provide a depiction of the participants and their narratives.

Figure 1

Themes Identified Aligned with Research Questions 1, 2, and 3

How do individuals explain the influence of their cultural background on their decision-making?	
<i>Theme 1: Growth Mindset</i>	Sub-theme 1.1: Higher level of mental processes
	Sub-theme 1.2: Instilled cultural beliefs
How do cultural norms, values, and beliefs influence an individual's decision-making processes?	
<i>Theme 2: Consciousness</i>	Sub-theme 2.1: Social values
	Sub-theme 2.2: Belief system
	Sub-theme 2.3: Self-awareness
How does understanding cultural influences on decision-making processes promote efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts?	
<i>Theme 3: Empowerment</i>	Sub-theme 3.1: Firmness of Purpose
	Sub-theme 3.2: Different perspectives
	Sub-theme 3.3: Open-mindedness

The findings demonstrate that there is a significant cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. Three themes developed from the participants' responses offering an understanding of the cultural influence on the decision-making process of individuals:

1. Growth mindset emerged as the participants expressed having experienced a higher level of mental processes regarding the cultural influence on their decision-making processes. They described their cultural background as being a sounding board that provided guidance and support when making decisions. They expressed their belief that through hard work, learning from others, and having an open mind, their abilities and capacities have been developed, and they have achieved a higher level of mental process and a growth mindset

2. The consciousness theme emerged as the participants expressed how their social values, belief systems, religion, and traditions have influenced their decision-making processes. The participants acknowledged that education and cultural beliefs instilled in them by their parents and family in their country of origin had a significant impact when making decisions throughout their lives. They stated that, as a result, they have gained a deeper sense of self-awareness.

3. Empowerment emerged when the participants expressed how the understanding of cultural influences on decision-making processes promotes efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts. They rely on resilience and perseverance and maintain a firmness of purpose when facing challenges. Being open-minded to the way of life in the United States and viewing situations from different perspectives helps them to acculturate and find effective problem-solving approaches.

All the participants expressed their belief that their cultural background is significant regarding their decision-making. No opposing themes were found. This section will describe how

the themes align with the research questions based on the participant's responses during the interviews:

Question 1: How do individuals explain the influence of their cultural background on their decision-making?

Theme 1: Growth Mindset

This theme comprises the participant's narratives of how their cultural background influences their decision-making. The participants' narratives described how, although they usually take into account their instilled cultural beliefs when making decisions, they have gained new perspectives when migrating to the United States. Sun stated, "My cultural background is like a sounding board for me when I make decisions." Earth noted, "I learned to view situations from different perspectives when confronted with difficulties and rely on my parents and family for guidance. When I look at issues from different perspectives, I can think critically and make informed decisions."

The participants consider their cultural background a sounding board that supports and guides them when making decisions. Their responses demonstrate how they have also gained new insights and knowledge in the United States that influence their decision-making. Their cultural background, when combined with the new perspectives they acquired in the United States, has enabled them to achieve a higher level of mental processes and a growth mindset. They believe they have obtained a higher level of mental processes that allow them to gain different perspectives and an advantage when making decisions.

Question 2: How do cultural norms, values, and beliefs influence an individual's decision-making processes?

Theme 2: Consciousness

Participants shared how cultural norms, values, and belief systems influenced their decision-making processes. They expressed that their social values, such as respect, honor, religion, and family, influenced their behavior and decision-making. Pluto said, “Respect, hard work, and beliefs, including religion, are the foundation of who I am today. My family and the environment I grew up in absolutely shaped and formed who I am, how I think, and how I act.”

Saturn stated:

When I make decisions, I consider my cultural beliefs, including religion and traditions. I am trying to instill my cultural influence in my children, and sometimes there is conflict between us due to the different perspectives in the United States culture.

These social values and belief systems have enabled them to become more conscious and self-aware of the cultural influence on their decision-making process. They have an impact on their thought processes and behavior. Their relationship with others and how they view the world are also impacted by the social values and belief systems they hold.

Question 3: How does understanding cultural influences on decision-making processes promote efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts?

Theme 3: Empowerment

The theme of empowerment emerged when the participants expressed how understanding cultural influences on their decision-making processes promotes efficient problem approaches in diverse contexts. They shared how their cultural background encourages hard work and resilience when they face challenges. These values provide a solid foundation that encourages their firmness of purpose. When faced with challenges, their hard work, resilience, and new perspectives have been critical in their empowerment to make decisions in their lives. They also shared that having

different perspectives and having an open mind are important and useful key factors that promote efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts. Venus stated:

Some of the challenges I have encountered from cultural diversity are language barriers, systemic racism internalized trans generationally, and cultural disparities and beliefs that can create barriers in how I approach difficult situations. My parents instilled in me the importance of family, friends, work ethics, civic duty, and community involvement.

For Jupiter, developing a different perspective empowered him to acculturate and use effective problem approaches to overcome difficulties. He said, “I had to adjust my thought process and look at situations from a new and different perspective to be able to function properly in my new life.” Uranus also stated that gaining a new cultural perspective empowers him to make well-informed decisions:

Although my cultural background influences my decision-making, I am open-minded and consider other perspectives to make informed decisions. I understand the importance of acculturating to the different perspectives in this country. Despite the challenges I encountered in the United States, such as miscommunication and stereotyping, I try to look at situations from a different cultural perspective.

Summary

In Chapter 4, an overview of the chapter was presented, including the purpose and research questions of the study. Investigating how individuals from diverse non-WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, democratic) cultures describe the impact of their cultural backgrounds on decision-making processes exhibited heartfelt narratives provided by the participants. They identified cultural factors that have a significant influence on their decision-making processes.

The descriptive results section comprises the gathered data, analysis, storage, and summarized key results of the study. Furthermore, the study demographics, including the participants' pseudonyms, age, gender, and country of origin, were presented. The study findings were arranged by research question. Three main themes and eight subthemes emerged, summarizing the study participant's direct quotes to the research questions regarding the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. The participants' responses demonstrate culture's major influences on their decision-making processes.

In Chapter 5, an overview of the chapter will be provided, along with a discussion and summary of the findings. The implications will be presented, and the limitations section will include previous and new limitations followed by recommendations for future research. The Chapter concludes with a summary of the chapter.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Overview

The purpose of this study was to investigate how individuals from diverse non-WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, democratic) cultures describe the impact of their cultural backgrounds on decision-making processes. This chapter includes a summary of the key findings and a thorough discussion of the findings of the study in comparison to the research literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Furthermore, a discussion of how this study fits into the biblical foundations described in Chapter 2 and how it contributes to our knowledge of the theory of the constructs is presented. The limitations section presents previous and new limitations, followed by recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

A phenomenological approach was utilized to explore how individuals from diverse non-WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, democratic) cultures describe the impact of their cultural backgrounds on decision-making processes. Through comprehensive interviews with 13 participants, they described their personal experiences regarding cultural influence on their decision-making processes. Results indicate that participants consider that their cultural background significantly influences their decision-making. This summary presents the key findings through the three research questions.

Research Question 1: How do individuals explain the influence of their cultural background on their decision-making?

The theme of a growth mindset highlights the value of understanding the influence of culture on the decision-making processes of individuals. Participants explained that their cultural backgrounds and belief systems have a major impact on their decision-making. Pluto, Neptune,

and Moon considered who they are today as the result of the teachings they received while in their countries of origin. Sun and Neptune shared that their cultural background is a sounding board when they make decisions. Although they rely on their cultural background when making decisions, they shared that they have become more self-aware and have learned to have new perspectives when making decisions in the United States. Ceres also shared that when making decisions, she always looks at situations from different perspectives. She uses her past experiences as a model and is open to other perspectives that will help make the best decisions for her in this country. This open-mindedness to new perspectives has enabled them to develop a higher level of mental processes.

Research Question 2: How do cultural norms, values, and beliefs influence an individual's decision-making processes?

The theme of consciousness emerged when the participants expressed their awareness and acknowledgment of the cultural influence on their decision-making. They concurred that cultural norms and values shape how individuals make decisions in their everyday lives. Cultural norms are the rules that lead to behavior in a society, whereas cultural values are the beliefs a society deems valuable (Gelfand & Realo, 2018; Zhang et al., 2023). To adhere to these norms and cultural values, individuals must be conscious and self-aware of their thoughts and behavior. Earth highlighted the fact that individuals internalize the learned experiences and identify what is acceptable or unacceptable behavior. Similar to Earth, Mars recognizes that his family and cultural values have influenced his thought process and behavior over the years. They reflect on their cultural beliefs and systems for guidance and support when making decisions.

Research Question 3: How does understanding cultural influences on decision-making processes promote efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts?

The empowerment theme surfaced when participants expressed that understanding the cultural influences on decision-making processes and having different perspectives empowers and promotes individuals to implement efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts. For Neptune, her past experiences and the education she received from her parents influenced her behavior and how she made decisions. In Venus' case, she believes that resilience and ambition provided her with a firmness of purpose to implement efficient problem-solving approaches. These findings highlight how understanding cultural influences on decision-making processes promotes efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts.

Discussion of Findings

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is a framework that displays culture's influences on an individual's values and how they interact with behavior. These dimensions provide a lens to identify how culture influences decision-making in different social backgrounds (Burr & Dick, 2017; Hofstede, 1980; Orr & Hauser, 2008). The findings align with Hofstede's dimensions theory that framed this study. The findings demonstrate a clear understanding of the participant's lived experiences regarding the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. As the participants answered the research questions, their responses demonstrated their understanding of culture's influence on their decision-making processes.

Theoretical Context

The study's focus on understanding cultural influences on the decision-making processes of individuals through diverse cultural backgrounds aligns with Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory (Hall & Hall, 1990). Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is a framework for cross-cultural communication. These dimensions are utilized to understand how individuals from diverse cultures behave, think, and communicate. The narratives expressed by the participants in

this study align with the cultural dimensions theory. For example, Pluto pointed out how cultural values and beliefs have influenced his thought process and behavior. He expressed, “Respect, hard work, and beliefs are the foundation of who I am today. My family and the environment I grew up in shaped who I am, how I think, and how I behave.”

Neptune's account illustrates how her cultural beliefs have influenced her behavior and the decisions she made throughout her life. She stated, “My cultural beliefs are a sounding board that guides me when making decisions. The teachings and education I received from my parents influence how I behave and the decisions I have made in my life.” This finding is consistent with Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, which shows the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members and how these values relate to behavior (Hofstede, 1980). In Saturn's case, he shared how he takes into account his cultural beliefs when he makes decisions. He stated, “When I make decisions, I consider my cultural beliefs, including religion and traditions.”

Cultural dimensions are vital to understanding how culture influences decision-making processes and how cultural diversity affects decision-making approaches. The application of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory to the study's findings gives an understanding of the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. Exploring cultural influences on decision-making is crucial for recognizing, understanding, and acknowledging diversity. It is also necessary for encouraging inclusivity, effective communication, collaboration, and problem-solving between culturally diverse individuals (Ratts et al., 2016; Spohn et al., 2022).

Previous Research Literature

Following is a discussion of the findings in this study and how they compare to the literature review presented in Chapter 2.

According to Podrug (2011), cultural values influence decision-making styles. The statement expressed by Moon when she said, “I respect the cultural norms and values of my culture. My parents taught me the importance of respect, hard work, and education,” sums up Podrug’s conclusion.

Culture plays a central role in forming human behavior and cognitive processes, including decision-making. The participant's statements revealed how culture has influenced not only their decision-making but also their behavior and intellectual processes. For example, Pluto pointed out, “My family and the environment I grew up in shaped and formed who I am today, how I think, and how I act.” Mars stated, “I try to project my cultural pride by behaving in a way that represents my culture.” Neptune said, “The teachings and education I received from my parents influence how I behave and the decisions I have made in my life.” These findings support previous research conducted by Brodhead (2019), Chernyak et al. (2019), and Rossi et al. (2023), who concluded that culture considerably influences an individual’s behavior and intellectual processes as a complex construct, consequently influencing decision-making processes.

Similar to Podrug (2011), Guo et al. (2022) determined that cultural differences also influence decision-making behaviors, and recognizing cultural differences is critical for regulating decision-making behaviors (Guo et al. 2022). Lu (2023) agrees with Guo et al. (2022) and also determined that cultural differences influence decision-making behaviors and that recognizing cultural differences is needed for managing decision-making behaviors.

Furthermore, according to Cantarero et al. (2021), recognizing cultural differences and moral bases is vital for regulating ethical decision-making behaviors and culture (Cantarero et al. 2021). These conclusions from previous research support the participant’s responses to the interview questions. Uranus stated, “I migrated to this country to better my life and recognize the

importance of acculturating to the different viewpoints of individuals from other cultures. I am open-minded and consider other perspectives when making decisions.” In agreement with Uranus's statement, Jupiter stated, “I just began to think differently and gained a new perspective on how things work in this country. I started from zero and changed my thought process.”

Contributions to Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions Theory

This study contributes to our understanding of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions theory. It supports findings from previous literature on cultural dimensions and expands our knowledge of the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. As the participants shared their lived experiences regarding the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals, they provided insight into the application of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions theory.

Biblical Foundations

Culture had a major and significant influence on the decision-making processes of individuals in biblical times. The findings in this study demonstrate that culture also influences the decision-making processes of the participants in the study. Their shared life experiences indicate that their decision-making, thought processes, and behavior are culturally influenced. Earth expressed that culture has influenced her thought process, behavior, and the decisions she has taken in her life. Similarly, Sun stated that her culture influences the decisions she makes. As in biblical times, culture continues to be an influential factor in the decision-making processes of individuals.

The Scriptures are clear and specific about how relevant culture influences the decision-making processes of individuals. In Genesis 12:1-4 the Lord instructed Abram to leave his culture, and his family and go to a land God would show him. Abram decided to leave in obedience to God and his decision changed the course of history and millions of people

(*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Genesis 12:1-4). The book of Exodus 32:1-6 tells of how the people of Israel grew impatient while waiting for Moses to come from the mountain and made the decision to build a golden calf to worship. Their decision was based on their experience when they were slaves in Egypt and had learned to worship idols (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Exodus 32:1-6).

Furthermore, in the New Testament, in the book of John 7:45-52, the Pharisees, influenced by their cultural beliefs, decided to reject Jesus as the Messiah. They expected a political leader who would save them from the Roman occupation (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, John 7:45-52). In the book of Acts 17:16-34, the Apostle Paul was extremely angry when he saw the people in Athens worshipping many idols. He presented the good news about Jesus and the resurrection utilizing the title he saw on one of the altars which read, "To an unknown God." Paul used the people of Athens's cultural beliefs to share the gospel. (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, Acts 17:16-34). These examples demonstrate how cultural influences can affect decision-making.

Implications

The findings of this study provide important implications through several domains affecting theoretical perspectives, psychological practice, and social attitudes. These implications emphasize the experiences of individuals regarding the cultural influence on their decision-making processes. Understanding how cultural factors influence decision-making is vital for comprehending, recognizing, and acknowledging diversity. This understanding promotes efficient interaction and collaboration across cultures and develops decision-making and problem-solving methods in varied situations (Ratts et al., 2016; Spohn et al., 2022).

Theoretical Perspectives

This study supports previous research studies and provides insight and understanding into the application of cultural dimensions theory. By exploring the experiences of individuals from non-WEIRD countries regarding the cultural influence on their decision-making processes, this study reveals their deep-rooted beliefs, their challenges, and how much their cultural background influences their decision-making. These findings emphasize the significance of considering the cultural dimensions as they are a context that demonstrates culture's influences on an individual's values and how they relate to behavior (Podrug, 2011).

The theory offers a toolset to explore how cultural norms and values shape cognitive processes inherent in choices (Oyserman et al., 2002). Moreover, according to Beugelsdijk and Welzel (2018), combining Hofstede's cultural dimensions with Inglehart's cultural dynamics can provide a more thorough framework for understanding national culture and that cultural dimensions and dynamics relate to influencing social results. The findings of this study contribute to the current research by presenting the life experiences shared by individuals from non-WEIRD cultures.

Psychological Practice/Consulting

By including insight obtained from this study into their counseling practices, professionals in the mental health field can better provide services to individuals. The perceptions of the cause of an illness can vary throughout cultures. Cultural groups have their own particular beliefs regarding illnesses and their treatment. Religion, traditions, and moral values are influencing factors regarding the individual's beliefs. Cultural influences on the therapeutic relationship are an important factor to be regarded when working with different cultures in the mental health field.

The cultural background of the client and the counselor are essential to the therapeutic relationship. Understanding the cultural background influence on individual decision-making,

thought processes, and behavior is valuable and essential when providing mental health services. According to Cohen (2009), identifying cultural influences is fundamental when investigating human behavior and relations. This study helps to understand why individuals from different cultural backgrounds may demonstrate behaviors, make different choices, and respond to situations.

Social Attitudes

According to Podrug (2011), the decision-making process of individuals is related to the individual's culture, social standards, and customs. Previous research studies indicate that societies' cultural structure influences social information's influence on decision-making (Molleman & Gächter, 2018). Individuals utilize social principles shaped by their culture and make decisions supportive of those social principles (Banks & Banks, 1989). This study contributes to promoting the understanding of cultural diversity in our society.

Another implication of this study is in the area of community service. This study provides an understanding of the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. Community agencies can utilize the findings to understand the individual's physical needs. They could provide referrals to social service programs, health providers, mental health counselors, and housing programs. Employing staff with similar cultural backgrounds might benefit the individuals as they can relate to them and feel more comfortable.

Church

The implications of this study's findings for the church are significant. Christians are called to understand the cultural influence on decision-making and accept individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. In the book of Galatians 2:11-14, the Apostle Peter was influenced by cultural customs that separated Jews and Gentiles. On one occasion, he abstained from eating

with Gentile believers when other Jewish believers entered the room. Peter's decision was influenced by cultural principles of Jewish purity laws (Amplified Bible, 1965/2015, Galatians 2:11-14). When the Apostle Paul heard of Peter's behavior, he confronted Peter in front of everyone and told him that Christians are justified in Christ by faith and not by the works of the law, that Jewish and Gentile Christians were united under the new covenant, under one faith.

In the book of John 16:15, Jesus commanded Christians to go all over the world and preach the Gospel to all creation. To comply with this commandment, Christians should understand the cultural diversity and beliefs of individuals. Christians should exercise cultural sensitivity, communicating the message of Christ. The church can meet the individual's spiritual and physical needs by understanding and accepting cultural diversity. Welcoming and accepting individuals from diverse cultures into the church will result in unity and physical and spiritual growth. (*Amplified Bible*, 1965/2015, John 16:15).

Limitations

Previous Limitations

Several limitations were recognized. The study's findings may not have been generalizable to every cultural group due to the restricted sample size and cultural diversity. The study's sample size may not represent the entire population, and the cultural diversity of the sample may not be enough to offer a complete understanding of how culture forms decision-making behaviors. This limitation could have affected the external validity of the study's findings, as the results may not be pertinent to other cultural groups or contexts (Shadish et al., 2002).

Moreover, the study may have been limited by the intricacy of cultural dimensions and the difficulty of evaluating them correctly. Cultural dimensions are manifold and may have been difficult to measure correctly and operationalize, which could have impacted the validity of the

study's findings (Maxwell, 2010). Moreover, cultural dimensions may vary across diverse cultural groups and backgrounds, which could have impacted the generalizability of the study's findings.

The validity of the study's findings may have been impacted by the possibility for participants to offer socially desirable responses or to be affected by the research background (Edwards, 1953). These biased responses could have led to biased results that inaccurately display the participants' true experiences. Additionally, the research context, for instance, the wording of survey questions, could have impacted participants' responses and led to biased outcomes.

New Limitations Found

A new limitation found was the difficulty of coordinating the interview schedule. Some of the participants were not able to meet on the appointed date and time, thus the meetings had to be rescheduled several times. Two participants canceled their participation in the study. Another limitation was the age of the participants. The youngest participants were 36 years old, thus, I was not able to obtain data from younger individuals who might have had different points of view from those of older participants.

Recommendations for Future Research

It is critical to consider cultural diversity in future research studies to determine the validity and applicability of research findings to all individuals. Emphasizing cultural diversity implies conducting research at a global level, not only from Western society, and involving participants and researchers from diverse cultural backgrounds. By exploring the function of culture and beliefs in the decision-making processes of individuals at a global level, the outcomes can be more generalized and inclusive of diverse cultures and ways of life. Another recommendation is to consider increasing the research sample for future studies. Increasing the

sample population could give researchers more generalizable findings. They can administer surveys, questionnaires, and other tools to gather additional data.

An additional recommendation is for researchers to conduct other research based on the understanding gained and the findings in this study. The following are several studies that can be conducted to further the understanding of the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals.

Quantitative Studies

Combining qualitative results with quantitative data can provide a more objective, wider perspective on relationships, correlations, and patterns within larger populations. The researchers could generate inferential statistics to make generalizations about a larger population.

Longitudinal studies

In a longitudinal study, researchers continually analyze the same individuals to identify any shifts that might happen over time. A longitudinal study could offer knowledge of the experiences and the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals over time.

Cross-Cultural Studies

Researchers could observe the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals across diverse cultures. They can study the commonalities and dissimilarities in beliefs, traditions, and values.

Summary

This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to explore how individuals from diverse non-WEIRD cultures perceive the impact of their cultural backgrounds on decision-making. Through interviews with 13 participants, they described their personal experiences regarding cultural influence on their decision-making processes. The key findings indicate that participants

consider that their cultural background significantly influences their decision-making. The study contributes to previous research by increasing our understanding of the participants' viewpoints and belief systems based on their accounts. These findings support previous research conducted by Brodhead (2019), Chernyak et al. (2019), and Rossi et al. (2023), who determined that culture significantly influences an individual's conduct and intellectual processes as a construct, thus affecting decision-making processes. Lu (2023) also determined that cultural differences influence decision-making behaviors and that identifying cultural variations is needed for regulating decision-making behaviors. Three key themes and eight sub-themes developed from the participants' answers to the interview questions: growth mindset, consciousness, and empowerment, providing insights into the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals.

The implications of the study affecting the theoretical domain provide a toolset to investigate how cultural standards and values model cognitive processes in choices (Oyserman et al., 2002). In the psychological domain, the cultural background of the client and the counselor is crucial to the therapeutic connection. Understanding the cultural background's influence on individual decision-making, thought processes, and behavior is central when providing therapeutic services. According to Cohen (2009), recognizing cultural influences is essential when exploring human behavior and interactions. The implications in the social attitudes domain support previous research which shows that societies' cultural construct influences social information's influence on decision-making (Molleman & Gächter, 2018). For the church domain, the implication is that the church can provide for the individual's spiritual and physical needs by recognizing and understanding cultural diversity. Accepting individuals from different

cultures into the church will produce physical and spiritual growth. (Amplified Bible, 1965/2015, John 16:15).

Further research on a larger sample and a more diverse population was recommended to obtain more generalized findings. As globalization increasingly erases geographical borders, understanding how culture influences decision-making and behavior is essential (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Quantitative, longitudinal, and cross-cultural studies were recommended for further research to gain additional data and understanding of the cultural influence on the decision-making processes of individuals. Also recommended was the need for cultural diversity among the researchers conducting the studies. Researchers from non-WEIRD cultures could provide deeper insights and understanding into how culture influences the decision-making processes of individuals.

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APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT FLYER

Research Participants Needed

Cultural Influence on the Decision-Making Processes of Individuals

- Are you 18 years of age or older? Do you speak English as a second language?
- Were you born and raised in your country of origin (Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Bolivia, Haiti, Nicaragua, or Nigeria) at least until you were 18?

If you answered **yes** to each of the questions listed above, you may be eligible to participate in a research study.

The purpose of this research study is to investigate how individuals from diverse non-WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, democratic) cultures describe the impact of their cultural backgrounds on decision-making and decision preferences.

Participants will be asked to participate in an interview to describe the impact of their cultural backgrounds on decision-making. I am contacting community agencies, churches, and chambers of commerce to assist me in my recruiting efforts and requesting approval to solicit advertisement flyers for prospective participants for my study. My contact information will be on the flyers for the interested potential participants to contact me via telephone or email. Once the interested potential participants contact me, I will set up a date, time, and place to meet with them face-to-face or via a video conference system such as Zoom or Teams to introduce and explain the purpose of the study. I will select the sample based on my judgment and the purpose of the study looking for those who have had experiences associated with their cultural influence on the decision-making. I will conduct the interviews with the participants at an agreed safe place, date, and time at the participant's convenience (via face-to-face or video conference).

The interviews will be conducted in a comfortable setting, free from any potential disruptions and noise. The interviews will be from 45 to 60 minutes long. I will begin the interviews with open-ended, broad questions that will concentrate on gaining insight into the topic of the study. The interviews will be recorded and documented, and I will take notes throughout the interview. After the interviews, the data will be recorded by transcription using the open and selective coding process. Moreover, I will conduct and create the transcriptions in files utilizing Word and Excel. I will conduct member checking with the participants for accuracy. I will also utilize the Nvivo software to organize, store, and analyze the data. The data will be securely backed up on the computer for at least three years after completing the study. The information will be password-protected to safeguard the data on the computer. The video, audio and/or taped recorded information will be deleted after it has been transcribed for the security and protection of the participants. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time. No compensation will be provided to the participants in the study.

If you would like to participate, contact the researcher at the phone number or email address provided below.

A consent document will be given to you at an agreed date, time, and place that is convenient for you. The consent form will comprise the following items:

1. The right of the participant to voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time.
2. The central purpose of the study and the procedures to be used in data collection.
3. The protection of the confidentiality of the respondents.
4. The known risks associated with participation.
5. The expected benefits to accrue to the participants.
6. The signature of the participant. After reading, agreeing to participate, and signing the consent form, we will meet to conduct an interview.

Julia Carrion-Rivera, a doctoral candidate in the Psychology department. School of Behavioral Sciences at Liberty University is conducting this study.

Please contact Julia Carrion-Rivera at [REDACTED] for more information.

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

Consent

Title of the Project: Cultural Influence on the Decision-Making Processes of Individuals

Principal Investigator: Julia Carrion-Rivera. Doctoral Candidate. School of Behavioral Sciences, Psychology Department, Liberty University

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, born and raised in your country of origin (Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Bolivia, Haiti, Nicaragua, or Nigeria) at least until you were 18.

Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

The purpose of the study is to investigate how individuals from diverse non-WEIRD cultures describe the impact of their cultural backgrounds on decision- making.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

1. Participate in an in person or video conference audio-recorded interview.
2. The interview will be conducted in a comfortable setting.
3. The interview will last from 45 to 60 minutes.
4. After the interviews have concluded, the data, interview transcripts, developed themes, and outcomes will be returned to participants to verify accuracy. They will provide validation, to confirm the credibility of results.

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include that the findings of this study will provide a platform for further research into the influence of other cultural dimensions on decision-making. It has the potential to expand and contribute to the theoretical understanding of cultural influences on decision-making processes of individuals, and the capacity to provide practical insights that can be applied in various fields to improve cross-cultural interactions and outcomes by encouraging intercultural understanding, fostering variety and inclusion, and assisting to provide positive social changes in our connected worldwide society.

From a practical standpoint, the study's findings could significantly affect several fields, including international business, organizational behavior, health, public policy, transportation, and education. Understanding how cultural differences influence decision-making can improve cross-cultural communication and cooperation, leading to more efficient decision-making and problem-solving strategies in different contexts. Theoretically, this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge in cross-cultural psychology and decision-making. It will address the current

gap in research that overlooks the influence of non-Western, non-WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) cultures on decision-making processes.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.

- Data collected from you may be used in future research studies and/or shared with other researchers. If data collected from you is reused or shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed beforehand.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted, and all hardcopy records will be shredded.
- Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years. The researcher will have access to these recordings.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University, Global Trade Chamber of Commerce, Coconut Creek Community Center, or Church by the Glades Community Church. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Julia Carrion-Rivera. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [REDACTED]

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy of the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

By signing this document, you are agreeing to the person named below participating in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy of the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I agree for the person named below to take part in this study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record the person named below as part of their participation in this study.

Printed Subject Name

Printed LAR Name and Relationship to Subject

LAR Signature

Date

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Guide

RQ 1: How do individuals explain the influence of their cultural background on their decision-making?

Q 1: In your experience, how has your cultural background influenced the decisions you have made in your life?

Q 2: Which do you think are some significant cultural influences that form your decision-making processes?

RQ 2: How do cultural norms, values, and beliefs influence an individual's decision making processes?

Q 1: In your opinion, how do cultural norms impact the decisions you make?

Q 2: In your experience, do you think that cultural values have impacted your decision-making?

Q 3: Do you think that cultural beliefs have influenced the decisions you have made in your personal and professional life?

Q 4: How do you describe the significance of incorporating your cultural background in your decision-making?

RQ 3: How does the understanding of cultural influences on decision-making processes promote efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts?

Q 1: How do you believe your cultural background promote effective problem-solving approaches?

Q 2: In your opinion, what are some particular decision-making issues or challenges that surface from cultural diversity?

Q 3: In your experience, what do you think happens when individuals in your culture are prompted to utilize effective problem-solving practices?

APPENDIX D: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

March 27, 2024

Julia Carrion-Rivera
Ralph Ogburn

Re: IRB Approval - IRB-FY23-24-1435 Cultural Influence on the Decision-Making Processes of Individuals

Dear Julia Carrion-Rivera, Ralph Ogburn,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This approval is extended to you for one year from the following date: March 27, 2024. If you need to make changes to the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit a modification to the IRB. Modifications can be completed through your Cayuse IRB account.

Your study falls under the expedited review category (45 CFR 46.110), which is applicable to specific, minimal risk studies and minor changes to approved studies for the following reason(s):

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

For a PDF of your approval letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study Details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found on the same page under the Attachments tab. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

APPENDIX E: CODING SAMPLE

Theme 1: Growth Mindset

Participants shared that when their cultural values and beliefs are combined with the new perspectives they acquired in the United States, they achieve a higher level of mental processes and a growth mindset that helps them with decision-making. They have gained knowledge and understanding they did not have before coming to the United States.

Sub-theme 1.1: Higher Level of Mental Processes. Earth considers that since she looks at situations with different cultural points of view she has learned to think critically and make informed decisions. This has helped her to achieve a higher level of mental processes and develop a growth mindset.

Sub-theme 1.2: Instilled Cultural Beliefs. Sun expressed that her cultural background is a sounding board for her. She stated that the values instilled in her in her country of origin, and the new perspectives she has gained in the United States, have helped her achieve a growth mindset.

Theme 2: Consciousness

Participants conveyed how cultural norms, values, and belief systems shaped their decision-making processes. They expressed that their social values have helped them more self-aware when making decisions.

Sub-theme 2.1: Social Values. Pluto shared that social values, for instance, respect, morality, faith, and family, influenced his behavior and decision-making. He stated that those values are the foundation of who he is today.

Sub-theme 2.2: Belief System. Saturn commented that he considers his cultural beliefs which include religion and traditions.

Sub-theme 2.3: Self-Awareness. Moon stated that in this country, she is more self-aware of the cultural differences between her culture and the culture in the United States. This awareness inspired her to gain insights into her new life in this country.

Theme 3: Empowerment

Participants expressed how resiliency, hard work, firmness of purpose, and having an open mind have been key factors when experiencing challenges. These key factors have empowered them to employ efficient problem-solving approaches in diverse contexts.

Sub-theme 3.1: Firmness of Purpose. Venus shared that she has encountered many challenges in this country, such as language barriers, and systemic racism, and has developed a firmness of purpose when overcoming obstacles.

Sub-theme 3.2: Different Perspectives. For Jupiter, adjusting his thought process to align with a new and different perspective empowered him to make the appropriate decisions and change his life in the United States.

Sub-theme 3.3: Open-Mindedness. Uranus expressed that he is open-minded and considers different perspectives to make decisions. He added that he has learned to acculturate and be more accepting of other cultures.