Introduction:

For this activity, participants will refer to the Hofstede Insights website (full hyperlink here: https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/) and explore the cultural proclivities of their own cultures as well as compare them with others’ cultures, understanding that these are generalizations. Participants will examine the generalizations presented on the website and reflect on the complex nuances that are excluded from these over-simplified categories.

Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Explain how simple descriptions of cultural proclivities are often only generalizations that explain cultural aspects on a superficial level.
2. Articulate the proclivities of their own cultures and compare them to other cultures according to the Hofstede Insights website.
3. Examine gaps in the information provided by the Hofstede Insights website by engaging in more substantial discussion about the nuances of their own culture.

Time:

1 hour.

Group Size:

Small Group.

Materials:

See Participant Instructions (in Downloads).

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Cultural Self-Awareness:

- To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

Knowledge of Cultural Frameworks:
To demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.

Other Skills:
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

Activity Instructions:

1. Instruct participants to visit the Hofstede Insights website (full hyperlink here: https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/) and select their country in the dropdown menu to see the value for the six dimensions: Power Distance, Individualism, Masculinity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long Term Orientation, and Indulgence. Then ask them to take 10 minutes to read the description of the six dimensions. Note: They may not find their own country listed. In this case, have them choose a country they feel shares some similarities with their own.

2. Small group discussion (15 minutes). Ask:
   - In what ways did you and others align with the categories?
   - In what ways did you and others differ from the categories?
   - How did/would you feel if you didn't find your country listed?

3. Instruct participants to type in a different country and read the description of the 6 dimensions for that country (15 minutes). Ask:
   - What stereotypes or negative perceptions might come up when looking at the description of another country?
   - What are the potential dangers of using a website like this? When can it be beneficial?
   - What can you do to mitigate the risks of stereotyping?

4. Instruct participants to type in both countries at the same time if they haven't already (10 minutes) and review the dimension comparisons. Ask:
   - How does comparing two countries change what stereotypes or negative perceptions come up?
   - When might it be useful to compare two or more countries?
   - What other sources of information can you use to supplement this generalized bird's eye view?

5. Whole class debrief (10 minutes). Ask participants to discuss their experience of using the Hofstede Insights website.

Activity created by Dr. Kris Acheson-Clair, CILMAR.