

# Review of: "Influence of Cultural Factors on Organizational Performance of Multinational Corporations: A Bibliometric Review from 1983 to 2020"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Based on the review provided in Qeios\_Feng\_Barahas.pdf and the Qeios publishing policy guidelines, I offer the following assessment:

The contents of the manuscript deal with the frequency of citations of a class of publications but do not directly assess the influence of culture on organizational performance.

Measurement and Use of Culture: The manuscript does not provide specific details about how culture was measured or analyzed in the manuscript or in the articles cited for analysis. The paper is described as a "bibliometric review of the influence of cultural factors on the organizational performance of multinational corporations (MNCs) over nearly four decades (1983-2020)." It's not possible to critically evaluate the specific methodologies used to measure or analyze cultural factors.

Using the guidelines in Qeios\_publishing\_policy, I review the manuscript Qeios\_Feng\_Barahas.pdf.

Based on the review provided in the document and the Qeios Publishing Policy guidelines, I can offer the following assessment:

1. Aims and Scope: The paper appears to be within the scope of Qeios, as it provides a comprehensive bibliometric review of the influence of cultural factors on the organizational performance of multinational corporations. This topic is relevant to fields such as international business, management, and cultural studies.
2. Open Access: The review doesn't explicitly mention open access, but as it's being considered for Qeios, which is an open-access platform, it likely complies with this requirement.
3. Copyright: There's no specific mention of copyright issues in the review. However, as the paper is a bibliometric analysis of existing literature, it's unlikely to infringe on copyrights if proper citations are used.
4. Authorship: The review doesn't raise any concerns about authorship. It mentions a single author, Shide Feng, affiliated with the Russian Academy of Science.
5. Ethics:
  - Human and Animal Rights: As this is a bibliometric review, it doesn't involve direct human or animal subjects, so this aspect is not applicable.

- Informed Consent: Not applicable for this type of study.
- Competing Interests: The reviewer explicitly states "No potential competing interests to declare," which aligns with Qeios' policy on transparency regarding conflicts of interest.

Overall, the paper seems to meet the publishing guidelines of Qeios.

The authors also point out that the paper acknowledges geographical imbalances in research contributions and identifies areas for future research, which adds to its value.

For the manuscript to be suitable for publication in Qeios, it needs to be revised to conform to the issues stated in the title.

Based on the review provided in the document and considering the Qeios Publishing Policy guidelines, I would rate this manuscript 3 out of 5 stars. Here's the rationale for this rating:

1. Aims and Scope: The paper clearly aligns with Qeios' aim to publish reviews of an important topic in international business and management.
2. Methodology: Problems with measuring "culture" and "organizational performance"; quantitative measures are not provided.
3. Analysis: The paper employs sophisticated analytical tools (VOSviewer) and provides insightful analysis, including visual representations of research themes.
4. Contribution to Field: The authors emphasize that the paper offers valuable insights into current trends and future research directions, suggesting it makes a significant contribution to the field; however, the purpose of the review is not stated to be providing insights into future research directions.
5. Structure and Clarity: The paper is described as well-organized and easy to follow, even for non-experts in bibliometrics.
6. Ethical Considerations: There are no apparent ethical issues, and the author has declared no competing interests.
7. Global Perspective: The study acknowledges geographical imbalances in research contributions, demonstrating awareness of broader research contexts.

The paper loses a star primarily because:

1. While comprehensive, it doesn't appear to present groundbreaking new findings, but rather synthesizes existing research publications.
2. The review doesn't mention any significant weaknesses or limitations of the study, which could have provided a more balanced assessment.
3. There's no mention of replication materials or data availability, which are increasingly important in modern research practices.

I can offer some insights on problematic issues.

1. **Measurement and Use of Culture:** The review does not provide specific details about how culture was measured or used in the analyses. It only mentions that the paper focuses on "the influence of cultural factors on the organizational performance of multinational corporations." Without access to the full paper, it's impossible to critically assess the methodology used for measuring culture or how it was incorporated into the analyses.
2. **Cultural Perspective:** The review notes that the study "acknowledges the geographical distribution of research contributions, highlighting the imbalance between Western and non-Western countries." This suggests that the paper does consider cultural diversity in research, which is a positive aspect.
3. **Scope and Relevance:** The paper covers a significant timespan (1983-2020) and analyzes 856 scientific documents, which suggests a comprehensive approach to understanding cultural factors in organizational performance over time.

Rating: Given the limited information available and the inability to assess the crucial aspects of cultural measurement and analysis, I would tentatively rate this article 3 out of 5 stars.

Rationale for the rating:

- The paper appears to be comprehensive and well-structured.
- It uses reputable data sources and analytical tools.
- The study acknowledges geographical imbalances in research.
- Unable to assess the quality of cultural measurement and analysis.
- Cannot evaluate the robustness of the methodology related to cultural factors.

This rating is conservative due to the lack of specific information about the paper's treatment of culture. A higher or lower rating might be warranted if the paper were specific regarding its handling of cultural measurements and analyses.

The authors address the complexities and potential biases in cross-cultural research.

Based on the review provided in Qeios\_Feng\_Barahas.pdf and the Qeios publishing policy guidelines, I can offer the following assessment:

Recommendations on how the authors could improve their methodology for measuring cultural factors: There are several models available that provide publicly available quantified assessments of cultural values for nations, clusters, sub-cultures, and intra-country regions, for example, the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness project, Ronald Inglehart's model, Shalom Schwartz's model, among several others. The manuscript does not provide specific details about how culture was measured or analyzed in the submitted manuscript or the articles chosen for review. The paper is described as a "bibliometric review of the influence of cultural factors on the organizational performance of multinational corporations (MNCs) over nearly four decades (1983-2020)." Without access to the method of measurement of culture, it is not possible to critically evaluate the specific methodologies used to measure or analyze the effects of cultural factors.

However, the review does note a few relevant points:

1. The study acknowledges "the geographical distribution of research contributions, highlighting the imbalance between Western and non-Western countries." This suggests some consideration of cultural diversity in research.
2. The paper identifies "emerging research clusters and future research directions," which may include cultural aspects, though this is not explicitly stated in the review.
3. The review mentions that the paper offers "a nuanced understanding of the most influential countries, regions, journals, and authors in this field," which could potentially relate to cultural factors, though again this is not explicitly detailed.

**MEASUREMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE:** To properly evaluate the methods for measuring organizational performance, we would need information on:

1. The specific metrics used to measure performance (e.g., financial indicators, productivity measures, innovation metrics, etc.)
2. The data sources for these metrics
3. The time frame over which performance was measured
4. Any controls or adjustments made to account for industry, firm size, or other relevant factors
5. How the performance measures were validated or cross-checked
6. Whether the study used objective measures, subjective assessments, or a combination of both
7. If multiple performance indicators were used, how they were combined or weighted

Without this information, it's not possible to make a meaningful assessment of the quality of the performance measurement methods.

What we can infer from the review is that this study is a bibliometric analysis, which typically focuses on analyzing publication patterns rather than directly measuring organizational performance. The paper seems to be reviewing and analyzing existing literature on the influence of cultural factors on organizational performance in multinational corporations, rather than conducting primary research on organizational performance itself.

Quality Rating: 3 out of 5 stars

Rationale for the rating:

1. **Comprehensive Scope:** The paper covers a significant timespan (1983-2020) and analyzes 856 scientific documents, indicating a thorough approach.
2. **Rigorous Methodology:** The review describes the paper's methodology as "robust" and "systematic," combining performance analysis and science mapping.
3. **Data Quality:** The use of Web of Science as the primary data source is noted as enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings.
4. **Analytical Tools:** The use of VOSviewer for constructing bibliometric networks and visualizing co-occurrence of keywords is highlighted as a strength; however, there are questions regarding the quality of the data.

5. **Global Perspective:** The study acknowledges geographical imbalances in research contributions, demonstrating awareness of broader research contexts.
6. **Future Directions:** The paper is praised for identifying areas where further research is needed, particularly in emerging or developing economies.
7. **Organization and Clarity:** The paper is described as well-organized and easy to follow, even for non-experts in bibliometrics.

The paper loses a star primarily because:

1. **Lack of Specific Information on Cultural Measurement:** While the review mentions "cultural factors," it doesn't provide details on how these were specifically measured or analyzed, which is a key aspect of the research question.
2. **Potential Western Bias:** The acknowledged imbalance between Western and non-Western contributions might affect the comprehensiveness of the cultural analysis.

Overall, this appears to be a high-quality bibliometric review that makes a valuable contribution to understanding research trends in the field of cultural factors and organizational performance in MNCs. However, without more specific information on how culture was measured and analyzed, it's difficult to fully assess this crucial aspect of the study.

To comment, pro and con on using nationality as a surrogate for measuring cultural differences; with citation and references where appropriate.

Using nationality as a surrogate for measuring cultural differences is unfortunately a common approach in cross-cultural research, particularly in international business and management studies. However, this method has both advantages and drawbacks that researchers should consider carefully.

Pros:

1. **Convenience and Accessibility:** Nationality data is often readily available and easy to collect, making it a convenient proxy for culture in large-scale studies (Kirkman et al., 2006).
2. **Clear Boundaries:** Nations have defined geographical and political boundaries, providing a clear demarcation for group comparisons (Hofstede, 2001).
3. **Established Frameworks:** Several well-known cultural frameworks, such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions, are based on national-level data, providing researchers with established metrics for comparison (Hofstede, 2001; House et al., 2004).
4. **Policy Relevance:** National-level cultural data can be particularly useful for policymakers and multinational corporations when making country-specific decisions (Tung & Verbeke, 2010).
5. **Historical and Institutional Context:** Nations often share common historical experiences, institutions, and legal systems that can shape cultural values (Inglehart & Baker, 2000).

Cons:

1. Oversimplification: Using nationality as a proxy for culture can oversimplify the complex, multifaceted nature of culture, ignoring within-country diversity (Shenkar, 2001).
2. Ignoring Subcultures: This approach may overlook significant subcultures within nations, especially in culturally diverse countries (Au, 1999).
3. Assumption of Homogeneity: It assumes cultural homogeneity within nations, which is often not the case, particularly in large or diverse countries (McSweeney, 2002).
4. Static View of Culture: National cultures are often treated as static entities, ignoring the dynamic nature of culture and its evolution over time (Tung, 2008).
5. Ecological Fallacy: Applying nation-level cultural characteristics to individuals within that nation can lead to ecological fallacy, where group-level traits are incorrectly attributed to individuals (Brewer & Venaik, 2014).
6. Globalization Effects: In an increasingly globalized world, national boundaries may become less relevant as cultural indicators due to increased cross-cultural interactions and influences (Leung et al., 2005).
7. Neglect of Other Factors: Focusing solely on nationality may lead researchers to overlook other important factors that influence behavior and values, such as profession, education, or socioeconomic status (Taras et al., 2016).

In conclusion, researchers should be aware of its limitations. A more nuanced approach that considers multiple levels of culture (national, regional, organizational) and acknowledges within-country diversity may provide a more accurate representation of cultural differences.

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Tung, R. L., & Verbeke, A. (2010). Beyond Hofstede and GLOBE: Improving the quality of cross-cultural research.

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2. Potential Western Bias: The acknowledged imbalance between Western and non-Western contributions might affect the comprehensiveness of the cultural analysis.

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