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The Impact of Westernization on Tongan Cultural Values Related to Business

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THE IMPACT OF WESTERNIZATION ON TONGAN CULTURAL VALUES
RELATED TO BUSINESS

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Psychology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

By
Lucas Nelson Ross

May 2009

THE IMPACT OF WESTERNIZATION ON TONGAN CULTURAL VALUES
RELATED TO BUSINESS

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This study examined the impact of Westernization on Tongan cultural values (Collectivism I, Collectivism II, Power Distance, Future Orientation, and Uncertainty Avoidance) related to business. A Tongan version of the Project GLOBE Beta Questionnaire measuring cultural dimensions at the societal level was completed by 222 Tongans from the island groups of Vava'u, Ha'apai, and Niuatoputapu. One-way ANOVA and planned comparison results indicated significant differences for Collectivism II and Uncertainty Avoidance. Scores from Vava'u showed significantly less Collectivism II than Ha'apai, but not Niuatoputapu. Furthermore, scores from Vava'u showed significantly less Uncertainty Avoidance than Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu. No significant differences were found between Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu on any of the cultural dimensions in this study. The results of this study indicate the cultural dimension scores in one of Tonga's more populated and technologically advanced island groups are beginning to reflect the values of Western culture. Implications for organizations planning to conduct business in Tonga are discussed.

The Impact of Westernization on Tongan Cultural Values Related to Business

The increasing connection among countries and the globalization of business do not mean that cultural differences are disappearing or even decreasing. As economic borders collapse, it is possible for cultural barriers to grow. When individuals from differing cultures interact, many similarities may emerge, but many differences also may be amplified (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). According to Rabotin (2008), globalization is extensive, and to be successful in this sort of atmosphere, leaders must be knowledgeable in communicating and functioning within a range of cultural environments. Competition is intensifying in both the global and regional arenas with organizations mobilizing on a much broader scale (Goldstein & Ford, 2002).

Globalization opens up a number of opportunities for business, but key challenges are also created. To succeed in global business, a better and more flexible understanding of different cultures is necessary for managers and employees (House et al., 2004). This is not an easy task; but to continue a constant learning environment, new research is needed on how culture functions. There are a number of factors that affect the creation and change of organizational cultures. These factors include the presence of competitors; local, regional, national, and global economic conditions; the type of business, whether it be manufacturing or service; the type of labor supply, etc. (House et al., 2004).

The current study focuses on the way organizations reflect the societies in which they exist and, more specifically, on the business implications for a traditional culture evolving into a more modern, Westernized society. Several small and large scale attempts that look at cultural differences in the business

world have been successful (e.g., Project GLOBE). Culture, however, is not a static entity, and thus more research is needed to understand the process of change in order allow for better prediction of appropriate business practices.

In the past, it was common for organizations to conduct business only within the boundaries of their home market. However, the rising costs in these countries combined with lower costs in others and the advancement of communication technologies have led to the development of increasing global competition. As a result, it is becoming progressively more difficult for organizations to increase their chances of success and survival. As the strategies used by organizations to obtain success within their own borders often do not work across international boundaries, a need has developed for individuals and businesses that possess different cultural values, different managerial styles, and new organizational structures (Rodriguez, 1997).

Although there have been a number of research efforts to identify cultural variables associated with work across the globe, there is virtually no information on the South Pacific and, more specifically, Tongan culture. Although Tonga does not embody a Mecca for foreign investment, the country's economy is dependent on foreign assistance to offset its trade deficit (Central Intelligence Agency, 2009). Most of the major projects (e.g., new school buildings, providing computer and networking equipment for schools) within the country are also funded by foreign aid. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, many of the projects begun in Tonga involving host country nationals have been unsuccessful. An argument can be made, therefore, that this lack of success can be partially attributed to a lack of understanding of the Tongan culture. If so, then a greater awareness of the culture would allow foreign organizations to better prepare their

expatriates for conducting business in Tonga, or, at the very least, allow them to select more culturally appropriate endeavors.

The Kingdom of Tonga is a traditional place that is evolving to a more Western philosophy, which may likely affect the types of organizational structures and interventions that will be successful. The purpose of this study is to look at that change. The following sections discuss the research done with Project GLOBE, including its cultural indices, the impact of the West, some background information on the Kingdom of Tonga, Westernization and Tonga, and a more in-depth look into the cultural practices of Western societies.

History of Project GLOBE

Realizing that differing cultures are becoming increasingly connected and the world of business becoming more global, the creators of Project GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program) became aware of a need for valuable international and cross-cultural contact, cooperation, and support, not only for efficient practice of management but also for the enhancement of the individual state. As these realizations of an interconnected, global business world became noticeably influential, the creators of Project GLOBE believed that more cultural barricades and unforeseen challenges would emerge. Currently, approximately 170 researchers from 62 countries utilize information from all the regions of the world to meet the goals of the Project GLOBE initiative. These goals include shifting the focus of organizational behavior literature from being frequently U.S. related to cross-cultural and becoming a foremost contributor to the leadership and organizational literature (House & Javidan, 2004).

Societal and organizational items for nine cultural indices were utilized in Project GLOBE. According to House and Javidan (2004), these indices were a result of research conducted by Hofstede (1980), Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), and McClelland (1961). The indices include Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance, Collectivism I, Collectivism II, Gender Egalitarianism, Assertiveness, Future Orientation, Performance Orientation, and Humane Orientation. Through interviews, focus groups, and a review of the pertinent literature, the authors of Project GLOBE developed items for each of the indices that reflect cultural “values” (what the respondents think “should be”) and to reflect cultural “practices” (what the respondents perceives “as is”). This allows individuals to answer items on how their society or organization currently is, but also allows them the opportunity to answer questions on how their society or organization should be. This gives the researchers an opportunity to compare the cultural values (“should be”) of a group or individual to the cultural practices (“as is”) of the group or individual.

The nine major cultural constructs investigated by Project GLOBE are defined below (House and Javidan, 2004).

Uncertainty Avoidance: The degree to which organizational or societal members attempt to avoid uncertainty by dependence on rituals, societal norms, and routine practices to lessen the unpredictability of future experiences.

Power Distance: The extent to which organizational or societal members anticipate and agree that power should be shared unequally.

Collectivism I (Institution): The extent to which organizational or societal institutional practices support and reward collective allocation of resources and collective action.

Collectivism II (Family): The extent to which individuals articulate allegiance, pride, and cohesiveness in their families or organizations.

Future Orientation: The extent to which organizational or societal members take part in future-oriented behaviors such as investing in the future and planning.

Gender Egalitarianism: The degree to which gender role differences are lessened by an organization or society.

Assertiveness: The extent to which organizational or societal members are assertive, aggressive, and argumentative in societal relationships.

Performance Orientation: The degree to which an organization or society members are supported and rewarded for performance progress and excellence.

Humane Orientation: The extent to which organizational or societal members are supported and rewarded for being fair, selfless, kind, giving, and caring to others.

Impact of the West

According to Von Laue (1987), the world is becoming interdependent, global competition is being modeled after the West, and the sustainment of political power is often achieved through the technology, weapons, attitudes, and sciences from the West. The spread of Western culture can be viewed as beneficial to a non-Western society with the associated spread of modern medicines and advanced technologies. However, it can also be seen as a destroyer of original cultural ideals, values, and beliefs. It is obvious that no other cultural style has promulgated like that of the West and it seems likely that

Western culture will continue to shape the rest of the world for some time. Consequently, to continue this push of cultural monopolization, the spread of Western ideas are often forced upon societies with the West getting much of its higher authority through military force. As a result, non-Western cultures are often overpowered and must submit to Western ways. While there are some who will argue that Western culture has corrupted traditional Polynesian culture, and to some degree this is true, the spiritual gifts (i.e., Christianity) of the West that have been spread through missionaries, arguably, have had a positive effect on the region. It can also be said that, likewise, the generosity of the Polynesian culture has much to offer to the West, and the technical expertise the West has to present is of obvious value to the South Pacific (O'Reilly, 2008).

The impact of developed Western countries (i.e., United States, Australia, New Zealand, England, and Canada) on non-Western cultures can be seen throughout the world. In Senegal, the impact of the West can most be seen in the marriage system. The age of individuals' first marriage has steadily risen throughout the decades since the 1970s, smaller families are becoming more prevalent, and the practice of polygamy, while still widely carried out, is declining. These changes are attributed to the advancement of education, mass media, and the urbanization of Senegalese society (Senegal, 2008).

Traditional cultures from the islands in the South Pacific have also become greatly Westernized. For instance Micronesia, which includes the islands of Guam and Palau, among others, has been under the rule of Spain, Germany, Japan, and the United States. These administrations started in the mid 1500s until the late 1900s when Micronesia claimed its independence in 1970. This rule under foreign power was and is

still true for many island groups in the South Pacific. As a result of being under these foreign powers, the South Pacific was introduced to lifestyles different from their own. Many people left their farm life and began working in mines owned by Europeans. Changing the way South Pacific people lived their life led them to adopt other Western habits. For example, many began dressing in a more Westernized style of clothes and abandoned their traditional dress (Fashion Encyclopedia, 2008). The modern world is increasingly changing the South Pacific. As O'Reilly (2008) noted,

“outboards are replacing outriggers; Coca Cola and consumerism are becoming alternatives to coconuts. Furthermore, even though television is still not present in many South Pacific homes, behaviors and attitudes are being shaped by VCRs that play illegally copied videotapes available at the local corner store. As a result, villagers are becoming fascinated by material desires, while their diets are transforming as imported processed foods become a replacement for the traditional fiber rich foods like plantains and breadfruit.”

Many of these same types of changes can be seen in Tongan culture. Tongans, in the past, have embraced the idea of an extended family, but in recent times, couples of the newest generation are choosing not to utilize the extended family but, instead, live on their own (Lonely Planet, 2008). This is likely for the same reasons as the growing Westernization of the Senegalese society. Tonga, as will be discussed in further detail, is going through a transition that is beginning to replace old traditions with new Western ideals. Due to the relative remoteness of some of the islands in Tonga, however, the extent of change appears to vary considerably across the kingdom. This makes the Kingdom of Tonga the perfect location to study the expansion of the West and how that expansion impacts the culture, and the types of interventions that would help ensure the success of business enterprises attempted in these changing cultures.

Kingdom of Tonga Background

The Kingdom of Tonga is a country located in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. It consists of 170 islands that are divided into three main island groups; Tongatapu (located in the south), Ha'apai (located in the center), and Vava'u (located in the north).

Niufo'ou, Niuatoputapu, and Tafahi are isolated islands in the north with 'Ata being an isolated island in the south. The Kingdom of Tonga is the last Polynesian kingdom in the South Pacific (Tonga, 2008).

Tongans are mostly represented as Polynesian, with small mixes of Melanesian, European, Chinese, and other Pacific Islanders. About two-thirds of the Tongan population lives on Tongatapu, the main island. Located on Tongatapu is the capital of Nuku'alofa, which is the urban and commercial center for the Kingdom of Tonga (Tonga, 2008).

The main part of Tonga's economy is agriculture. Tonga produces coconuts, pumpkins, vanilla, a variety of fruits and vegetables, and is developing a growing fishing industry. Textiles, brewing, and furniture production are part of the small sized industry. Another source of revenue is the payments from the many Tongans working in Western cultures like New Zealand and Australia (World Travel Guide, 2008). The country remains dependent on external aid and remittances from Tongan communities overseas to offset its trade deficit. The government is emphasizing the development of the private sector, especially the encouragement of investment, and is committing increased funds for health and education. Tonga has a reasonably sound basic infrastructure and well-developed social services. High unemployment among the young and the continuing upturn in inflation are major issues facing the government (Central Intelligence Agency,

2009). Future plans include developing tourism and improving the island's transportation systems and communication (U.S. Department of State, 2008). This growing tourism and increased communication is beginning to modify and shape current Tongan life and will undoubtedly have an impact on future generations that have more contact with other parts of the world.

Modern Tongan life is essentially the same as it has been for centuries with the emphasis on agriculture and traditional values. The majority of Tongans live a survival type farming life that includes insistent pressures from church and family. In Tonga, individuals are raised on the belief that they are a product of the Tongan culture and that any action or behavior must be done for the good of the group, even at the expense of the individual. Western society, on the other hand teaches a much more individualistic approach to life. Nevertheless, Tonga is going through change. For example, cars and internet access continue to find their way onto some of Tonga's inhabited islands. As of 2006, 12 of the 36 inhabited Tongan islands have cars and 7 have electricity (McCoy & Havea, 2006).

The foundation of Tonga's culture is based on the notion of rank. In Tongan life, rank impacts all responsibilities and interactions. Tongans will often avoid communication until they can determine who is of higher rank. This knowledge will then establish how the interaction will occur. The class system in Tonga is made up of royalty, nobles, and commoners. The decision of who is in which class is established by heredity. Showing respect to an individual of higher rank is very important. For example, when a commoner is in the presence of royalty, signs of respect would be to keep their heads lower than the member of royalty, keeping their eyes down, not speaking, and never

walking in front of a noble or royalty. When communicating with nobles or royalty, Tongans use different forms of language (i.e., different words and phrases) than they would use when interacting with other commoners.

Westernization and Tonga

Included in the rich history of Tonga is the ever present contact with more developed countries that are considered to have Western ideals and philosophies. Westernization in the South Pacific Islands began in the early 1500's, with interactions from Europeans. As time went on Americans and Asians also began to intermingle with the natives from these islands (Pacific Islands, 2008). The first Europeans to come into contact with Tonga are believed to be the Dutch. The Dutch were quickly followed by the British, Spanish, and French.

It has been argued that Tongans took on the values of the Western societies in order to survive in their ever-changing world. After the unification of Tonga in the 19th century, Tonga was counseled by European Americans to take on the characteristics of Western societies if it wanted to escape threats from larger countries. Thus, according to Oliver (as cited in Urbanowicz, 2003), Tongans came to believe that the only way to continue being Tongan (i.e., not be conquered) was to be seen as Western.

Tonga may not have been ready for change during the 19th century, but the right people at the right time came to introduce these changes. For example, European missionaries had a major impact on Tongan change. These missionaries brought Western people, materials, and values to the three major island groups of Tonga (Tongatapu, Ha'apai and Vava'u). With the beginning of European visitors, a new Western religion was introduced. In a relatively short period of time, the native religion of Tonga was

replaced by Western religion. Today the majority of Tongan families belong to a Christian church (Pacific Islands, 2008).

With the beginning of the 20th century, Tongans continued to be involved with an increasing number of global issues. Just before World War I, Tonga became involved with Britain on a more concerted level. During this time, Tonga signed a treaty that allowed for British protection during any foreign affairs. However, the prospect and involvement with war brought more and more Western contact with Tonga. The Second World War aroused many South Pacific Island societies to inquire about issues in Western communities. During World War II, both the United States and New Zealand troops were stationed on Tongatapu (Lonely Planet, 2008). Between the years of 1942 and 1945, millions of American soldiers had contact with Tonga. This contact allowed Americans to bring their unfamiliar culture to Tonga. Local Tongans were astounded by the money and goods brought by Americans as they had never seen anything like that before. Along with products of modern technology, the American soldiers brought modern music, sports, cigarettes, beer, and chewing gum. Furthermore, unlike other nations that had visited Tonga, Americans came from a country that was racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse (Weeks, 1987). Adding to the military history of Tonga and Western societies, in both 2004 and 2007 Tonga went as far as sending troops to Iraq (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2007).

According to the Lonely Planet Travel Guide (2008), more recent Tongan affairs have been highlighted by governmental changes that were influenced by foreign pressures. Tonga saw a rise in a governmental change that decreased the power of the upper classes, and increased the desire for a constitutional monarchy that is a reflection of

the British system. This is not surprising considering Tonga's long history of contact with Europe, particularly Britain. Tonga's growing interest in the utilization of more globalized affairs can be demonstrated by their request to become part of the World Trade Organization.

Tongan people are increasingly facing the issue of balancing influences of Western culture and technology with traditional values. Nuku'alofa is the epitome of a place where Western and traditional Tongan culture mix (U.S. Department of State, 2008). Fletcher and Keller (2001) described Nuku'alofa (especially the younger residents) as a place that is suffering from the influence of American culture. Likewise, the impact of the West can be seen clearly in the younger generations who are beginning to question the function of the monarch and rebelling from the idea of the extended family (Lonely Planet, 2008).

Western culture has been assimilated into Tonga in more ways than just simply foreign visitors. A great number of Tongans live and work overseas, particularly in New Zealand, Australia, and the United States. According to Lee (2004), there are approximately 40,000 Tongans in New Zealand, 37,000 in Australia, and 15,000 in the United States. These numbers include Tongans that are born overseas. Tongans living away from the homeland typically continue to have close ties with those still living in the island nation. These connections include business ties, church networks, kinship links, and student groups. These overseas Tongans keep their social, political, and economic connections through remittances, internet, phone calls, back and forth travel, videotapes, and photographs. With this amount of information and contact from such a large contingent of Tongans living in Western cultures, it is necessary to study what sort of

impact Western culture is having on Tongan culture. Technology and communication continue to advance and expand in Tonga. However, even with social connections from the West, the island locations, and a growing tourist contingent, information does not always spread quickly from island to island. Tonga did not even get a wireless phone service until 2002 (Heydon, 2008). With certain island groups being more populated, possessing a growing tourist industry, advancing technologies, and less isolated than others, it is likely that information will be extended to these places more rapidly.

Cultural Practices of Western Societies

In order to find the extent to which Western societies affect Tongan culture as it relates to business organizations, it is important to ascertain how the Western societies themselves score on the cultural dimensions related to work discussed in the Project GLOBE research.

Western countries that have had the most contact with Tonga are Australia, England, New Zealand, and the United States. Information on these countries was included in an article on the Anglo Cluster by Ashkanasy, Trevor-Roberts, and Earnshaw (2002). Economic and demographic profiles for these countries and Tonga (for comparison purposes) are contained in Table 1.

Table 1
Economic and Demographic Profiles

Country	Population (millions)	Life Expectancy (years)	Surface Area (sq. km) (thousands)	GDP (U.S.\$ billions)	GNI per capita (U.S. \$)	GDP growth (annual %)
Australia	21.02	81	7,741	821.72	35,960	4.5
England	61.03	79	245	2,727.81	42,740	3
New Zealand	4.23	80	271	129.37	28,780	3.4
United States	301.62	78	9,364	13,811	46,040	2.2
Tonga	0.1	73	0.8	0.2	2,320	N/A

Notes: Data taken from 2007 World Bank Indicators (2008).

The findings of the GLOBE researchers for the Anglo Cluster were gathered through mid-level managers in the aforementioned countries. Results were found for both the practices of a society (As Is) and the values of a society (Should Be). If Westernization truly has had an impact on Tongan culture it is likely that the cultural dimensions ratings from Tonga would reflect the ratings from societies like Australia, England, New Zealand, and the United States. Table 2 gives a summary of the “as is” or cultural practice scores for Australia, England, New Zealand and the United States.

Table 2
Country Means for GLOBE Societal Cultural Practices

As Is	Australia	England	New Zealand	United States	Averages
Collectivism I	4.29	4.27	4.81	4.2	4.39
Collectivism II	4.17	4.08	3.67	4.25	4.04
Power Distance	4.74	5.15	4.89	4.88	4.92
Future Orientation	4.09	4.28	3.47	4.15	4.00
Uncertainty Avoidance	4.39	4.65	4.75	4.15	4.49

Results indicate that the countries of Australia, England, New Zealand, and the United States have average ratings on four of the five cultural dimensions listed in Table 2 on the practices of a society (As Is) compared to the rest of the world (Ashkanasy et al.,

2002). The exception is a high rating (4.92) on Power Distance. Ashkanasy et al. attribute the high Power Distance ratings to the spread of the British Empire and the tension created by the dilemma for colonies to find their own uniqueness while keeping up with British practices. This tension created noticeable power differences and put a prominence on status among these different societies. As stated earlier, Tonga has similar connections to the British Empire. While it was never a colony of Britain, Tonga did come under the protection of the British in the late 19th century (Lonely Planet, 2008). It is likely, therefore, that Tonga's Power Distance ratings will reflect those of other Western colonies. In addition, as stated earlier, the basis of traditional Tongan culture is a rank system that includes royalty and nobles thus Tonga may have even a higher Power Distance score than those found in the Anglo cluster.

Current Study

This study focuses on the island groups of Vava'u, Ha'apai, and Niuatoputapu. Vava'u is the most populous of the three, and largely due to its possession of the Port of Refuge (one of the South Pacific's top ports), is an important part of Tonga's growing tourist industry (Fletcher & Keller, 2001). The Ha'apai island group is more remote and the people live in a more traditional manner. The population is fairly small due to the movement of residents to Tongatapu, Australia, and New Zealand for a life outside of fishing and agriculture. Ha'apai is considered to be less influenced by Western societies than any other place in Tonga, aside from the Niuaus. The Niuaus is where Niuatoputapu is located and residents here are observably conservative and very traditional in their actions and behaviors.

The current study will focus only on the cultural dimensions of Collectivism I, Collectivism II, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Future Orientation as these dimensions represent clear distinctions between traditional Tongan and Western practices. As stated earlier, Tonga is a traditionally collectivistic nation that has been high in Power Distance with a culture that is based on rank and a government that includes nobles and royalty. Organizations with cultures that are more individualistic and less collectivistic have employees that consider themselves independent of the organization and see their hiring as a reflection of their skills and abilities rather than their social relationships and backgrounds. Societies that are more collectivistic require a greater emotional attachment from members to the organization; likewise, the organizations in return should assume an extensive responsibility for their members (Gelfand, Bhawuk, Nishii, & Bechtold, 2004). Societies and organizations that are high in Power Distance tend to have centralized decision-making, fewer employees per supervisors, and an autocratic leadership style. Societies and organizations low in Power Distance, on the other hand, tend to utilize decentralized decision-making, fewer supervisors per employee, and a participative style of leadership (Landy, 2005).

Tongan society, also, has fairly specific rules with respect to many situations. For example, men are ranked higher than women except within families where sisters have a higher status than brothers, and older people have more status than younger ones. Society also has rules concerning how one behaves after a death in the family/community, where one sits at a wedding, who speaks at social events, etc. (Bernstein, 1983). This suggests that traditional Tongan culture is one that is higher in Uncertainty Avoidance than most Western cultures. Societies and organizations that are high in Uncertainty Avoidance tend

to be very accepting of technical solutions, demonstrate strong loyalty to their employers, and often constrain their innovators by rules and standards. Those low in Uncertainty Avoidance tend to be opposite including being very skeptical of technical solutions, possess weak loyalty to their employers, and do not constrain their innovators by strict rules and standards (Landy, 2005).

Future Orientation, is another dimension that seems to separate traditional Tongan culture with that of the West. It is not surprising to learn that the Western world's sense of urgency for the future comes from work obligations. However, for Tonga this sense of urgency comes from church and family, which typically does not require long-term strategies. Tongans are not concerned with planning and the norm is for tasks to get done when they have to be done. In fact, it is fairly common for a store to close because there are not enough items to sell or enough capital to purchase additional items (McCoy & Havea, 2006). This suggests that traditional Tongan culture is one that is lower in Future Orientation than Western culture. Future Orientation is the primary decision variable for all organizations because it represents the problem of allocating resources over time, known as intertemporal choice (Laverty, 1996). Future Orientation in the organizational setting entails preparing the organization to meet potential environmental changes and is, therefore, a necessary leadership attribute (Brommer & De La Porte, 1992).

It will be interesting to see the results between the island groups of Vava'u, Ha'apai, and Niuatoputapu on the abovementioned five dimensions as Vava'u represents an island that is going through more and more change and increased influence of the West while Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu represent islands that are being perceived as more traditionally Tongan on the surface. Furthermore, this study will concentrate on the "as

is” perception for the people of Tonga. When looking at the impact of Westernization it is necessary to look at the cultural practices and what an individual perceives “as is.” This study is not concerned with how Tongans think their culture should be, but instead what sort of cultural practices are actually taking place on the island regardless of whether that perception is good or bad so the impact of Westernization can be determined.

Based on the preceding literature and relative remoteness of the island groups, the following hypotheses are posed with respect to the cultural dimensions of Collectivism I (institution), Collectivism II (in-group), Power Distance, Future Orientation, and Uncertainty Avoidance regarding the island groups of Ha’apai, Niuatoputapu, and Vava’u.

H1: Collectivism I will be less in Vava’u than in Ha’apai and Niuatoputapu.

There will be no difference between Ha’apai and Niuatoputapu

H2: Collectivism II will be less in Vava’u than in Ha’apai and Niuatoputapu.

There will be no difference between Ha’apai and Niuatoputapu.

H3: Power Distance will be less in Vava’u than in Ha’apai and Niuatoputapu.

There will be no difference between Ha’apai and Niuatoputapu.

H4: Future Orientation will be greater in Vava’u than in Ha’apai and

Niuatoputapu. There will be no difference between Ha’apai and Niuatoputapu.

H5: Uncertainty Avoidance will be less in Vava’u than in Ha’apai and

Niuatoputapu. There will be no difference between Ha’apai and Niuatoputapu.

Method

Participants

Participants include 222 Tongans from the island groups of Ha'apai, Niuatoputapu, and Vava'u. From the island group Ha'apai, data were collected from 83 participants (45 males, 36 females, with 2 unknown). In Niuatoputapu, data were collected from 32 participants (20 males, 12 females). Data in the Vava'u island group were collected from 107 participants (42 males, 62 females, with 3 unknown). Participants were from various organizations and education levels within each of the three island groups. Data from the Tongatapu island group was also collected but were not used because the data collection technique differed from the other three island groups. As such, any difference observed may be due to data collection rather than actual differences. This study was reviewed and approved by the Human Subjects Review Board at Western Kentucky University (See Appendix A).

Materials

Participants filled out a Tongan version of the Project GLOBE Beta questionnaire that was concerned with the cultural dimensions at the societal level. To arrive at a Tongan version of the Beta questionnaire several Tongans fluent in both English and Tongan translated the questionnaire from English to Tongan and from Tongan to English several times until a consensus was reached on a single Tongan version. Discrepancies were discussed and the questionnaire was put through a small pilot study to determine understanding of the questionnaire items. No significant discrepancies were revealed. No psychometric properties were assessed for the Tongan version of the Beta questionnaire.

Procedure

Data were collected as part of a larger GLOBE Project by Paquin, De Vries, Pathak, and Naz between the years 2003 and 2005. Participants were asked to complete a Tongan version of the Project GLOBE Beta questionnaire. Participants had the option of verbally being asked the questions, however none selected this option. For completing the questionnaire, participants were paid approximately \$1 USD.

Design

The design in this study was comprised of an independent variable (island group) with three levels (Ha'apai, Niuatoputapu, and Vava'u) and five dependent measures (Collectivism I, Collectivism II, Power Distance, Future Orientation, and Uncertainty Avoidance). The relationship between the independent variable and each of the dependent measures was analyzed separately (i.e., the dependent measures were not combined into a composite score) via five one-way between participant ANOVAs.

Results

The one-way ANOVAs conducted to find differences between Ha'apai, Vava'u, and Niuatoputapu on the cultural dimensions of Collectivism I (Hypothesis 1), Power Distance, (Hypothesis 3), and Future Orientation (Hypothesis 4) were not significant (see Table 3). The one-way ANOVAs conducted for the cultural dimensions of Collectivism II (Hypothesis 2) and Uncertainty Avoidance (Hypothesis 5), however, were significant (see Table 3).

Table 3
Results of One-way ANOVA Analyses

Cultural Dimension	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>
Collectivism I	2	.998	.009	.370
Collectivism II	2	7.176	.06	.001
Power Distance	2	.395	.004	.674
Future Orientation	2	1.006	.009	.367
Uncertainty Avoidance	2	5.435	.05	.005
	219 (wg)			

Since the number of planned comparisons within the cultural dimensions of Collectivism II and Uncertainty Avoidance exceeded the number of degrees of freedom associated with the between groups mean square, a modified Bonferroni test was used to maintain the family-wise error for planned comparisons at the level dictated by degrees of freedom between groups. A calculation of the adjusted significance level indicates a new rejection probability of .033 for both Collectivism II and Uncertainty Avoidance. This resulted in a family-wise rate of .099 (Keppel, 1991).

The planned comparison results revealed that participants reported significantly lower Collectivism II in the VVU island group ($M = 2.87$, $SD = .635$) than participants from the Ha'apai island group ($M = 3.27$, $SD = .873$), $t(188) = 3.65$, $p < .01$.

Participant's results from the Niuatoputapu island group ($M = 2.95$, $SD = .620$) were not significantly different than those from Vava'u, $t(137) = .645$, $p = .520$. There were no significant differences for Collectivism II between Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu, $t(113) = 1.88$, $p = .115$.

The planned comparison test for the cultural dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance revealed that participants reported significantly less Uncertainty Avoidance in the Vava'u island group ($M = 2.55$, $SD = 1.05$) than participants from the Ha'apai island group ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.05$), $t(188) = 3.11$, $p < .01$. Participant's results from the Niuatoputapu island group ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.33$) were not significantly different than those from Vava'u, $t(137) = -2.22$, $p = .072$. There were no significant differences for Uncertainty Avoidance between Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu, $t(113) = -.101$, $p = .920$.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact Westernization has on a traditional culture and the business implications that result from this impact. Past research has indicated that the strategies used by organizations to obtain success within their own borders do not work across international boundaries. As the strategies used by organizations to obtain success within their own borders often do not work across international boundaries, a need has developed for individuals and businesses that possess different cultural values, different managerial styles, and new organizational structures (Rodriguez, 1997). This research was intended to serve as a stepping-stone to understand culture better and its effect on business practices around the world.

The results failed to support or provided only partial support for the hypotheses pertaining to Collectivism I, Power Distance, and Future Orientation (Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4 respectively). Specifically, Collectivism I and Power Distance were not found to be significantly less in Vava'u than in Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu. Also, Future Orientation was not found to be greater in Vava'u than in Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu. However, as hypothesized, no significant differences were found between Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu on any of the abovementioned hypotheses. For Hypothesis 2, results indicated that Collectivism II was significantly less in Vava'u than in Ha'apai, but not significantly less in Niuatoputapu. Again, as hypothesized, no significant differences were found between Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu. For Hypothesis 5, results indicated that Uncertainty Avoidance was significantly less in Vava'u than in Ha'apai, but not significantly less in Niuatoputapu. As expected, no significant differences were found between Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu.

While none of the hypotheses were fully supported, there were still some interesting findings. The finding that Collectivism II was significantly less in Vava'u than in Ha'apai, but not Niuatoputapu needs further exploration. The results indicated that Niuatoputapu and Vava'u were not significantly different on Collectivism II. This is possibly due to a statistical power issue, in that, the number of participants that took the questionnaire in Niuatoputapu was relatively small. As stated, in the literature review, of the three island groups involved in this study Niuatoputapu is the most traditional and conservative. Not finding a significant difference can most likely be attributed to the fact that only 32 participants took the questionnaire in Niuatoputapu, compared to 83 and 107 in Ha'apai and Vava'u. Also, the fact that no significant differences existed between the island groups in regards to Collectivism I seems to not make much sense. However, it is important to remember that Collectivism I reflects institutional practices that support the collective allocation of resources and collective action, while Collectivism II reflects how allegiance, pride, and cohesiveness is articulated in families or organizations. According to Hofstede (1980), more than any other cultural dimensions, individualistic versus collectivistic societies have overwhelming implications for how individuals work. The Collectivism II results indicate that Vava'u is moving away from this allegiance and cohesiveness in a family or group setting, but not in the institutional sense of Collectivism. It makes sense that Collectivism II is ahead in its more Westernized practices because, as is often the case, organizations reflect the society in which they are located. Before the organization can change, the society itself must go through changes. In Tonga, collectivistic behaviors are deeply rooted into all aspects of traditional life and

while collectivistic scores are reflecting more individualistic tendencies in places like Vava'u it may take some time for this to influence business and organizational life.

The fact that Uncertainty Avoidance is significantly less in Vava'u than in Ha'apai, but not Niuatoputapu can be attributed to the same logic described above for Collectivism II. With the relative difference in number of participants, statistical power is likely the cause of no significant differences being found between Vava'u and one of Tonga's most traditional island groups. However, the significant difference between Vava'u and Ha'apai is another indication of the societal practices potentially reflecting the spreading influence of the West. As stated earlier, Uncertainty Avoidance involves organizational or societal members' attempts to avoid uncertainty through rituals, traditions, and routines to lessen the unpredictability of future events. This also involves the notion that an organization reflects its society. Everyday Tongan culture is full of rituals and traditions for avoiding uncertainty, but these do not seem to translate to work-related issues. According to Hofstede (1980), rituals in traditional and modern societies are often used to develop relationships and give meaning to life. Rituals are used for religious purposes and are less easily recognized within organizations. It is possible that the traditions, rules, and rituals used in Tongan society are not used to avoid uncertainty as they are in the West. This notion is likely reflected in Tongan organizations. For example, Tongans in organizations may use rules and rituals the same way they do within society, to build relationships and feel a purpose to life. Rules in these organizations, however, are not there to better predict the future or assist in avoiding uncertainty. As a result, this may account for the lower than expected Uncertainty Avoidance score for Vava'u.

When looking at the cultural dimensions that did not reveal significant results there are a number of possible reasons for this occurrence. Power Distance is an important dimension for both Tongan organizations and Tongan society because of the rank system and the fact that the government is a monarchy. However, as has been stated, the younger Tongan generation has begun to question the function of the monarchy (Lonely Planet, 2008) and if a change ever does occur, it is likely that businesses and organizations in Tonga will follow suit. Because much of Tongan society is still based on rank and the call for a democratic government has not been heard, it is not surprising that Power Distance scores between the island groups were not significantly different. It was unanticipated that Vava'u in particular, did not more reflect Western societies in Future Orientation. However, as McCoy and Havea (2006) pointed out, the Western world's sense of urgency for the future comes from work obligations. Tonga's sense of urgency comes from church and family that often do not require long-term strategies. Tongans are not concerned with planning and this is a major reason many businesses in Tonga fail. It is likely that this obligation to church and family is so strong in Tonga that more time is needed for Western influences to take effect.

Business Implications

As Vava'u has shown to be relatively comparable to Western societies and significantly different from the more traditional society of Ha'apai in the cultural dimension of Collectivism II and Uncertainty Avoidance it is important to look at the possible business implications.

While Collectivism I has more to do with the institution, the significant result for Collectivism II is a future indication of where the society and thus organizations and

businesses may be heading. Businesses that have more of an individualistic and less collectivistic environment tend to have very specific business implications. If Tongan society in the more populated and technologically thinking island groups is any indication, business practice implications of Tongans reflecting this cultural practice may include a sense of emotional independence from the organization and more importance being attached to freedom and challenge in jobs, opposed to importance being focused on training and skill usage. Individualistic management styles will aspire to leadership and variety, while organizational leadership will most likely choose pleasure, affection, and security as life goals rather than duty, expertise, and prestige. Within an organization that uses Tongan workers or is based in Tonga in the near future, individual initiative will be encouraged and individual decisions will likely be considered better than group decisions. A business that is less collectivistic is characterized by thinking of people in more general terms rather than in-groups and out-groups (Hofstede, 1980). Additionally, according to Gelfand et al. (2004), characteristics of Tongan organizations that are more individualistic may include employees that are less concerned about building relationships and as a result develop more short-term relationships. The organization itself will likely care more about the work and less about the employees' personal or family life. Furthermore, selection is likely to be focused more on knowledge, skills, abilities, and will be emphasized more than training and motivation. The willingness to use or learn new skills will be based on individual interests, needs, and capacities. Organizations must be aware of whether or not a society, in this case Tonga, is more collectivistic or more individualistic because individualistic versus collectivistic societies have overwhelming implications for how individuals work (Hofstede, 1980). Results of

this study indicate a less collectivistic society in the more populated island group of Vava'u, and if this trend continues, employers must be aware of the characteristics mentioned above to be successful in Tonga and other similar remote locations throughout the world.

A significant result for Uncertainty Avoidance also has implications for business practices in Vava'u and other island groups in Tonga. In organizations, uncertainty about the future is dealt with through technology, rules, and rituals (Hofstede, 1980).

Uncertainty Avoidance has been traditionally high in Tongan society. However, as Erez and Earley (1993) stated, societies with high Uncertainty Avoidance tend to be societies that are very stressful. In Tonga, most stress comes from family and church pressures, rather than work pressures. For Western cultures, much of the stress comes from work pressures. Tongans are not concerned with planning and the norm is for tasks to get done when they have to be done (McCoy & Havea, 2006). While it was hypothesized that Uncertainty Avoidance would be significantly lower in Vava'u than in Ha'apai and Niuatoputapu, it was not expected to be as low as the results indicated. High Uncertainty Avoidance makes societal members feel like the future is more predictable. The low Uncertainty Avoidance scores, particularly for Vava'u, may indicate that Tongans are beginning to rely less on traditional cultural rituals and rules in the more populated and technologically advanced island groups. This may hint at the significantly lower in-group Collectivism score for Vava'u. As has been discussed, it is likely that Tongans use their societal traditions, rituals, and rules for other purposes, like relationship building, instead of avoiding uncertainty. This indicates that Tongans are not concerned about planning for

the future and avoiding uncertainty which is likely the reason Tongan stores and other small businesses struggle (McCoy & Havea, 2006).

It may also be that Tongan businesses do not possess the modern efficiencies of the modern business world to make an environment more predictable. Technology, basic business principles like feedback, and other necessities in the business world are not as prevalent in Tongan society as it is in Western cultures. These are important as they are used to assist organizational members in avoiding uncertainty and also help the organization as a whole to predict the future. As Tonga goes through change and innovation, uncertainty levels often increase. The problem is that Tongans are not concerned or do not have the resources to deal with uncertainty.

The lower Uncertainty Avoidance scores have a number of implications on organizations or individuals that choose to conduct business in Tonga. Organizations involving Tongans will be less concerned with orderliness and maintaining records and often do not document what happens in meetings. Often interactions and norms will be informal rather than guided by formalized policies and procedures. Behavior will be less dictated by established rules. Furthermore, risks taken will be less calculated and less resistance will likely be shown toward change by organizational members. New product development may be facilitated through minimal planning and rely on the word of others rather than contractual agreements (Sulley de Luque & Javidan, 2004). Anyone that chooses to use Tongan workers must be aware of these perceptions and behaviors regarding Uncertainty Avoidance as this will dictate how a business is likely to run on most island groups.

It should be noted, however, that although Vava'u was significantly different for two of the dimensions, the effect sizes for both of these dimensions were quite small. Specifically, the eta square index indicated that only 6% of the variance associated with Collectivism II and 5% of the variance associated with Uncertainty Avoidance was accounted for by island group. Furthermore, while it appears that Tongan culture may be beginning to become more Westernized, it still retains much of its traditional values and still has quite a ways to go before it will approximate the cultures associated with those found in the West. Thus, while it is important that any organization attempting to conduct business in Tonga be aware of the spreading Westernization that may be occurring, it would be foolhardy not to consider the strong traditional culture that still persists throughout the kingdom

Future Research

Very little research has been done in South Pacific societies. As such, very little is known about business practices in locations like Tonga. To understand global business issues better more research must be done in remote locations like Tonga. Culture is not static and if research continues to be conducted in Tonga, it is likely that those results will continue to show Western practices maintaining a steady influential rise. As tourism and business in Tonga continues to increase, more information will be needed on the business practices. While this study gives insight into five cultural dimensions on three island groups there is more that still needs to be explored. Other island groups including, the most populated island group of Tongatapu, needs to be included in other studies. Furthermore, the four cultural dimensions not included in this study (i.e., Gender Egalitarianism, Assertiveness, Performance Orientation, and Humane Orientation) need

to be analyzed in order to better understand Tongan culture and what consequences these may have for business practices.

Limitations

As with any other study, this study has its share of limitations. With the Beta GLOBE questionnaire being translated from English to Tongan there may be a problem with the measurement equivalency with the English version of the questionnaire. This may make direct comparisons with the Anglo cluster results difficult. However, since participants completed the same questionnaire comparing the results across island groups is less of a problem. A further limitation is that the psychometric properties for the Tongan version of the questionnaire have not been assessed.

Furthermore, the data collected from the Tongatapu island group was not included in this study because a different data collection technique was used on this island. Tongatapu has similar characteristics as Vava'u, in that, it has a growing tourist industry and more advanced technologies compared to the more traditional island groups in Tonga. Using the data from this island group would have helped confirm that these business and technology oriented island groups are moving toward Western culture and would have made for a stronger study in general.

When completing the questionnaire, the cultural differences in Tonga became evident as Tongans do not often see questionnaires and were likely to think of it as a test with right and wrong answers rather than an opinionated questionnaire. This perception could have caused the participants' responses on the questionnaire to be based less on their actual view and more on what they believe is correct. However, the researchers tried to overcome this by explaining to all the participants that there was in fact no correct

answer and that they were truly interested in their opinions regarding the items. Also, with the smaller sample collected in Niuatoputapu, there may be an issue of statistical power. In smaller samples, it may be difficult to detect the differences between groups.

Finally, while the results show that Tonga appears to be moving toward the West, it is important to note that the data were collected approximately five years before this study. As a consequence of this and the fact that culture continually changes, the results do not necessarily represent Tonga as it is now.

Conclusions

This study extends our knowledge of South Pacific culture, particularly that of Tonga. Tonga is beginning to reflect more Western values in its more populated and technologically advanced island groups. Culture is never static; it is always changing; sometimes the change is slow, sometimes rapid. The consequences of an ever-changing culture include its business practices. As has been discussed, organizations reflect the society in which they preside. The success of a culture's business sector can be an important determining factor of the prosperity of people who live in the culture. In the future, research on Tonga and other remote cultures could further our understanding as to the extent of western impact and what is required for organizational success in every location around the world. By developing an education on the very different business nuances attached to each culture and making aware the fact that international business competition is the future for all societies it will be possible to fully understand the meaning of globalization and its impact on the business world.

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Appendix A

Human Subjects Review Board at Western Kentucky University Approval

