STRESS AND PERFORMANCE IN UNCERTAINTY-AVOIDING INDIVIDUALS: AN INTRODUCTORY LITERATURE REVIEW

by

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ABSTRACT

Uncertainty avoidance as a cultural construct has been known to affect worker stress and performance in organizations, but a review of these findings has not been done up until this point. In effort to clarify the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and stress and performance, a comprehensive literature search was performed. Findings from articles on this topic have been presented. In addition, organizational practices for accommodating uncertainty avoidance and other cultural dimensions have been explored. This review shows that uncertainty avoidance appears to be linked to higher stress, while its relationship to performance appears to depend on other factors. Best practices for accommodating uncertainty avoidance tend to include enhanced communication and structure. Ideas for future research on this topic are discussed.

DEDICATION

For my sister, Emily. You are my hero!

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INTRODUCTION

In our continuously evolving society, diversity in organizations has become increasingly

common. With growth in diversity comes the responsibility of accommodating the variety of

people that now fill our work-force. Not only do organizations need to give employees tools to

be able to perform well, they must also provide a work environment in which employees can

thrive, no matter what their cultural background. Such an environment must keep workplace

stress under control, because it directly affects the ability of an organization to perform well. It is

widely known that higher stress is related to higher absenteeism, higher amounts of health

claims, and lower productivity (Cartwright & Cooper, 1997). Moreover, Pasca and Wagner

(2011) have recently discussed the importance of cultural diversity in the organization and the

need for research to re-explore important topics such as workplace stress from a cultural

perspective.

Different cultural dimensions must be taken into account when trying to alleviate stress and

increase performance in organizations, as individuals with different cultural dimensions may

react to interventions in different ways. If these differences are not taken into account,

interventions may not be as effective. For example, a review of a training program in a Korean

organization, SK Group, showed that it was only efficient when used in Korea itself (Lim, 1999).

When the same training was used in other countries, the program was inefficient and less of the

desired, taught traits were exhibited in the workplace. Upon performing a cultural needs

assessment, it became clear that SK Group's training methods did not take into account cultural

differences between Korea and partner countries. Therefore, upon utilization of more culturally diverse instructional methods, training results significantly improved.

In support of Pasca and Wagner's call for research, I sought to explore literature concerning cultural dimensions in the workplace and their effects on worker stress and performance. By exploring this literature, I hoped to arrive to a better understanding of the role culture plays in the workplace and how best to accommodate different cultural dimensions in order to decrease stress and increase performance. To achieve this goal, I began by familiarizing myself with culture as it is defined in social psychology, because only with a clear definition of culture can we arrive to a better understanding of its role in the workplace.

In the field of social psychology, Hofstede has defined culture as being the set of mentalities that differentiate one society from another, and has used countries as examples of cultural groups (1984). While Hofstede's studies of culture have been called into doubt by some researchers, his findings have been undeniably influential in moving social psychology research forward (Triandis, 2004). Because of his role in advancing social psychology research, I decided to use his definition of culture as a guideline in exploring the influence of cultural dimensions in the workplace. Hofstede has defined five dimensions of culture: power distance, individualism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity, and long-term orientation (2001). Of these dimensions, uncertainty avoidance in particular is frequently noted for being related to stress (Hofstede, 1994, 2001, 2004). As such, I decided to separate uncertainty avoidance from Hofstede's other dimensions in order to perform a more specific analysis of its role in the workplace.

I will begin this literature review by defining uncertainty avoidance as a cultural construct. Then I will explore examples of uncertainty avoidance in the workplace. Delving deeper into the topic, I will examine literature concerning the links between uncertainty avoidance, stress, and performance. Finally, I will discuss some best practices for accommodating uncertainty avoidance in the workplace. By exploring this topic through these different perspectives, I aim to bring more clarity to concerns surrounding uncertainty avoidance. This review will not only show the ways in which uncertainty avoidance relates to stress and workflow, but also the ways in which it can be used to each organization's advantage. In addition, this review will highlight gaps in the existing literature on uncertainty avoidance so that readers may consider next steps in studying this cultural construct.

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

Uncertainty avoidance was first identified by Hofstede (1984) as a societal need for rules and standards to guide behavior in organizations. In project GLOBE (2004), House and colleagues operationalized uncertainty avoidance to represent the degree to which "orderliness, consistency, structure, formalized procedures, and laws" are sought out (p. 166). Though uncertainty avoidance has been cited as the measurement of a culture's tolerance for ambiguity, not all researchers use the two terms interchangeably. For example, Gupta (2012) operationalizes uncertainty avoidance as being the measure of tolerance for ambiguity. In contrast, Endres and colleagues explore tolerance for ambiguity as its own construct and make no mention of its relationship to uncertainty avoidance (Endres, Chowdbury & Milner, 2009). This pattern can be seen throughout the literature surrounding uncertainty avoidance and tolerance for ambiguity.

Hofstede himself has identified uncertainty avoidance as being a measure of tolerance for ambiguity, implying that the two terms are indeed interchangeable (2011). For the purposes of this review, I have explored literature that use both terms. However, I have chosen to include in my review only pieces that conceptually line up with Hofstede's definition of uncertainty avoidance. As such, the terms "uncertainty avoidance" and "tolerance for ambiguity" will be used somewhat interchangeably with the single limitation that, in context, each term fits Hofstede's defined characteristics. A table of characteristics representing the two extremes of uncertainty avoidance can be seen in Figure 1.

Weak uncertainty avoidance societies	Strong uncertainty avoidance societies
In the family: • What is different, is ridiculous or curious • Ease, indolence, low stress • Aggression and emotions not shown	• What is different, is dangerous • Higher anxiety and stress • Showing of aggression and emotions accepted

At school:
• Students comfortable with:
  - Unstructured learning situations
  - Vague objectives
  - Broad assignments
  - No time tables
• Teachers may say "I don't know"
	• Students comfortable with:
	  - Structured learning situations
	  - Precise objectives
	  - Detailed assignments
	  - Strict time tables
	• Teachers should have all the answers

At the work place: • Dislike of rules - written or unwritten • Less formalization and standardization	• Emotional need for rules - written or unwritten • More formalization and standardization

Figure 1: Characteristics of societies low (weak) in uncertainty avoidance versus societies high (strong) in uncertainty avoidance. From Hofstede, 1994.

Uncertainty Avoidance in the Workplace

Uncertainty avoidance has been discussed in management and organizational psychology as a cultural influence in the workplace. At the societal level, a relationship between uncertainty avoidance, organizational outcomes, and managerial methods can be seen. At the individual level, employee attitudes as they relate to stress and performance become more obvious.

At the individual level, research includes Debus and colleagues' exploration of the mediation of uncertainty avoidance between job insecurity and job satisfaction (2012). What they found is that people who are more uncertainty-avoiding are more likely to have negative attitudes toward jobs they feel insecure in. On a similar note, Rosen & Knauper (2009) were able to demonstrate that individuals who have higher intolerance of uncertainty worry about ambiguity and find it more stressful than those who do not.

On a large scale, some notable studies that explore uncertainty avoidance include Shane's 1993 and 1995 world-wide investigations. In 1993, Shane examined uncertainty avoidance in 33 countries and found that uncertainty-avoiding societies are less innovative than others. Later, in a separate study of 68 countries (1995), he explored the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and four championing roles: the organizational maverick, the network facilitator, the transformational leader, and the organizational buffer. He discovered that people from uncertainty-avoiding societies are less likely to take on championing roles, potentially explaining the lack of innovation discovered in his earlier study. Shane's identified championing roles all share in common the necessity to step outside of the organizational structure and start new trends, something that uncertainty-avoiding people are less likely to do because they prefer stability and consistency (1995).

In 1996, Gouttefarde compared French and American management values with the intention of identifying what sets French management methods apart from American management methods.

He found that heightened uncertainty avoidance in French culture (contrasting American culture's lower uncertainty avoidance) was one factor that set apart the French management methods from American methods. As a result, French managers are more likely to require consistent communication with their subordinates and may be less likely to fire long-time members whom they view as being stable forces in the company (Gouttefarde 1996).

Many years later, Ollo-López and colleagues explored the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and new work practices: job rotation, autonomous teams, job autonomy, and upward communication (2011). To their surprise, they found that uncertainty avoidance correlated with all of these practices, despite their usage being recently implemented. This finding brings to light two important considerations:

1. Although uncertainty avoidance represents a need for rules and standardization in the workplace, it doesn't always represent a fear of new things. Rather, with the proper organizational support and structure, managers and subordinates may be willing to try new work practices (French & Bell, 1978).

2. Communication (or, in the case of Ollo-López's study, upward communication) may play a role in the likelihood that uncertainty-avoiding individuals feel comfortable trying new things. This role may be exemplified in the relationships between managers and their subordinates (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). For example, a worker may feel more comfortable trying new ideas if she knows that she can confide in her manager about how well these new practices are working out in the organization.

Uncertainty Avoidance and Stress

Stress has been defined several ways in workplace literature. Jex, Beehr, and Roberts (1992) highlighted three typical perspectives on stress in the workplace: as stimuli from the environment, as a response to such stimuli, and as an interaction between stimuli and responses. For example, in a situation where an employee does not know how to do his job and begins to experience stress, the stress he experiences can be defined as a lack of instruction from his superiors, heightened uncertainty avoidance on the part of the employee, or as a relationship between both of these factors. The latter perspective of stress has been more clearly defined by McGrath (1976) to be the result of an environmental event being perceived as demanding more requirements than a person feels he is capable of meeting with his current resources.

Throughout the years, Hofstede has noted links between strong uncertainty avoidance and the phenomena of high anxiety and stress (1994; 2001; 2004). For example, in his study of cultural dimensions in IBM, a corporation with locations in 71 countries, he identified a link between anxiety and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede also claims that people in uncertainty-avoiding cultures feel uncomfortable in situations that are "novel, unknown, surprising, and different from the usual" (1994). Furthermore, he predicted that they are more likely to seek structure through the use of guidelines (Hofstede, 1984). For example, Hofstede identified Latin American culture as being uncertainty-avoiding (i.e. having high levels of uncertainty avoidance), using their interest in strict rules as an example of this. Given the above characteristics, Hofstede pointed out that uncertainty-avoiding individuals may also be more likely to experience stress in novel or unstructured situations (1994, 2001).

This claim has been both directly and indirectly supported in studies exploring subjective well-being, strain, anxiety, and the tendency to worry. For example, in a study of managers, Keenan (1979) found that individuals who scored high for intolerance of ambiguity were more likely to experience tension and strain when put into ambiguous roles. Later, Frone (1990) completed a meta-analysis on the role of intolerance of ambiguity in the stress-strain relationship. His analysis supported Keenan's findings that intolerance for ambiguity moderates the stress experienced due to role ambiguity.

In 2005, researchers exploring Mexican employees reported evidence supporting Hofstede's findings that Latin culture employees experience higher stress in response to lack of social support and structure (Rodriquez-Calcagno). If Hofstede's previous claim that Latin culture is more uncertainty-avoiding is correct, then this provides more substance to his argument that high uncertainty avoidance is linked to higher levels of stress (Rodriquez-Calcagno, 2005).

Despite the overwhelming evidence that uncertainty avoidance is connected to higher stress, some researchers have been able to pinpoint situations in which this is not the case. A study of 78 Greek managers showed that if the organizational culture matches up with the cultural tendency of the manager, stress is low (Joiner, 2001). In other words, though the managers in the study tended to score high in uncertainty avoidance, they were comfortable because the organization also supported high uncertainty avoidance by maintaining structure and using formalized procedures (Joiner, 2001). Still another study of 21 countries found no relation

between uncertainty avoidance and stress, which calls Hofstede's stress connection into doubt (Peterson & Smith, 1995).

Uncertainty Avoidance and Performance

The relationship between uncertainty avoidance and performance is less understood than that of uncertainty avoidance and stress. Wang and Chan (1995) propose that managers with high levels of tolerance for ambiguity (i.e. low uncertainty avoidance) can process new information more efficiently than those with high uncertainty avoidance. This might imply that low uncertainty avoidance is naturally related to high levels of performance.

However, literature has shown that the relationship between performance and uncertainty avoidance is typically moderated by other factors. For example, Su, Yang, & Yang (2012) found, in a study of 212 Chinese firms, that it wasn't uncertainty avoidance itself that was directly related to a firm's performance, but the degree of similarity between the firm's uncertainty avoidance and the uncertainty avoidance of its workers. That is, individuals who avoid uncertainty perform well for firms that support those attitudes, while individuals who accept uncertainty perform well for firms that also accept uncertainty. However, if there is a clash between the degree of uncertainty avoidance of the firm and the individual, performance is jeopardized (Su, Yang & Yang, 2012). Similar evidence can be seen in a study of high-level managers from Mexico, a country known for being high in uncertainty avoidance according to Hofstede (1984). Frucot and Shearon (2013) studied 83 Mexican managers working in the

United States and found that those who avoided uncertainty performed best in conditions where they were in control of their situations. In this case, the relationship between performance and uncertainty avoidance appeared to be moderated by the managers' perception of control.

Another factor that is commonly known to be related to performance is stress. Given the assumption that greater uncertainty avoidance leads to higher levels of stress, it is pertinent to explore how stress relates to performance and what this relationship might mean for the connection between uncertainty avoidance and performance. The effect of stress on performance has been explored extensively both from the perspective of the workplace and of the individual. One example of stress's effect on workplace performance can be seen in Jones et al's (1988) study of the relationship between stress and malpractice at several hospitals. In this case, higher levels of stress were linked to higher levels of malpractice. Later, in a large automotive finance company that was interested in maintaining good customer service, Ryan, Schmit, and Johnson (1996) found a relationship showing that locations with employees reporting higher levels of stress also reported lower levels of customer satisfaction. In this instance, lower levels of customer satisfaction may be have been caused by diminished performance on the part of the employees.

More specific studies of how stress affects individual performance have reached many conclusions over the years. As early as 1890, it has been argued that higher levels of stress are linked to narrower focus, causing the stressed person to zone in on one stimulus and miss out on the surrounding environment (James, 1890; Salas, Driskell, & Hughes 1996). Expanding upon

this notion, Baddeley (1972) and Hamilton (1982) have both found evidence that higher levels of stress not only narrow focus, but also reduce working memory. According to Klein (1996), such effects of stress lead to incomplete mental processing, thus interfering with decision making and other performance tasks. On the other hand, there has been evidence showing an inverted-U relationship between stress arousal and performance, where moderate amounts of arousal have caused optimal performance and extremely low or high amounts of arousal have caused poorer performance (Easterbrook, 1959). However, both this relationship and the traditional linear portrayal of stress have been limited in describing the relationship of stress and performance fully, unless tasks themselves are taken into account (Hanoch & Vitouch, 2004). To this end, the effect of stress on performance should be explored with new perspective.

Given the discourse about the relationship of uncertainty avoidance and stress, and the popular connections that have been shown between stress and performance, a logical next step would be to explore how these three constructs work together. For example, is the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and performance mediated by stress? Furthermore, does the ambiguity of a situation moderate this relationship by changing the effect of uncertainty avoidance on stress? This moderated mediation model can be seen in Figure 2. It is possible that stress acts as a mediator between constructs in relationships such as those seen in the aforementioned Su, Yang, & Yang (2012) and Frucot and Shearon (2013) studies. Exploring the role of stress as a mediator in relationships between uncertainty avoidance, performance, and other causal variables would add more evidence of an existing relationship between uncertainty avoidance and performance.
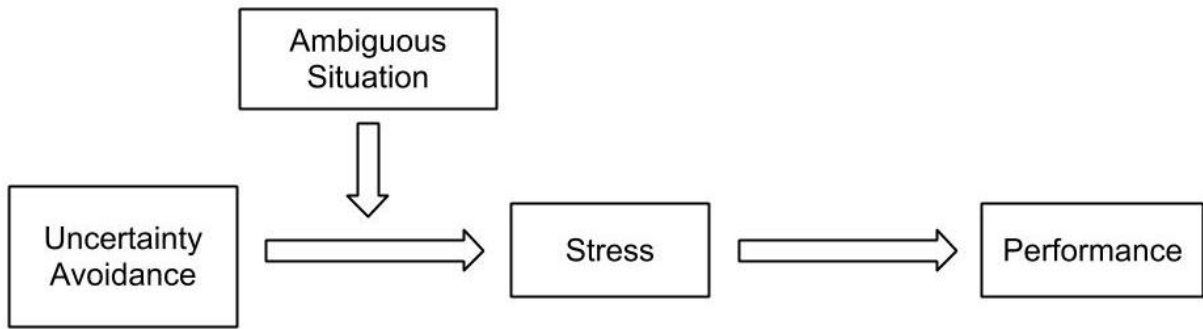
Figure 2: Proposed relationship between uncertainty avoidance and performance with stress as a mediator and situational uncertainty as a moderator.

SUGGESTED PRACTICES

Given that uncertainty avoidance plays a role in workplace functioning, it is necessary to explore strategies that both mitigate the negative effects and intensify the positive effects of uncertainty avoidance. Following are a list of suggested practices from the literature on uncertainty avoidance and culture.

What the Individual Can Do

Baker and Carson (2011) explored the use of attachment and adaptation in mitigating the negative effects of uncertainty avoidance in individuals. They found that those high in uncertainty avoidance were likely to use both attachment and adaptation to overcome feelings of discomfort in uncertain situations. Namely, they "attached" by forming a strong identity with their immediate group, and they "adapted" by adjusting to their surrounding environment. These findings supported earlier literature suggesting that attachment and adaptation are methods of coping in uncertainty avoiding individuals (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Geletkanycz, 1997). Furthermore, Baker and Carson suggest:

- The individual should change her strategy of management depending on if the organization is in an unexplored market or in a traditional market (2011).

Specifically, if the organization is in a new market that was previously not in existence, Baker and Carson suggest that the use of adaptation would be the most appropriate managing strategy (2011). On the other hand, if the organization is in a traditional environment, the use of attachment should be used in order to find stability with the traditional business model (2011).

What the Manager Can Do

In 1990, Frone published a meta-analysis exploring the relationship between intolerance for ambiguity, role stress, and strain. His findings, in line with prior work by Keenan (1979), not only identified intolerance for ambiguity as a moderator between role ambiguity and stress, but also highlighted new possibilities for management strategies based on this relationship. Frone suggests two strategies for accommodating uncertainty avoidance:

- Management should strive to reduce role ambiguity by allowing the subordinate to play a larger role in decision making. This will keep management informed while giving uncertainty-avoiding subordinates a feeling of control over their situations (1990).

- Management should strive to become intuitive of their subordinates' levels of intolerance and tailor their tasks to fit their needs for structure (1990).

Frone's suggestions are born out of the need to decrease ambiguity for the worker who is intolerant of it. In short, by considering each subordinate's tolerance or intolerance of ambiguity, the manager can create a work environment that is conducive to low stress and increased performance for that person (1990).

What the Organization Can Do

Several organizational strategies for accommodating uncertainty avoidance and other cultural phenomena have been found in the literature. From micro-level changes to organizational development, each strategy brings a unique perspective to the positive role the organization can play in responding to uncertainty avoidance.

In 1986, Jaeger compared the values of organization development to those of 40 different

countries by using Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions. Organization development is

concerned with the implementation of change in a deliberate manner (Huse, 1980). Upon careful

analysis, Jaeger concluded that organization development should be implemented in different

ways based on different cultural needs (1986). More specifically, organization development must

be done carefully in organizations that have high uncertainty avoidance, as employees may not

feel comfortable with interventions that have unpredictable outcomes or lax structure. As such,

Jaeger recommends using Harrison's (1970) depth intervention, which is intervention based on

how formal or informal the change needs to be. In the case of uncertainty-avoiding

organizations, the change would need to be formal and structured, which would require one of

the following interventions:

- job enrichment,

- management by objective,

- managerial grid, or

- survey feedback (French & Bell, 1978).

In utilizing these methods, Jaeger recommends tailoring the speed of the intervention to the

needs of each organization (1986). A delicate balance between the method of intervention and

timing of the intervention should be sought out.

Randolph (2002) has espoused the use of organizational empowerment in addressing challenges

faced in multinational organizations. Citing ways in which empowerment has a positive effect on

performance, he has recommended it as a tool to accommodate differences along dimensions of culture (including uncertainty avoidance). According to Randolph, the following three strategies should be used to successfully empower a multinational organization:

- Share accurate information widely so that workers can take responsibility,

- Create autonomy with clear boundaries to identify worker responsibility,

- Replace hierarchical thinking with teams that manage themselves (2002).

Of these, creating autonomy with clear boundaries has been noted as the most beneficial to those who have high uncertainty avoidance, as it allows uncertainty-avoiding individuals to feel safe about taking charge instead of relying on top-down structure (Randolph, 2002).

Ramburuth, while exploring five cultural groups working for a Singaporean multinational corporation, realized that the structure of the company could influence the personal values of staff from different cultural backgrounds (2009). In noting the challenges that organizations face in finding common ground between disparaging cultures, they suggested both a micro-level and macro-level approach to accommodating general cultural differences:

- At the micro-level, management should consider and utilize the values and beliefs of all members in the work team, and develop strategies to create better performance based on this diversity (Ramburuth, 2009; Maznevski, 1994).

- At the macro-level, management should develop policies and programs that create social awareness, emphasize the importance of culture and accountability, work to reduce feelings of alienation in minority groups, actively incorporate diversity management, empower employees to get them more involved in accepting diversity, create more

commitment among staff, review systems and policies that promote diversity, and create

support systems that encourage diversity (Ramburuth, 2009).

According to Ramburuth, putting effort into the above general ideas will allow the organization

as a whole to be more diversity-friendly while simultaneously affecting worker acceptance of

differently cultural constructs.

Applying Suggested Practices

With so many suggested practices at one's disposal, it can be overwhelming to decide on the best

method of implementing change in the workplace. However, it may not be necessary to decide

on one practice over another. For example, a combination of the above suggested practices can

be used to help an organization become more considerate of individuals who feel a significant

amount of uncertainty avoidance. These changes can be implemented at the macro-level, and

carried out by individuals of all tiers in the workplace. Based on the above suggested practices, I

recommend the following series of actions as an example of implementing change to better

accommodate and utilize uncertainty avoidance in the workplace.

Upon realizing that an organization might benefit from change in order to accommodate cultural

dimensions such as uncertainty avoidance, it is important to determine what type of intervention

would be best-suited to the cultural traits permeating the workplace. As Jaeger (1986)

recommended, the depth and speed of the intervention should depend on the level of uncertainty

avoidance in the organization. To this end, a cultural needs assessment similar to Lim's (1999)

assessment of SK Group would provide information on the uncertainty avoidance of an organization's workers. A simple survey such as the MSTAT-I can measure uncertainty avoidance with little interference (Mclain, 1993).

Once the organization's level of uncertainty avoidance has been determined, the depth and speed of the intervention can be determined as well. For example, an organization characterized by employees with extremely high levels of uncertainty avoidance would benefit most from job enrichment, a method of motivating employees by giving them more autonomy (French & Bell, 1978). Furthermore, the implementation of job enrichment practices should be done slowly in order to give individuals who avoid uncertainty ample time to adjust to the changes (Jaeger, 1986).

After deciding on the type of intervention to pursue, an organization can then decide which suggested practices would be most appropriate for that intervention. For example, an organization that has chosen to pursue intervention through job enrichment should focus on practices that involve motivating employees. Such practices would include creating autonomy with clear boundaries so that workers can establish more responsibility, and allowing subordinates to play a larger role in decision making so that they feel in more control of their jobs (Randolph, 2002; Frone, 1990). The success of these practices can be assessed over periods of time through the use of performance examinations and stress questionnaires. Changes to the intervention can then be considered based on the success of the practices implemented.

I have provided just one example of implementing change in the workplace for the accommodation of uncertainty avoidance. Many approaches can be taken, and the depth and speed of intervention can be altered based on the needs of the organization (Jaeger 1986). Furthermore, it is not always necessary to make direct changes to the organizational structure. Broader changes in policies and organizational values can also be pursued (Ramburuth, 2009; Maznevski, 1994). Contrastingly, more personalized approaches such as training individuals to manage their uncertainty avoidance may also be considered (Baker & Carson, 2011). It is up to each organization to decide.

DISCUSSION

The literature presented in this review highlights several possible relationships concerning uncertainty avoidance in the workplace. Firstly, uncertainty avoidance appears to be linked to higher levels of stress, although some sources dispute this claim. Secondly, the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and performance appears to rely on outside factors. Unfortunately, there is limited literature covering this relationship and what outside factors may be influencing it. One area of interest in exploring the link between uncertainty avoidance and performance is whether or not stress is a possible moderator. To date, this possibility has not been explored despite ample evidence showing that uncertainty avoidance relates to stress and stress relates to performance. Based upon the research covering uncertainty avoidance, stress, and performance, I proposed a model that can be tested to explore the relationship between these three variables (Figure 2).

In addition to theoretical constructs, many practices have been suggested for application to culturally diverse organizations, using uncertainty avoidance as a cultural construct. Two overarching practices suggested in the literature are the use of communication and the implementation of clear boundaries. These areas are particularly relevant for organizations dealing with uncertainty avoidance, because communication creates a gateway through which uncertainty can be replaced with answers and clear boundaries provides the stability that uncertainty-avoiding individuals appear to crave (Hofstede, 1994).

The findings of this review should provide a good starting point for researchers who are developing updated theories on the moderated relationship between uncertainty avoidance, stress, and performance. For managers, this review has provided methods by which uncertainty-avoiding individuals can perform their best in the workplace. For organizations as a whole, this review has highlighted ways in which to accommodate uncertainty avoidance and use it to the organization's advantage. Largely speaking, these findings offer a starting point in the long process of creating increasingly successful organizations in an increasingly diverse workforce.

While several studies of uncertainty avoidance, stress, and performance were examined, there are many more reports of research on this topic to be analyzed. A more thorough investigation of the literature may lead to stronger conclusions about the relationships between stress, performance, and uncertainty avoidance. Furthermore, a more comprehensive review of additional best practices could be explored. These limitations should be used as directions for further research and analyses by other researchers in the field.

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