

International Business Communication A1

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1. Introduction

International business can be referred to as the trading of goods across the borders from one part to a different part of the world. Companies that trade in different parts of the world use international marketing strategies in order to not only capture the large audience from different parts of the world, but also enhance the life span of the product. That is why communication plays an important role in building relationships with international customers through distribution networks, as well as supply chain networks. Tesco is a British multinational corporation within the retail sector of the country that has provided quality services to their customers for the last 103 years. The company was founded by Jack Cohen. According to 2021 data, the company has in total 367,321 employees who have relentlessly managed the different organisational processes of the company to manage the different organisational processes in an effective way, which has impacted the overall growth of the company in a positive way (Moura, 2021). Further, the company helps the employees to go through several training and development programs so that they can provide quality services to their customers in order to increase the overall brand recall value of the company. The current report structure is going to describe the different aspects of international business and communication by taking China as an example where companies want to expand by using different communication strategies that will impact the overall growth of the company in a positive way. Above all several recommendations have been made that will impact the overall sales and profitability of the company in a positive way.

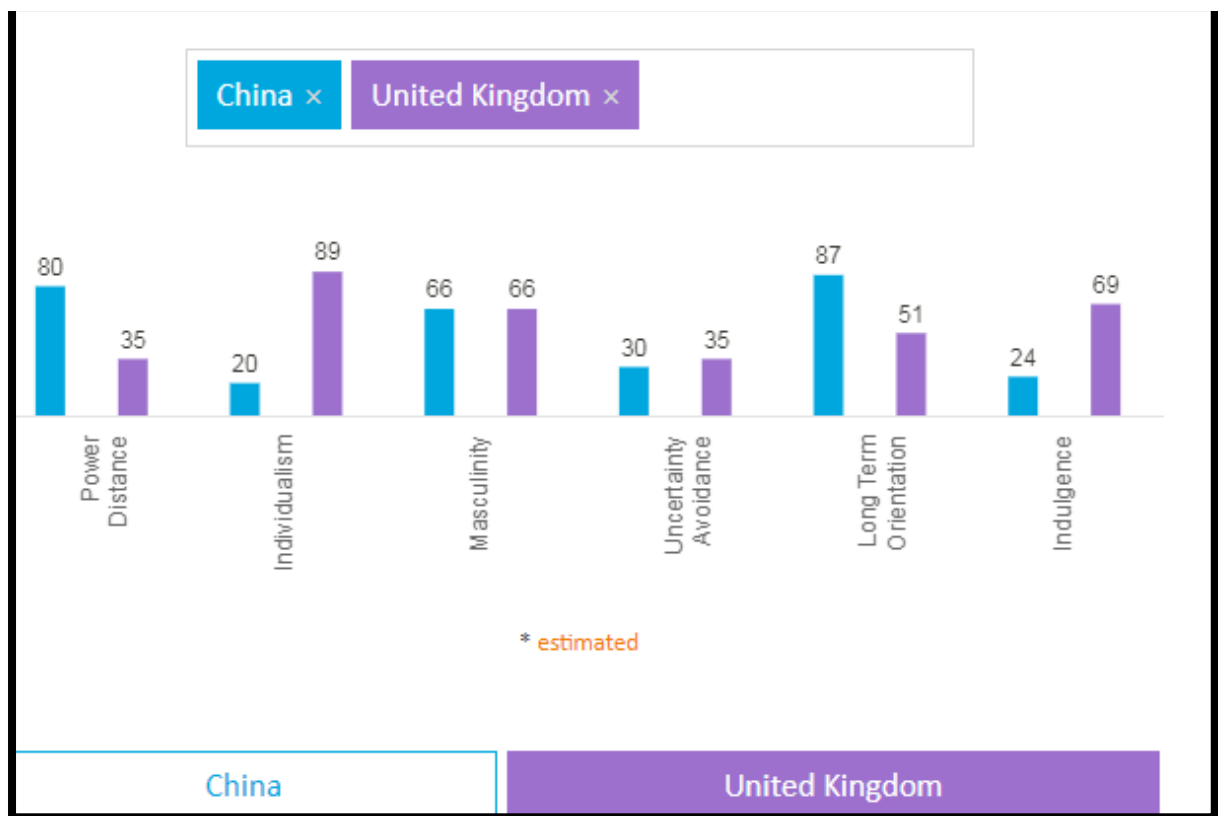
2. Introduction of China

China has the largest population of any country in the world, with a total of around 1.4 billion people. The area of the country is around 9.6 million square kilometres. The national capital of the country is Beijing. China belongs to one of the oldest civilisations of the world, which was born on the Yangtze River and yellow river. In China, the communist Party is the ruling party of the entire country of 22 provinces (Gu *et al.*, 2020). Mandarin is the common language. The Great Wall of China and Dragon tattoo are the national symbols of the country. Confucianism and kung fu also originated from China. As China is one of the fastest growing economies in the world, the government has taken several measures to provide quality education to the population, allowing them to be capable of contributing to the economy by reducing the overall unemployment rate in China. China is also a technologically advanced country, which is

considered as the manufacturing hub for different products of the companies that belong to different parts of the world. China is also known for its strict policies, rules and regulation that helps them to sustain a crime free environment within the country, which not only enhances the quality of life of the people but also impacts the overall growth and development of the country in a significant way (Chen *et al.*, 2020). Being a technologically advanced country, they can make the overall transportation system smooth and communicable for the common people of China, which has not only improved the urbanisation of the country but also has led the country to grow their economy in a significant way. Apart from that the country has so many popular tourist spots that attract people from different parts of the world and help the country to enhance the overall growth of the tourism and hospitality industry which further impacts the economy of the nation in a significant way. The country has a rich historic culture which attracts visitors from different parts of the world. Although China has previously Indicated a stance against globalisation, recent changes had provided it with the opportunity to connect with different parts of the world, which has significantly impacted the overall industrialisation of the country in a significant way.

3. Cultural differences

The cultural difference can be ascertained using Hofstede cultural dimension as a comparison between the UK and China



Hofstede Cultural Dimension

(Source: Hofstede Insights, 2022)

Power Distance- at a score of 80 China ranks higher at the power distance than UK which is at 35, which implies that society thinks that the inequality among the individual is acceptable. The relation of superior and subordinate can be polarised as well as there is no issue and voice against the abuse of power made by the superior. Peoples are not to have the aspiration beyond what their ranks hold.

Individualism- at the score of 20 China has a highly collective culture, in which people act according to the interest of the group and not their own. Personal relationships are given more importance. People look after themselves and their family (Hofstede Insight, 2022).

Masculinity- with a score of 66 China is regarded as a masculine society, equal to the UK. it implies that China is success-driven and goal oriented. The requirement to guarantee success can be understood through the fact that Chinese often sacrifice their time with family and leisure time to prioritise their work.

Uncertainty Avoidance- with a score of 30, China scores less on Uncertainty Avoidance than UK which scores 35. This implies that the Chinese are quite comfortable and agreeable to ambiguity. The Chinese languages are quite sufficient with ambiguous meanings that can be difficult for the foreigner to understand (Zhang *et al.*, 2018). Moreover, the Chinese seem to be quite adaptable.

Long term Orientation- China has a score of 87 in this regard and the UK scores 51. This implies that China ranks higher than the UK in this aspect. Since China scores 87 in this regard, it is regarded as quite a pragmatic culture. The society that has pragmatic orientation believes that the truth and reality rely greatly on the circumstances, time and context.

Indulgence- since China scores as low as 24, it is quite a restrained society. They have the tendency to pessimism. They do not put much importance on leisure time as well as they keep their gratification of their desires controlled. They believe that their actions are somewhat restrained by social norms (Xu *et al.*, 2019).

4. Cultural sensitivity

China is a country that has great cultural sensitivity. It is quite important to adhere to their cultural norm in order to maintain respect and dignity (Tao and Li, 2022). The family is regarded as the concentration of life for most of the people in China. Age and rank are highly respected factors. It is the Chinese culture to nod or bow instead of shaking hands. Moreover, it is necessary to greet the oldest person first in the group. The Chinese do not like being touched by strangers, and whistling or the clicking fingers are regarded to be disrespectful.

Traditionally, the cultural values which influence the mindset of the Chinese people are courtesy, loyalty, wisdom and harmony. The tradition of China is quite different from that of western world. The cultural sensitivity can be understood as:

Significance of Guanxi: Guanxi in Chinese means “relationship” and it is the method and way of social networking as well as influential connection that enhances business as well as other related dealings (Cao *et al.*, 2022). When an individual is successful in building guanxi with another person, they can do the favour as well as act on behalf of another person. In Chinese culture it can take a long period of time, even up to as 1-2 years, to develop guanxi with a foreigner.

Everything should be in writing- while doing the business with Chinese it is important to write everything in an email or document form (Roshid *et al.*, 2022). From every instruction as well as blueprints, it is necessary to write everything in order to make any unrequited error.

Observing the hierarchy and ranks - Hierarchy and ranks are the areas which are quite significant and important which the business must understand to function in China. It is quite crucial to observe these aspects in China. People with higher ranks must be treated with care, as it can land in lawsuits. During business meetings, it is important to be dressed in the formal attire.

5. Communication barriers and challenges

Whilst doing business in China comes with great opportunities, it also presents significant challenges. There are three principal categories of barriers in the way of communication, namely linguistic, cultural and psychological.

Linguistic barrier - China is a country which has its own language, namely Mandarin, which is spoken by most of the population (Haidar and Fang, 2019). While doing business in China, one of the greatest barriers to communication is speaking the language. English is the language which is spoken most by the people of the UK. The people of the UK will often find difficulties in doing business in China as the language spoken in both the countries is quite different. While conducting business meetings, the officials may face difficulties in following what is happening.

Cultural barrier - China has a culture of collectivism which emphasises collective orders whereas the people of the UK enjoy individualism. The culture is quite strict in the Chinese region and initiating communication can be difficult (Zhu and Delbridge, 2021). Moreover, it is necessary to maintain decorum and respect while talking, as one can unintentionally cause offence (Lee, 2020). In the UK, communication is comparatively easier if one knows basic English. Thus, differences in culture play a huge communication barrier in China. Due to wide cultural differences, initiating efficient communication gets restricted for the foreigner.

Psychological barrier: psychological barrier is one such barrier that might emerge due to the emotional limitation of the human being. These barriers result in being absent-minded as well as anxiety. Further, fear in sharing as well as expressing people's idea to another person. Making false and irrelevant assumptions regarding the Chinese people can hamper the efficient flow of communication.

6. Communication strategies and recommendations

These communication strategies and recommendations will help Tesco to succeed in China:

It is important to understand and embrace the difference in the culture, language and lifestyle of foreign land (Celik and Yildiz, 2019). Embracing and accepting the diversity of China will assist Tesco in successfully making its place in China.

Usage of technical devices and digital applications on Smartphone can help in initiating small communications. Google translator is one such aspect which Tesco and the employee can make use of during the initial days of business in China.

It is recommended to listen actively and clearly with patience in order to mitigate any error or miscommunication. One must not focus on listening and just speaking, this can result in a great communication gap between the speaker and the listener.

If the verbal form of communication is tough, one may use non-verbal and written forms of communication in order to facilitate better communication flow among the people (Paranduk and Karisi, 2020).

Providing a linguistic training program in Tesco is one of the effective measures to build an efficient communication strategy. It is important to know the basics of the language of the country where Tesco wants to operate.

It is important to be precise as well as informative while communication, the sentences must be concise and clear and understandable by both the parties.

It is necessary to mitigate communication barriers such as the status barrier, physical barrier, noise barrier as well as linguistic barrier with the help of specific measures to overcome the challenge of communication issues (Guttman *et al.*, 2021).

Using the right communication channel is recommended to the people who are coming to China in order to do business.

Using an efficient marketing strategy as well as social media marketing can help Tesco in succeeding in China.

7. Conclusion

It can be concluded that China is a country with great population and development. The report has focused on the international market and business communication. The Hofstede cultural dimensions have been used in the report to analyse the cultural difference between the UK and China. Moreover, it was analysed that China is a culturally sensitive country, and one must follow the local cultural norms to maintain respect and dignity. Moreover, hierarchy and rankings are two areas in which businesses must be well-versed in order to operate well in China. It was analysed that linguistic barriers are one of the most common communication barriers while doing business in China. When speaking with Chinese people, it is important to preserve etiquette and respect. In China, cultural differences are a major communication hurdle. Small communications can be aided by the use of technical gear and digital applications on cell phones. It is critical to have a basic understanding of the language of the country in which Tesco wishes to operate. The report has successfully presented all the necessary information regarding international market and business communication.

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