Cross Cultural Communication on Websites: Evidence from USA and Malaysian Websites

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Abstract: This study analyses the effect of culture on the marketing communication through websites of four multinational fast-food companies operating in USA and in Malaysia. Additionally, how the design of a website gets affected by culture is also analyzed in this study. The content analysis procedure is applied in this research. The findings of the study reveal that sample websites reflect local cultural values. Further, the design of the websites displays the national cultural stance. The use of other features like animations and sounds also attract local customers. The study recommends that the companies in Pakistan should go for the culture preferred and designed websites for attracting the customers.

Keywords: Culture, Websites, USA, Malaysia, Cultural Dimensions

1. Introduction

The use of internet is on the surge around the globe at an exceptionally fast pace. According to the worldwide digit population statistics (2020) the current online population around the world is around 4.66 billion which comprises 60 percent of the world's total population. The internet is free from the restrictions of geographical boundaries which enables the users to socialize freely without time and location limitations. Further, it provides a very easy and convenient way for communication in today's fast world. The internet also facilitates people to interact with people of other cultures and countries thereby become part of the global community.

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Websites on the internet collectively known as World Wide Web (WWW) are very authentic and formal channels through which communication on the internet can be done. Moreover, they are good marketing tool for businesses of all kinds. Companies around the world use this marketing tool because it is virtually equivalent to doing physical business for 4.66 billion internet users. These huge number of potential buyers are hard to reach through traditional marketing techniques thereby the websites are a vital marketing tools for a successful business. However, the existence of a website alone does not guarantee success. The design and content of websites are also crucial aspects of digital marketing and business.

Much work has been done on the usage and the ability of internet in communication. Nevertheless, the field is ripe for further research. One of the evidence for this invitation to research more is companies face major losses by choosing the wrong choice of either standardizing or differentiated approaches for communication including marketing communication.

With the acceleration of globalization the need for cross-cultural communication accelerates owing to international viewers on websites. It is observed that most websites are created considering local culture which is introduced around the globe not according to the target group or culture.

Previous studies on cross cultural-communication emphasized on features of websites. There is very little work done on cross-cultural preferred marketing communication on websites. The closely related study by Singh & Matsuo (2004) measured cultural adaption on the websites for 115 multinational companies irrelative to the industrial categorization they belong to. However, this study analyzed cross-cultural communication on websites. Further, it also analyzed multinational companies that belonged to one specific industry. The selection of one industry is important since different industries may behave differently.

The fast-food industry is different from other industries because it is more complex for its due involvement of multiple factors such as taste, preference, religious prohibitions related to consumption, the economic condition of the target country, healthy habits and culture in the industry. For instance, McDonald's does not serve its famous product 'BIG MAC' in the Middle East. It is serving kebab on flatbread unlike in North America where hamburgers are in demand. Similarly, in the size of the burger is smaller as their consumption rate is low compared to the Middle East. This shows that the size of products of fast food changed as per the demand of the consumers of the targeted country (Pooley, 2016). Therefore, the multinational fast food companies have to make an extra effort and research for successful businesses they run. According to various researchers including Steenkamp (2019) many businesses have endured huge losses for not understanding cultural differences.

The present study focuses on the top four multinational fast food companies named Burger King, KFC, McDonalds and Domino's Pizza. This study adds to the literature by analysing design and communication styles on websites in cross-culture of USA and Malaysia. This study covers four multinational fast food companies, thereby providing fresh evidence regarding the dynamic industry. The present study aims to fulfil two objectives: First, to analyse the effects of culture in online communication and how culture affects thedesign of a website. Second, to understand the various features which are considered when a website isdesigned in the context of culture.

We used the context dimension of culture for analysing the effect of culture on website communication. Further, power distance, individualism versus collectivism and uncertainty avoidance dimensions of culture (Hofsteded 1980) is used to see how culture influences website design and what other features are considered in the design of a website. For the methodology, content analysis is done in order to make cross-content comparison of USA's and Malaysian's websites.

The article is is organized as follows: Section 2 provides a review of the existing literature. Section 3 explains the methodology of the study. Section 4 consists of results and their explanation. Finally, Section 5 presents the conclusion along with a few recommendations.

2. Literature Review

Culture and how to communicate within the culture across different national boundaries have always been a focus of the research for many decades. The literature on cross cultural communication on the website can be grouped into four strands. The first strand of literature explains the most prominent cultural theories. The second strand of literature highlights studies related to culture and marketing. The third strand focuses on culture and website. Lastly, the fourth strand argues how websites designs and features are the most important ways through with companies communicate with their clients. We further elaborate these.

Existing literature on culture can be disintegrated into earlier and modern studies. The earlier studies define culture in the form of a barbarian context. Whereas, modern studies describe culture as a multi-dimensional concept and cannot be explained in a signal definition. The most widely used definition of culture is given by Linton (1945) and Griffin &Pustay (2007). Linton (1945) defines culture as a collection of learned behaviours. The effects of these learned behaviours are usually shared and transmitted by the people of a particular society and consequently resulting in the orientation of culture. Similarly, Griffin &Pustay (2007) describes culture as learned, shared and continuing patterns in a society. Further, values, ideas, attitudes, symbols and behaviours are the ways through with people show their culture. The most widely established cultural frameworks have been proposed by Hall (1976) and Hofstede (1980).

With an aim to understand cultural issues and how people of different cultures communicate with each other, Hall (1976) categorized culture into two groups: High context and Low context cultures. This categorization of culture has been made on the basis of different communication styles and societal factors which are prevalent in different societies. Concerning communication styles in high context culture, there are strong behavioural norms and communication is very clear. In high context societies, people rely on relationships with family and friends and elders' decisions are given high importance. Similarly, in high context societies, the non-verbal communication style is dominant. In high context societies, the extensive use of gestures, postures, body and behavioural language play strong sources of communicating cues. Moreover, the communication is usually indirect and relies on the mental capability, interpretation and knowledge of the listener. Regarding societal factors, it is observed that high context culture depends on their history and religion. People are reluctant to change their lifestyle as they hardly experiment with new ways of doing things. Further, they also seldom prefer open-ended questions and are considered more comfortable to work in groups. Conversely, in low context culture people prefer individualism, opt for innovation and change and give less importance to relationships.

The Dutch anthropologist Hofstede also proposed a cultural framework while conducting a multinational survey with IBM corporation subsidiaries on the manager's performance. He proposed four dimensions of culture which are: Power distance, Individualism and Collectivism, Masculinity and Femininity and Uncertainty Avoidance. The Hofstede (1980) model measures dimensions of culture based on index scores. According to Hofstede (1980) people in society are unequal due to power and wealth. Therefore, equality in society is nearly impossible to reach. The level of inequality may vary from country to country. Countries with a high degree of power distance have centralization and autocratic.

Related to individualism and collectivism, the dimension of Hofstede is much similar to Hall theory of High and Low Context Cultures. This measure of culture is focused on how people in a specific culture spend their lives in

big families, tribes. It also determines how people value and assess different things. In a collectivistic culture, people give importance to family structure and their decisions making (Hofstede, 1986; Kale, 1991).

Concerning the Masculine and Feminists dimensions of culture, it deals with the issues, responsibilities and roles of men and women of society. According to Hofstede (1980) the societal role of men and women may vary from culture to culture. However, in some societies, there are strictly defined roles for both. Like in masculine societies, men generally tend to show off success and wealth. On the other hand, in feminine societies, money or success does not come in way of relationships. People also are more socially responsible and caring in such societies (Hofstede, 1980).

Long term versus short term dimension of culture is introduced by Hofstede in 1994. According to this dimension, there are some cultures where short orientation is given importance. People of such culture usually give significance to short term success. Countries like USA have short-term orientation. People of such countries prefer the present over the future (Griffin &Pustay, 2007). Whereas, there are also some cultural societies where long term orientation is preferred. Asian countries such as China, Japan and Singapore have long term oriented culture. In these countries, people value their old tradition, care for their family, work hard and give importance to education and are disciplined.

Culture and Marketing

This strand of literature on culture and marketing is important since culture largely affects business. According to Steenkamp (2019) many businesses have endured huge losses for not understanding cultural differences. The prior research on marketing tools of culture and has been done by researchers including Sojka &Tansuhaj (1995). The researchers advocated that marketing helps to convey the intangible elements of beliefs and values. Similarly, communication links help to convey critical messages worldwide.

The literature on culture and marketing can be grouped into adaptation versus standardization versus contingency approach of commercials. Studies such as Mueller (1987), Sojka &Tansuhaj (1995) and Cho *et al.* (1999) in favor of adaptation suggest that if the advertisement portrays local culture and language, the product is accepted and fairly purchased by the customers in no time as compared to standardized advertising. On the other hand, studies in favour of standardization of products argue that standardization of product and marketing strategy is vital in order to recognize brand name around the globe and for achieving economies of scale along with the lower cost of marketing and operations. However, recent research in international marketing supports the contingency approach. Studies like Cavusgil & Zou (1994), Jain (1989) and Leonidou*et al.* (2002) favour the contingency approach for marketing. According to this approach, both the adaption, as well as standardization, should be adopted considering organizational capabilities and impacts of the external environment.

Culture and Website

According to Faiola & Matei (2005) understanding culture in online communication is important. There are a number of studies that worked on culture, content dimensions and product specialization impact on the website for different countries. Study such as Ju-Pak (1999) has conducted content analysis on cross-cultural advertising on websites of US, UK and South Korea. The authors reported that visual and fact-based articles are dominantly found on US and UK websites, unlike South Korean websites where there is more verbal content. In other words, websites of South Korea are similar to the websites of high context cultures whereas, US and UK websites contained more characteristics of low context culture. Similar findings of having more multimedia elements and animations were found on websites of Japan and Germany and less on US websites as reported by Cyr & Trevor-

Swith (2004). Similarly, a study on cultural adaptation is conducted by Okazaki (2005). The findings of the study advocate that websites of durable goods have adopted a standardizing marketing approach since the goods are not much affected by culture because of their long life span. Whereas, the website of non-durable goods follow the adoptive approach of marketing as they are culture and taste dependent. Another study by Zhao *et al.* (2018) focused on the impact of language on websites of the US and China since language difference is a major cultural difference among countries. The authors reveal that the websites of both countries are in local spoken language. Further, the use of animated pictures and videos is prevalent on Chinese websites indicating that people of collectivistic culture are found to be attracted towards animated material, unlike the US where there is individualism. Similarly, the study by Martino (2015) also validates the cultural adaption of the website by specifically focus on language and design.

Culture and Design and Features of Website

Culture has a huge impact on the design and features of websites. Studies such as Edwards *et al.* (2002), Cho *et al.* (1999), Wurtz (2005) and Kim (2009) investigated various design features on different cultural websites since the features also vary from culture to culture. A study by Edwards *et al.* (2002) advocates that the popup windows feature on websites is the most common attractive feature in any culture. Similar findings are also reported by Cho *et al.* (1999) suggesting pop-up windows are common than using the banner in website design because they gain immense attraction. Wurtz (2005) analyzed the website design of McDonald's in high and low context cultures. The author pointed out that in the design of high context culture there is more animation and moving visuals whereas, the website design of low context culture is more transparent and full of navigation support opinions. Another study by Kim *et al.* (2009) examined design features of South Korea and US websites. The author found that more text hyper-links and pull-down bars are frequently demanded and used on US websites while South Korea's websites use roll-over bars for the purposes of information transmission.

Method

This study is qualitative in nature. The content analysis in the study provides a cultural comparison of the website using a qualitative method. Furthermore, the method also assists in analyzing which cultural dimension is comparatively dominant in the communication and marketing strategies of the selected food chains. This study aims to find out how cultural differences and various dimensions of culture affect the website design of multinational companies. The present study conducted the content analysis as it focuses on the presence of cultural dimensions on the websites of the selected fast food companies. This technique enables us to thoroughly analyze the trends and designs of the companies' websites that are operating successfully in countries with different cultural backgrounds. Studies such as Singh & Matuso (2004) and Cyr & Trevor-Smith (2004) have also used content analysis in the study of comparing websites.

The chosen industry for this study is multinational fast food restaurant eateries. This study has analyzed the local websites of four fast-food chains named as Burger King, KFC, McDonald's, and Domino's Pizza, operating in both countries the USA and Malaysia. The reason for selecting this industry is that fast-food chains are usually international and their marketing strategies are widely successful because of their extensive marketing and meeting the demands of the customers. Moreover, this industry is largely affected by culture as people around the globe have different tastes and preferences regarding fast food eatables. The selection of the countries will help us to understand how culture affects web sites design. Since both, countries significantly have different cultural backgrounds.

Selected Model

This study follows Hofstede's model, developed by Hofstede (1986) in an attempt to investigate how culture and its various dimensions affect multinational websites. Hofstede (1980) introduced the index score to measure the cultural dimension. The index ranges 0 to 100. For instance, the index score of the USA is 40 in power distance indicating that it is a low power distance country. Whereas, the power distance score of Malaysia is 100 representing that the country has a high power distance. This study has analyzed cultural context along with its three different dimensions: Power Distance, Individualism VS Collectivism and Uncertainty Avoidance amongst these food chains reflecting through the content and design of their respective websites.

In a high context culture, people believe in establishing social trust. Furthermore, the high importance of personal relations and goodwill along with slow and ritualistic negotiations are prevalent features to name a few. On the contrary, in the low context culture, people get down to business first. They also value expertise and performance. Additionally, legal contracts and agreements are considered important in low context culture. Germany and China are the top most countries in low and high-context culture, respectively. Likewise, the power distance dimension of culture refers to degree to which culture accepts or rejects the social hierarchy and inequalities in organization and institutions. Companies with a high degree of power distance are highly centralized and have an autocratic mind of leadership and general people (Hofstede, 1980). The closer the index score of power distance is near 0, the lower the power distance the country would have. The vice versa goes for high power distance country (closer to 100 then more high power distance).

In the Individualism VS Collectivism dimension, individualistic culture has a lot of freedom. Every individual is responsible for him/herself and value self than others. However, in a collectivistic culture, people are bound by family structure and decision making (Hofstede, 1983; Kale, 1991). Here, society is more important than the individual and relationships are given prior importance. For example, a country like in the USA individualistic culture prevails whereas, Malaysia has a collectivistic culture (Hofstede, 1983). Lastly, uncertainty avoidance reflects how society responds to tolerance in any ambiguous (structured and unstructured) situations. In countries with high uncertainty avoidance, people see uncertainty as danger and inconvenience and tend to avoid it. The opposite goes for low uncertainty avoidance countries. In our sample the USA has high uncertainty avoidance while Malaysia has low uncertainty avoidance rank.

Results and Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that communication strategy on websites varies across cultures. The study also found that the designs of the websites are also influenced by culture. In other words, the multinational fast-food chains are displaying cultural design websites through the use of local languages, time and date. The other new dimensions like animations, sounds, color preferences of the customers and multimedia are also introduced in cross-cultural communication. Regarding website design business firms should focus on market trends of the country along with the needs and demands of the customers.

This section represents a detail content analysis of selected multinational companies operating in the USA and Malaysia. The analysis is done based on the cultural differences these countries have. Moreover, other factors such as power distance, collectivism and uncertainty avoidance are also analyzed on the basis of how these companies successfully communicate cross-culturally using their websites.

Communication Approach in Differences

Table 1 represents the difference in communication the observed multinational companies used owing to the cultural context of the sample countries. The analysis shows that the companies communicate differently in both the USA and Malaysia because of the difference in cultural values of these countries.

Low Context Culture

According to Hall (1976) USA has a low context culture. Therefore, in the USA the multinational companies communicate with their consumers considering their low cultural values. For instance, these companies use hard-sell approach in their products and services in order to pitch their consumers. Using this approach all the selected fast food companies offer benefits (discount and gift cards), comparative product advantages, information about the quality and ingredients of food along calories caloric information. Further, they also collaborate with other brands to increase their sale. Moreover, these companies also maintain their good reputation. People belonging to low context culture are attracted by prestige thereby in the USA earning a reputation is significant for a business. All the fast food companies display information (like 'number one company' 'best pizza in the world') about their brand which reflects their great prestige thus end up selling more products. In addition, due to direct communication in low context culture (USA), the use of direct words helps to communicate the reputation of the firms attaining customers' loyalty.

Table 1: Differences in communication styles in different cultural context

Multinational Companies	Cultural Dimensions	
	As observed on USA (a low context culture) websites	As observed on Malaysian (a high context culture) websites
Burger King		
	Hard Sell Approach	High Intensity of Images and Videos
	Terms and Conditions	Soft Sell Approach
	Reputation of the Firm	
	Informative Website	
KFC		
	Terms and Conditions	Soft Sell Approach
	Information on Reputation of the Firm	Images and Videos of High Intensity
	Hard Sell Approach	
	Informative Website	
McDonalds		
	Hard Sell Approach	Soft Sell Approach
	More Information on Website	High Intensity Images and Videos
	Terms and Conditions Mentioned	
Domino's Pizza		
	Informative Website	Politeness and Humbleness
	Detail Terms and Conditions	Soft Sell Approach
	Hard Sell Approach	High Intensity Images and Videos
	Reputation of the Firm	

Low context culture usually communicates in more detail, clearly defined and informatively. In all the analysed companies, this communication takes place through web links and set of terms and conditions. These food chains have mentioned their policies (buying and return), agreements and legislative food.

Furthermore, in low context countries like USA, there are strict laws which also made firms obligatory to display all kinds of information explicitly. The best way to present this information are through the use of hyperlinks. So, the culture of direct, detailed and defined communication in low context culture is also evident in the USA website of all the selected food chains. Resultantly, multinational food chains in USA are successfully operating by adopting the usual low-context culture of the country.

High Context Culture

Table 1 shows that high context culture communicates differently in contrast to low context culture. Malaysia is a high context culture country (Hall, 1976). Our analysed results suggest that Malaysian websites display high numbers of pictures and images in order to attract the customer. This is because in high context culture people are comfortable and prefer non-verbal communication than verbal communication. Our finding for high context culture is supported by the existing literature which also advocates the use of non-text means of communication. In high context culture, images navigate to new links displaying new information. Pictures of the products, brand ambassadors, latest TV commercials are the most common means through which selected multinational food chains communicate in high-context cultures as evident in this research. Moreover, unlike low context culture, high context culture uses soft sell approach while communicating with customers. This is because communication is usually indirect and hidden in this cultural context. The multinational food companies in Malaysia target customer's emotions to sell their products. Similarly, they also use specific strategy to target young children (customers) by the use of video games and cartoon characters. Further, the use of promotions, offers and different packages are also strategic ways to communicate in high context culture as evident in this research. This means that apart from products itself, the indirect use of intangible aspects of the products is one of the important aspects of communication in high context cultures.

Table 2 represents content analysis concerning power distance, collectivism and uncertainty avoidance dimensions of culture for selected food chains operating in USA and Malaysia.

Power Distance

The findings reported in Table 2 shows that both in the USA and Malaysia the companies communicate differently. Considering power distance dimension of culture, the analysis shows that Malaysian website of four selected food chains provide hierarchical information, images and videos of their respective founders and top management of their companies. It is because Malaysia is a high power distance country so they give special importance and respect to their elders. Further, the provision of the information also reflects that the companies follow the traditional legacy of showing cooperate culture and the prestige of the company. However, in the USA websites of the brand displays less information as compared to Malaysian websites. Apart from the hierarchical information, the brands also publish their vision and mission statements in Malaysian websites. The display of these statements reflects the communication differences between high and low power distance cultures. In Malaysian websites, it is common to see the recommendations of the authoritative figure to build a brand's credibility. These statements help to understand the philosophy of top management and their values which is important in Malaysian culture (high power distance). Whereas, the USA being a low power distance country does not display mission and vision statements on their websites as advocating these statements is not part of their communication style prevalent in their culture.

Table 2: Content Analysis of Multinational Companies

Multinational Companies	Power Distance	Collectivism	Uncertainty Avoidance
Burger King			
	Hierarchical Information	Family Theme	Customer Services
	Mission and Vision Statements	Links to Social Media Website	Navigation Tools
	Taking Ownership	Care for Community	Contact Information of local Stores
			Local Touch
			Toll Free Number
KFC			
	Hierarchical Information	Care for Community	Local Touch
	Taking Ownership	Family Theme	Navigation Tools
	Quality Certification and Awards	Links to Social Media Accounts	Contact Information of local Stores
			Customer Services
			Traditional Theme
McDonalds			
	Taking Ownership	Family Theme	Customer Services
	Quality Certification and Awards	Links to Social Media Accounts	Navigation Tools
	Hierarchical Information	Care for Community	Local Touch
	Mission and Vision Statement	Uniqueness of Country	Contact Information of Local Stores
Domino's Pizza			
	Hierarchical Information	Care for Community	Local Touch
	Mission and Vision Statement	Links to Social Media Accounts	Contact Information of Local Stores
	Taking Ownership	Family Theme	Customer Services
	Quality Certification and Awards		Navigation Tools
			Toll Free Number

Another feature of low power distance is taking ownership. The websites of the brands on Malaysia take ownership of their prestige by providing information about their satisfied customers in the form of testimonies of the satisfied customers. They endorse reviews of famous celebrities as well as different customers about their status appeals, food, quality and services and advertise them on several platforms. This finding is in line with the findings of Hofstede (1991) and Mueller (1987) who suggest that referent power is very important in high power distance culture. On the other hand, on USA websites the exhibition of status appeals are literally non-existent. So are the efforts of taking ownership of the brand because of its inherent nature of being low context culture. Furthermore, quality certificates and awards are also prominently highlighted on Malaysian websites. The brands present information about what standards of food quality they use, what certifications they have and which awards they won. Providing the aforementioned detailed information is part of referent power used by selected companies in the high context countries in order to promote their brand and attract more customers by building their trust. The presence of this feature on Malaysian websites is in accordance with the study by Singh & Matsuo (2004) who also verifies that the display of information regarding a product's quality and certifications features the use of referent power.

Collectivism

In the collectivistic dimension of culture, we have analyzed family theme, community practice and presence/absence of links to local social media websites in this study. The selected brands on Malaysian websites portray the presence of collectivist culture in their companies since it is deeply rooted in the targeted society. The companies promote images and pictures of families enjoying their food and employees working in a group on their webpage so that customers can connect with their brand through family theme (collectivism) culture. In contrast, USA websites exhibit different scenarios. Since the culture of the country is based on individualism so the findings suggest that the brands' websites show non-collectivism culture. The companies' communication strategy with customers displays their culture of individual customer importance thereby exhibiting individualistic culture.

The presence of community practices is another important feature evident in both Malaysian and USA websites of the companies. In the comparison of these countries' websites, there are evidence of several programs through with the brands are observing community practises in an attempt of being sensitive to cooperate social responsibility. Similarly, the companies also offer links to their local social media websites in both sample countries. Our findings suggest that Malaysian websites offer more links to local web pages. This finding is in accordance with the study Singh &Matuso (2004) who also suggest links to local media web pages in collectivist culture. Likewise, the brands' websites in the USA also display these links. It is mainly because of an attempt to provide convenience to the consumers by sharing information through these links.

Uncertainty Avoidance

In uncertainty avoidance, we have analyzed customer care and the use of navigation tools in the content analysis of the observed websites. The findings suggest that on the brands' websites of the USA the display of customer care offers of multiple services are offered as compared to Malaysian websites. It is because, in high uncertainty avoidance societies such as the USA (high uncertainty avoidance), people tend to exhibit the highest level of nervousness in comparison with the Malaysian population (low uncertainty avoidance). Resultantly, separate columns displaying information on frequently asked questions (FAQs), email response services, surveys and feedback are the prominent services provided on the USA websites. This result is supported by Hofstede (1980).

Similarly, navigation tool is another important feature commonly found on USA websites. The brands operating in the culture of high uncertainty avoidance (USA) offer more direct navigation tools so that the customers' trust and comfort can be enhanced by giving them instructions and guidance. The USA websites provide a large number of hyperlinks, downward pull bars, and navigation buttons in all directions to make it intuitive for their customers, unlike Malaysian websites.

Conclusion

This study analyzed the cultural differences using the methodology of content analysis comparing the websites of four multinational fast-food companies (Burger King, KFC, McDonald's and Domino's Pizza) operating in the USA and Malaysia. The analysis is conducted categorizing culture into high and low-context culture. Moreover, content analysis is done by analyzing three different aspects of communication named power distance, collectivism versus individualism and low and high uncertainty avoidance. This study has also linked cultural theories with the culture and content analysis of multinational companies' websites.

The findings suggest that in high context culture (such as Malaysia) people are more interested in images and videos on websites. Whereas, in low context culture (such as the USA) people prefer text and reading materials. In addition,

the collectivistic culture prominently portrays family themes using pictures and videos unlike individualistic cultures (USA). In addition, high power distance culture remarkably displays information about their CEOs and top management. Similarly, in high context culture societies, companies display their vision and mission statements explicitly whereas, in low context culture, quality certifications and food laws are notably mentioned on the websites. High uncertainty avoidance culture displays more customer care services (FAQs, surveys) and navigation tools on websites in order to reduce the anxiety of their customers. Cultures with low uncertainty avoidance provide the same features but sparingly. This concludes although the selected fast-food chains are multinational brands and globally operating successfully but they have molded themselves according to the culture of the very country they are running their business in.

Another important finding of this study is that despite the selected companies communicate differently across different cultures but they have certain similar features that are also found in both cultures. For example, all the four food companies operating in both countries websites provide contact information to their local stores. They have provided the feature of location search to their nearest outlets for the customers' ease. Similarly, these brands also add local touch on their websites. For instance, they used local symbols, language, currency, the symbol of pricing and local cartoon characters so that the customer feels culturally connected to the information displayed. Likewise, they also provide special promotions on national festivals and events so that customers feel comfortable and remain connected to their local values and traditions.

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