A Comparative Study of Chinese and American Corporate Image Construction from the Perspective of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory 一 Taking Huawei and Apple as Examples

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ABSTRACT

In the wave of globalization, more enterprises are carrying out internationalization strategies to enter foreign markets. By leveraging cultural differences, companies can effectively build their corporate image, enhancing consumer trust and gaining a competitive edge. In cross-cultural research, Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory has been widely used, providing a theoretical framework for comprehensively understanding and comparing the cultural differences of different countries. This paper analysed and measured cultural dimensions, using case study and comparative research methods to compare Huawei's and Apple's corporate image construction strategies in depth, and then applied Hofstede's cultural dimensions theoretical perspective to further explore the similarities and differences in how companies construct their corporate images in various cultures, as well as the underlying reasons for these differences. The findings of this research can guide companies to better understand and adapt to local cultural characteristics when conducting business in different countries. By refining their corporate strategies and establishing a positive corporate culture, businesses can enhance their development and success on the international stage.

Keywords: Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory; corporate image construction; Huawei; Apple

INTRODUCTION

Over time, competition among enterprises has gradually shifted from a focus on "hard power" to a comparison based on "soft power." In this competitive process, corporate image construction has become particularly important. Since the 1950s, business leaders have consistently prioritized corporate image construction as a key concern (Tran et al., 2015). The advantages and disadvantages of a corporate image directly affect the viability of enterprises. Therefore, research on corporate image construction has deepened alongside the development of enterprises.

In today's deeply integrated global economy, competition among enterprises transcends simple product, technology, or market rivalry. It now includes competition in culture, values, and image. As an important part of the soft power of enterprises, corporate image plays a pivotal role in enhancing the competitiveness of enterprises, shaping the influence of brands and promoting internationalization. As one of the largest economies in the world, the differences and commonalities in corporate image construction between China and the United States not only reflect the profound differences between the two countries but also highlight the complexity of cross-cultural communication and cooperation between enterprises in the context of globalization.

In cross-cultural research, Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory has been widely used, providing a theoretical framework for comprehensively understanding and comparing the cultural differences between countries. This theory emphasizes the important influence of cultural factors on individual behavior and organizational management and serves as an important guide to the study of corporate culture and image construction. Analyzing and measuring cultural dimensions allows for a deep understanding of the similarities and differences in values, behavioral patterns, and decision-making styles across different cultural contexts. In China and the United States, due to the differences in history, tradition, and values, corporate culture and corporate image construction present different characteristics. Therefore, from the perspective of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, a comparative study of corporate image construction in China and the United States is of great significance in deepening the theory of cross-cultural management, promoting corporate culture innovation, and upgrading the internationalization of enterprises.

Corporate image refers to the general perception of a company recognized by customers and the public based on its external characteristics and operational capabilities (Demeke & Ravi, 2024). The corporate image expressed by external features is called a surface image, which includes signboards, facades, advertisements, and trademarks. These elements provide an intuitive impression and help form a company's initial image. The image conveyed through operational strength is called a deep image, reflecting internal elements such as the quality of personnel, production and management capabilities, and product quality. Keller, a renowned branding expert, defines corporate image as the perception of an organization reflected in consumers' memories through associations (Tasci, 2021).

Corporate image is strongly connected to corporate culture, with the former being a significant component of the latter. Corporate culture serves as the foundation for the corporate image, determining behavioral patterns and internal operations (Kotter & Heskett, 2008), which directly or indirectly affect the external image. For example, a company with innovation and customer satisfaction as its core values tends to offer products and services that reflect high quality and innovation, thereby establishing a favorable market image. Thus, corporate image can be viewed as the external expression of corporate culture.

Enterprises convey their culture and values to the outside world through advertisements, public relations activities, and social responsibility programs, which help create and maintain their corporate image. Therefore, corporate image acts as a bridge between corporate culture and the public. With the intensification of international competition, corporate culture is essential not only for internal management but also as a critical criterion for evaluating enterprises in the international market. A corporate culture with an international outlook and multicultural inclusiveness can help create a positive global image, attract international talent and customers, and enhance competitiveness.

Corporate image construction is a complex and multi-dimensional process that encompasses all aspects of an enterprise, including brand, culture, values, and social responsibility. Rooted in marketing and communication, this process involves effectively conveying core values, brand image, and competitive advantages to the public through brand positioning, communication strategy development, and consumer interaction, all closely related to corporate culture. To date, research on corporate image creation has produced a wealth of theoretical knowledge and practical applications.

For instance, Almeida and Coelho (2019) emphasized that corporate culture, defined by values, beliefs, and basic assumptions, serves as the core and essence of corporate image, shaping its fundamental characteristics and value orientation. Corporate image, as the outward manifestation of corporate culture, reflects the dissemination of corporate values and identity. Therefore, the process of constructing a corporate image profoundly influences its dissemination outcomes.

Furthermore, Nwabueze and Mileski (2018) highlighted that corporate image is a pivotal means of disseminating corporate culture. Effective cross-cultural communication is crucial as it prevents misinformation, maintains and enhances the company's public relations, and improves the company's overall image.

In addition, scholars in this filed have proposed various dimensions and considerations for corporate image construction. For instance, Yang, Lai, & Zhu (2021) identified two main perspectives on corporate image: a firm's competence image and its social responsibility image. The former relates to its capacity to develop, produce, and deliver products and services, while the latter concerns its fulfillment of social obligations. Memon and Ooi (2023) further advocated for a comprehensive firm image encompassing innovation, integrity, and societal responsibility.

Moreover, brand image construction has been widely recognized as integral to corporate image development. Originating in the United States with Procter & Gamble's introduction of internal brand competition and brand management systems, the concept evolved into a robust area of theoretical inquiry. Li, K (2023) conceptualized corporate image as public perception shaped by information integration and corporate stimuli. Brand image embodies not only product attributes but also enterprise values and cultural connotations. Hence, enterprises must prioritize brand differentiation and enhance recognition and reputation through distinctive logos, slogans, and visual elements.

Furthermore, Prasetyo and Aliyyah (2021) underscored the paramount importance of cultivating a recognizable image and solid reputation for an enterprise's survival. Corporate culture and values form the bedrock of image construction, influencing both internal behavior and external perception. Values, as the core of corporate culture, encapsulate the enterprise's mission and vision, thus serving as the foundation for image construction. Enterprises must foster a positive, ethical corporate culture and convey it through employee conduct and social responsibility initiatives.

Additionally, fulfilling social responsibility is a crucial aspect of corporate image construction (Tian & Fang, 2024). Amid global economic and social progress, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has gained prominence. Enterprises, while pursuing economic gains, must address societal and environmental impacts, actively fulfilling social responsibilities to enhance their image. Yu, et al. (2021) explored the impact of corporate image on consumer behavior, finding that a strong sense of responsibility fosters consumer goodwill. They also demonstrated that corporate image significantly influences consumer perceptions, particularly when assessing product attributes indirectly. Moreover, Yang et al., (2020) suggested that corporate image advertisements effectively bolster consumer willingness to purchase, thereby stimulating consumption behavior.

In summary, research on corporate image construction has yielded a comprehensive theoretical framework and practical insights. These studies offer valuable methods for understanding corporate image construction and provide inspiration for practical application. Despite the interdisciplinary nature of much of the current research, drawing from fields such as marketing, communication, psychology, sociology, and cultural studies, there remains a notable gap in focusing on corporate image construction within specific cultural contexts.

Hence, this study is significant as it focuses on Huawei and Apple, two technology giants that not only dominate the global market but also represent the combined strength of American and Chinese culture and economy. By applying Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, this study analyzes how these organizations build their corporate image, providing important insights into the cultural foundations that influence corporate strategies. For multinational enterprises, understanding these cultural bases is essential to enhancing their global competitiveness and effectively engaging with diverse customer groups. By doing so, the research hopes to advance the understanding of Hofstede's theory and broaden its applicability across diverse cultural settings, contributing to the theoretical discourse on corporate image construction and offering fresh perspectives for

future investigations.

A critical factor in determining a business's success in today's globally competitive and interconnected marketplace is its ability to navigate cultural differences. Therefore, this research is particularly relevant given current geopolitical tensions and shifting consumer expectations, which necessitate a sophisticated approach to corporate image construction. Beyond contributing to scholarly understanding of cross-cultural management, the study offers valuable insights for companies seeking to optimize their strategies in the global arena through a comparative analysis of Huawei and Apple.

Research Questions

This study will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the corporate image construction strategies employed by Huawei and Apple. It aims to elucidate both the similarities and differences in corporate image construction across diverse cultural contexts, while also delving into the underlying factors driving these distinctions. It will specifically respond to the following questions:

1. How do cultural dimensions, as conceptualized by Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, influence corporate image construction in Chinese and American contexts?
2. What are the key similarities and differences in the corporate image construction strategies of Huawei and Apple, considering their respective cultural backgrounds?
3. How can the findings of this comparative study inform the development of effective cross-cultural management strategies for multinational corporations operating in diverse cultural contexts?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory encompasses five aspects: collectivism vs. individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity vs. femininity, and long-term vs. short-term orientation (Gallego-Álvarez & Pucheta-Martínez, 2021).

Firstly, collectivism and individualism are concepts that explain how individuals relate to the group in various cultural settings. In collectivist societies, people prioritize group interests and harmony, while in individualistic societies, personal freedom, self-fulfillment, and self-expression are valued. Western countries generally embody the cultural characteristics of individualism, encouraging individuals to pursue personal goals. In contrast, China embodies more collectivist cultural traits, emphasizing that individuals should work for the good of the group (Zhao et al., 2019). These cultural differences influence people's behavioral patterns, values, and social interactions.

Secondly, power distance refers to the degree to which members of a society accept the unequal distribution of power, status, and wealth in different cultural contexts (Wang, et al., 2020). This cultural dimension is often reflected in corporate hierarchies. In cultures with high power distance, societal norms legitimize differences in power and status, which are generally respected and defended. Consequently, firms in these cultures tend to adopt centralized management structures, where employees exhibit a higher degree of acceptance of power and status differences and are less inclined to interact with their superiors as equals.

Conversely, in cultures with low power distance, there is a stronger inclination towards equality and democracy, and it is believed that power and status differences should not be pronounced. In such cultures, firms are more likely to adopt decentralized management structures, and employees tend to prefer egalitarian organizational structures and a fair distribution of privileges. Communication between employees and leaders is more

egalitarian, and power is more decentralized. Thus, power distance as a cultural dimension significantly impacts a company's organizational structure, management style, and employee behavior.

Thirdly, uncertainty avoidance is a cultural dimension that reflects a society's need for rules, order, and stability, as well as its tolerance for change, risk, and the unknown (Küçükkömürler & Özkan, 2022). In cultures with high uncertainty avoidance, rules and stability are prioritized, often at the expense of democracy and freedom, leading to an emphasis on government stability. Conversely, cultures with low uncertainty avoidance are more open to change, diversity, and risk-taking, resulting in more adaptable policies. This cultural dimension influences individual behavior, decision-making, national values, policy orientations, and social structures (Hofstede, 1980; Díez-Esteban, et al., 2019). Understanding uncertainty avoidance is crucial for comprehending behavioral patterns, values, and policy choices in different cultural contexts.

The fourth dimension is masculinity and femininity, which refer to the roles and values assigned to males and females in societies (Hofstede, 1980; Tao et al., 2022). Masculine cultures prioritize competition, achievement, and power, while feminine cultures value caring, cooperation, relationships, and quality of life. This cultural dimension significantly impacts organizational management and human resource practices. In masculine cultures, organizations may adopt competitive pay systems and emphasize individual performance and career advancement. In contrast, feminine cultures prioritize employee well-being, a supportive work environment, and teamwork. These differences influence leadership styles and the overall work environment within organizations.

Long-term orientation and short-term orientation is the last dimension in Hofstede' cultural theory, representing cultural differences in time perspective and business practices (Hofstede, 2011). Long-term oriented cultures prioritize future development and long-term benefits, focusing on sustained relationships, social obligations, and reputation. Conversely, short-term oriented cultures emphasize immediate results and quick problem-solving, prioritizing short-term gains and profits. These cultural differences manifest in business practices, with long-term oriented cultures nurturing enduring partnerships and prioritizing long-term benefits, while short-term oriented cultures focus on achieving immediate outcomes (Hofstede, 2011; Pucheta & Gallego, 2024).

METHODOLOGY

This study examines the similarities and differences in corporate image construction between China and the United States, using Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory as the theoretical framework. It specifically analyzes the corporate images of Huawei and Apple through the lens of Hofstede's five cultural dimensions, exploring the underlying reasons for these differences through literature research and case study analysis.

The research draws on a variety of sources, including corporate reports, documents, specific cases, and public speeches by the founders of Huawei and Apple. By examining these materials, the study investigates how Chinese and American enterprises shape their corporate images under different cultural influences, focusing on the impact of corporate culture and entrepreneurial spirit. It highlights the similarities and differences between the two companies' approaches. For each cultural dimension, the study summarizes Huawei's and Apple's corporate images into concise keywords that reflect the significant differences between Chinese and American corporate images in different cultural contexts.

To enhance the authenticity and credibility of the analysis, the study incorporates specific examples, such as Apple's employee training programs, founders' public speeches, and employee information from the official website. These examples are used to reflect the real corporate culture and its role in shaping corporate image.

In the final stage, the paper discusses the reasons for the differences in corporate image between Huawei and

Apple from the perspectives of corporate core values, corporate culture, and corporate communication channels. It analyzes corporate social responsibility reports, slogans, and taglines to understand their influence on corporate image. Additionally, it examines the methods and channels used by these companies to communicate their corporate image strategies to the public.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Comparison of Huawei and Apple's Corporate Image under Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

1. Co-creator vs. autonomous developer

Huawei is more of a co-creator than Apple, clinging to traditional notions of collectivism. In China, individuals often identify with a group and prioritize the group's goals over personal ambitions. In the Chinese culture, there is a strong emphasis on community values such as solidarity, group, and family cohesion, as well as individual responsibilities to society, the organization, and the family. Family holds greater importance, and individual achievements and interests are considered alongside collective and family interests. Chinese culture prioritizes mutual social support, harmony, and conflict avoidance, with a focus on close internal relationships. This collectivist tendency is also evident in China's political and economic systems, where policies emphasize collective interests and stability. Huawei, as a Chinese company, embodies a collectivist corporate culture that values teamwork, employee well-being, and social responsibility. Huawei's vision centers around customer-centricity, striving for excellence, perseverance, and continuous value creation, with a strong focus on employee development and welfare, as well as active engagement in environmental protection, education, and charitable initiatives.

In contrast, Apple epitomizes an autonomous developer with a corporate culture leaning towards individualism. Individualism emphasizes personal autonomy, competition, and self-actualization, while collectivism focuses on teamwork and common goals. At Apple, employees are encouraged to exercise autonomy and achieve self-actualization, with management supporting them in generating new ideas and implementing innovative solutions. This approach fosters creativity and innovation among employees, enhancing the company's competitiveness in the market. Apple's vision of "making the complex simple" underscores its commitment to individualism, innovation, and the development of employees' capabilities. In addition, Apple is committed to protecting the human rights of its employees. The company not only provides various educational programs to help employees master diverse skills but also establishes communication channels to protect their rights.

In particular, Apple has carefully planned and implemented a comprehensive and in-depth education and training program for its employees, with the particularly noteworthy "Apple University" project being established internally. This highly specialized educational platform has meticulously designed a series of courses covering key areas such as product design philosophy, customer service optimization, and leadership development. The aim is to perpetuate Apple's core value system, business strategic wisdom, and practical experience of past successes. Notably, courses like the "Apprentice Program" use simulated real work situations to guide new employees in learning decision-making within Apple's unique corporate culture—a truly innovative approach.

These training initiatives not only help individuals enhance their professional capabilities but also significantly strengthen communication understanding and collaboration efficiency among cross-functional teams. Ultimately, this improves the overall operational capability of the team at its core level.

In addition, Huawei often refers to "contributing to global connectivity" in its official statements, reflecting collectivist values. Apple's adverts, on the other hand, often emphasize personal experiences and innovation,

reflecting individualistic tendencies. These findings are consistent with the individualism and collectivism dimensions of Hofstede's theory.

2. Authority follower vs. independent thinker

Power distance is an important concept in Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, which describes the attitudes and habits of different cultures regarding the distribution of power (Stępień & Dudek, 2021). Traditional Asian and African nations, such as China, India, Vietnam, and the Philippines, tend to accept unequal power distribution. These societies place high value on respect for family and authority, viewing status and power distinctly.

In Chinese society, there is a prevalent acceptance of power differentials and reverence for authority. Within the Chinese cultural context, disparities in power and social status are commonly observed in both personal and professional spheres. Parenting practices underscore the importance of obedience and deference towards elders and authority figures, while instances of superior-subordinate relationships characterized by dominance and control are frequently encountered in various institutions such as corporations, governmental bodies, and educational establishments. This hierarchical social framework is perceived as instrumental in upholding social harmony and order. Moreover, authority and power hold significant esteem in Chinese cultural norms, being regarded as representations of justice and sagacity. The values of venerating the elderly and respecting authority are also deemed as pivotal in traditional Chinese ethos.

Huawei is more in line with stereotypical Chinese patriarch model, featuring a strict management system and a deep respect for authority. Huawei emphasizes a "wolf culture" within its corporate environment, requiring employees to possess a strong sense of enterprise and teamwork while adhering to the company's overall strategy. This reflects a high power distance and respect for authority. Furthermore, Huawei's organizational culture also demonstrates a significant level of high power distance through several key aspects. Firstly, in terms of management leadership, Huawei's management holds a pivotal role in the decision-making process, exerting considerable influence and control over organizational resources. Secondly, the company maintains a clear hierarchical structure where senior managers occupy higher positions with greater authority, while subordinate staff are expected to adhere to company rules and regulations. As outlined in Huawei's company report, the organizational structure consists of the board of directors at the top level, followed by top leaders responsible for decision-making and strategic planning, and ordinary employees within each department. Lastly, Huawei implements a stringent performance appraisal system that places a strong emphasis on employee performance evaluations, with promotions and salary levels often tied to individual performance, thereby fostering a competitive and high-pressure work environment among employees.

In contrast, American society emphasizes equality and democracy, leading to a more even distribution of power. In the United States, there is less emphasis on hierarchical relationships between social classes, with individuals prioritizing personal fulfillment and freedom over social status and hierarchy.

Apparently, Apple's corporate culture reflects low power distance, emphasizing equality and democracy. Apple operates as a collaborative partner, encouraging open discussion and problem-solving. This is evident in the direct and equal communication between employees and management at Apple, where there is no clear hierarchy. CEO Tim Cook is actively involved in employee meetings and interacts directly with employees and customers through social media. Additionally, employees at Apple are granted a significant level of freedom and autonomy to express and implement their innovative ideas without constant supervision. This culture of low power distance aligns with Apple's values of fairness and equality, as the company's management emphasizes mutual trust and equality between employees and managers. Employees are encouraged to leverage their talents and creativity through open communication and collaboration for the mutual benefit of the company and its workforce.

Apple's commitment to improving the world necessitates global communication and collaboration. The company's ethos, centered on principles of equality, liberty, and teamwork, serves as the foundation for this goal. Apple fosters an environment where employees are encouraged to freely express themselves, innovate, and make meaningful contributions, placing a high value on their well-being as fundamental to the organization's prosperity. By embracing values such as equality, freedom, transparency, collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity, Apple has successfully minimized hierarchical barriers, leveraging its corporate culture as a key asset. This culture of openness and fairness not only empowers employees to unleash their creative potential and fulfill their aspirations but also plays a pivotal role in driving the company's achievements and advancement.

3. Risk avoider vs. risk taker

According to Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, uncertainty avoidance pertains to a nation's approach towards uncertainty and ambiguity (De Meulenaer, et al., 2018). Chinese culture is characterized by a tendency to avoid uncertainty and control risk. Stability, conservatism, and order are key values, with the belief that social stability can be upheld through the prediction and management of unknown factors and risks. This pursuit of order and stability is evident in traditional Chinese cultural concepts, such as "one world, one people" and "man can control heaven." Consequently, in business and political decision-making, Chinese culture tends to exhibit caution and conservatism, striving to mitigate uncertainties and risks to safeguard social stability and security.

Huawei embodies this cultural characteristic by assuming a sense of responsibility and mission as a security guardian. It prioritizes steady and sustainable development over innovation and risk-taking, as evidenced in its Corporate Sustainability Report, which encourages employees to take initiative while also emphasizing accountability. Huawei upholds the rights of its employees to engage in collective bargaining and freedom of association within the bounds of local legislation. In cases of non-compliance, individuals are expected to be accountable for their actions.

Additionally, Huawei advocates for proactive engagement from customers, employees, and local community members in fostering a harmonious and sustainable ecological environment. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balanced and healthy ecological setting in both personal and professional endeavors. Through regular stakeholder engagement on shared interests, Huawei welcomes feedback and expectations to inform the development of sustainable objectives. These principles underscore Huawei's commitment to a people-centric corporate culture. The company's strategic approach to business development is characterized by a preference for risk mitigation and a cautious stance to prevent potential adverse outcomes.

In contrast, American society's tendency to accept risk and uncertainty can be traced back to its historical Western pioneer roots, diverse cultural heritage, unique administrative structure, and emphasis on individual freedom and personal responsibility. The United States boasts a richly varied cultural and societal fabric, leading to notable cultural disparities and diverse values across different ethnic, racial, and religious groups. This diversity fosters greater familiarity with uncertainty and adaptability to change among Americans. Consequently, American culture tends to embrace risk and uncertainty, with individuals displaying a greater willingness to take risks, innovate, and act autonomously.

Apple exemplifies this risk-taking culture, daring to innovate in new areas rather than remaining in its comfort zone. Steve Jobs, the visionary behind Apple, emphasized innovation and risk-taking, which became fundamental tenets of the company's ethos. Within Apple, Jobs encouraged a culture of innovation and experimentation, embracing the prospect of failure as a valuable learning opportunity. He believed that through learning and continuous improvement, individuals could progress towards success. Apple is known for its rapid development of innovative products and swift market launches, supported by sustained investments in research and development to maintain a competitive technological edge. In 2007, Apple launched the iPhone,

revolutionizing the smartphone market by integrating a mobile phone, music player, and internet capabilities. This was followed by products such as the iPad and Apple Watch, which quickly captured the consumer market with their minimalist design and excellent performance.

4. Emotionally-oriented vs. career-oriented

Masculinity emphasizes assertiveness, competition, and material success, while femininity values quality of life, interpersonal relationships, and concern for the weak (Weishut, 2020). In the context of China's societal norms, which prioritize competition, achievement, and practicality, men typically hold higher social standing. Within the traditional Chinese cultural framework, men are commonly regarded as the primary providers and decision-makers within the family unit, thereby perpetuating gender disparities in various spheres, including marriage, professional environments, political arenas, and social hierarchies. Conversely, women in traditional Chinese society are often tasked with familial obligations and caregiving responsibilities, while encountering limited opportunities and support for career advancement. Despite ongoing shifts in societal attitudes, gender inequities and societal expectations remain prevalent in Chinese culture.

Notably, Huawei, a prominent entity in the realm of smart manufacturing and development within a predominantly male-centric industry, exhibits a corporate culture that leans towards endorsing masculine attributes. This is evidenced by Huawei's emphasis on values such as competitiveness, outcome-driven approaches, and diligent work ethics, which are commonly associated with masculine qualities.

Similarly, Apple's corporate culture is distinctly masculine. According to Apple's official website, in 2014, 70 percent of Apple's global workforce was male, while 30 percent was female. New data for 2021 suggests that 65.2 percent of Apple's global workforce is male, while 34.8 percent is female. These figures indicate that Apple has consistently had a high percentage of male employees. Tim Cook, Apple's chief executive, spoke about the new diversity and inclusion figures, saying the company was "proud of the progress" it had made. With a global workforce of 130,000, Apple is inevitably scrutinized for these standards. Although Apple has been gradually making efforts to diversify its workforce in recent years, the low turnover rate has indirectly hindered the rapid increase in the proportion of diverse employees. Nonetheless, with more than half of its workforce still composed of white males, there remains significant room for improvement in workforce diversity.

5. Investor vs. speculator

According to Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, the concepts of long-term and short-term orientation pertain to individuals' perspectives on time, their approach to the future and past, and their consideration of future consequences in present actions (Coscioni, et al., 2024). Apple is a speculator who is eager to get market rewards, while Huawei is the investor who plans for the long term. China is characterized by a long-term orientation, reflecting a historical and cultural emphasis on strategic planning and enduring goals. Chinese culture values teamwork, shared values, and long-term planning, as exemplified by initiatives like the 12th Five-Year Plan. Long-term-oriented societies prioritize stability in social structures, sustainability in the environment, and future-oriented rewards over the immediate gains favored by short-term-oriented cultures.

Huawei has a well-established corporate culture that prioritizes independent research and development (R&D) and technological innovation, alongside a strong focus on social responsibility and sustainable development. The company emphasizes technology advancement as a cornerstone of its long-term growth strategy, with a particular focus on independent R&D and technological innovation. Huawei actively promotes the adoption of 5G technology and advocates for the independent development of chips to prevent foreign domination in the domestic high-tech and new technology sectors. According to Huawei's financial report, the company allocates more than 10 percent of its revenue to R&D annually, reaching 15.9 percent in 2020, totaling RMB 141.9 billion.

This sustained and substantial investment in R&D aims to maintain technological leadership in areas such as 5G, artificial intelligence, and cloud computing, ensuring long-term market competitiveness. Additionally, the company is dedicated to overcoming barriers, reducing costs, and navigating Western sanctions. Through continuous technological innovation, quality service enhancements, and other strategic improvements, Huawei aims to solidify and expand its prominent position in the mobile phone manufacturing industry.

In contrast, the United States is characterized by a short-term orientation, where individuals typically prioritize immediate concerns, seek quick solutions, and prioritize hedonistic pursuits. This inclination is evident in various facets of American life, including swift decision-making in business and politics, preference for straightforward solutions, emphasis on personal autonomy and efficiency, and focus on short-term benefits.

Apple's organizational culture aligns with a short-term orientation, as evidenced by its strategy of consistently introducing new products to cater to market demands, such as annual releases of new mobile phone models and regular updates to tablet computers. Apple's product update cycle is relatively short; for instance, the iPhone series typically releases a new model every autumn. This rapid iteration strategy helps Apple maintain market excitement and stimulate consumer demand, though it may also be perceived as prioritizing short-term sales performance. These endeavors have enhanced brand recognition and product performance, enabling Apple to expand its market share through sales channel promotion and performance enhancements. The company's marketing approach often highlights features like exceptional performance and camera capabilities to capture consumer interest and drive short-term sales growth.

Based on the above discussion, it's apparent that Huawei and Apple's corporate images, shaped by their respective cultural contexts, exhibit both similarities and differences. Huawei's collectivist, risk-averse, and hierarchical approach contrasts with Apple's individualistic, risk-taking, and egalitarian culture. Despite these differences, both companies strive for excellence and continuous improvement, reflecting their pursuit of success within their cultural frameworks. Specifically, Huawei is a collectivist company that prioritizes social responsibility, teamwork, and employee welfare. These ideals are consistent with traditional Chinese beliefs of respect for hierarchy and community. Huawei's stringent management structure and cautious, long-term, risk-averse initiatives are indicative of this. On the other hand, Apple personifies a culture that is independent and individualistic, supporting creativity and invention through individual independence and low power distance. Additionally, the company's flat organizational structure promotes open communication. Apple's strategy is based on quick product development and market adaptability, which naturally involves taking risks. Despite the fact that Apple's short-term market responsiveness contrasts with Huawei's long-term perspective, both businesses exhibit a male corporate culture that values competitiveness and material success. Even with their different cultural perspectives, both businesses pursue excellence and ongoing development.

Reasons for the Differences in Corporate Image

1. Brand positioning and core values

The core values of Huawei and Apple differ significantly. Huawei places greater emphasis on customer needs and employee perseverance and self-criticism. In contrast, Apple focuses more on accessibility, education, environmental responsibility, and values user privacy and security highly. These differing core values reflect the distinct corporate cultures, business philosophies, and development strategies of the two companies, shaping their unique brand images and market positions.

Huawei's brand positioning is rooted in its core philosophy of "Serving Customers", and it is committed to providing superior communications solutions and services on a global scale. Its core objective is to create greater value for customers through high-quality products and services that provide in-depth insight into and accurately

meet their diverse needs. To this end, Huawei continues to increase its investment in R&D and launch competitive and innovative products to meet the specific needs of customers from different cultures. At the same time, Huawei actively seeks strategic cooperation with global leaders in various industries to jointly research and develop new technologies and products, and promote the continuous progress of the communications industry.

In terms of core values, Huawei adheres to the principles of "customer focus, the pursuit of excellence, long-term persistence, hard work, and continuous value creation". Huawei believes that customer demand is the fundamental driving force for enterprise development, always puts customer satisfaction in the first place, focuses on in-depth communication with customers, and provides tailor-made solutions for customers. In addition, Huawei is committed to providing its employees with a favorable working environment and career development opportunities and stimulating their innovative potential and spirit of struggle.

However, Apple focuses more on the deep integration of innovation and user experience. Adhering to the core concept of "making things simple", Apple is committed to combining cutting-edge technology with humane design to present a series of intuitive and easy-to-use products that create a seamless and smooth user experience. In terms of product design, Apple pursues the ultimate in superb craftsmanship and superior performance. In addition, Apple has achieved a deep integration of hardware and software by building a closed ecosystem. This integrated design enables the functionality and compatibility of Apple products to reach an unprecedented level, providing users with more convenient and efficient services.

In terms of core values, Apple always adheres to the core concepts of innovation, simplicity, and user experience. Apple focuses on the simplicity and aesthetic design of its products, pursues the ultimate user experience, and makes every product a work of art. These values have not only made Apple products highly recognized but also won the favor of many loyal fans around the world.

2. Communication strategy and means

In the construction of a corporate image, the selection and implementation of communication strategies and methods play a pivotal role. Huawei and Apple, as two globally renowned technology companies, exhibit distinctive characteristics and advantages in their communication strategies.

Huawei's communication strategy focuses on diversification and globalization. Globally, Huawei promotes its products and services through various forms of communication. Simultaneously, Huawei engages with users in real time on social media platforms, sharing new product information and updates on brand activities. Huawei emphasizes integrated marketing communication, utilizing advertising, public relations, and other channels to comprehensively showcase its corporate image and product features. For instance, in the "Reimagine" advertising campaign, Huawei used a series of videos and images to showcase its advancements in photography technology and how it redefined the possibilities of smartphone photography with the launch of the P30 series in 2019.

In contrast, Apple emphasizes innovation and uniqueness. Apple's product design itself serves as a powerful communication medium. Additionally, Apple excels in face-to-face interactions with consumers through new product launches, product experience sessions, and the opening of experience stores, allowing consumers to experience the unique charm of its products and establish a deep emotional connection. On social media, Apple enhances its brand image through precise content marketing and social engagement. For example, the "Shot on iPhone" ad series highlights the product's photographic capabilities by showcasing photos and videos taken by users with the iPhone, conveying Apple's brand philosophy that everyone can be a creator. By marketing this unique brand concept, Apple enhances user loyalty and encourages consumers to invest in both the product and its creative potential.

CONCLUSIONS

Apple and Huawei are two examples of very different company cultures that are influenced by different cultural environments. With a hierarchical structure and a risk-averse mindset, Huawei, which reflects traditional Chinese collectivism, places a strong emphasis on long-term planning, teamwork, and employee well-being. Apple, on the other hand, epitomizes American individualism by encouraging independence, inventiveness, and quick market responsiveness via a flat organizational structure that fosters candid communication and invention. Both businesses prioritize money achievement and competition in a male culture. Despite their differences, Apple and Huawei have achieved worldwide success thanks to their distinctive cultural approaches, which they each developed through time.

Based on the research into corporate image construction, it is evident that addressing operational challenges stemming from cultural differences presents a significant challenge in establishing a corporate image abroad. Many successful multinational enterprises grapple with maintaining a favorable corporate image due to cultural disparities, as consumers across different regions hold diverse perceptions and expectations of brand image. The efficacy of marketing strategies heavily relies on cultural alignment with the target market. However, cultural discrepancies may spark conflicts between corporate cultures and values in varying cultural contexts, potentially leading to internal contradictions and divisions within the enterprise, thereby impacting its overall image and reputation. Strategies such as fostering openness and communication, along with achieving tolerance and coexistence of different cultures and values through mutually beneficial cooperation, are essential in overcoming these challenges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has produced research findings and insights; however, it is limited by the author's narrow expertise, resulting in certain research constraints. These limitations primarily manifest in two key areas. Firstly, despite consulting relevant literature, there remains a noticeable subjectivity in the author's interpretation of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, which could affect the depth and accuracy of the analysis. Secondly, the selection and analysis of only two companies, Huawei and Apple, may limit the generalizability of the findings. Corporate image construction is a complex process influenced by various factors beyond the scope of these two companies.

In light of the constraints mentioned above, the next two recommendations are made for further study: to improve objectivity when analyzing Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions, it is necessary to take into account a variety of textual interpretations. Researchers should strive to incorporate diverse viewpoints and interpretations of cultural dimensions theory, promoting a more balanced and objective analysis. Similarly, broadening the scope of analysis in case studies is essential. Including a more diverse range of companies beyond Huawei and Apple would provide a broader understanding of cultural influences on corporate image construction.

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