



Challenges in Virtual Communication: An Intercultural Communication Perspective

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v10i1.4265>

Abstract

Pandemic Covid-19 has forced almost every level of industry to adapt to technological advancement in order to remain operating, not to mention multinational companies. When the company consists of employees from various cultural backgrounds, it is found that communication may encounter challenges. The face-to-face interaction during a meeting or work-related matter in an intercultural context could arise difficulties in understanding an individual's cultural values, way of thinking, the pace of work, and some other matters that would affect the work performance. Let alone the interaction should be mediated, such as holding continuous virtual meetings, due to the major pandemic condition. This study sought the challenges faced by a multinational organization namely Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd which is headquartered in Singapore within the intercultural context of organizational communication. In-depth interviews were conducted as data gathering techniques with seven informants from various cultural backgrounds. Findings of this study show that (1) employees have an adequate intercultural communication understanding within a multinational organization context, (2) similar job orientation eases the organizational communication process, and (3) fluid communication has accommodated uncertainty that possibly arises.

Keywords: *Organizational Communication; Multinational Organization; Cultural Values; Communication Challenges; Virtual Meetings*

Introduction

The pandemic has brought the communication pattern into rapid adjustment for interpersonal communication in various contexts. During the pandemic situation, Wijayanti (2021) highlighted that family communication patterns are shaped by factors that affect them, the form of communication itself, and the quality of communication. These findings could be reflected in the context of an organization whereby individuals are bound by the vision and mission of their workplace. Sealy, M. K. (2021) argued that due to the pandemic, individuals adjust to the changes in interaction due to social restrictions which include shelter-in-place and work-from-home orders.

Based on the data analysis done, it was discovered that the majority of individuals experienced diminished communication apprehension during the pandemic. Communication apprehension is

essentially a component in any industry to function at its fullest capacity and dodge pitfalls. Therefore, effective communication ought to take place. It is seen that communication activity changes on so many levels; individual, family, as well as professional manners which cover not only national but also global scale.

As trade becomes worldwide, more and more people are doing business across national borders. Culture clash continues to plague all aspects of international business as a result of this phenomenon. Culture colors people's sense of identity and the perception of others. Differences in leadership style and organizational behavior can often be traced back to cultural influences. Cultural misunderstandings are highly possible to occur (Frey-Ridgway, 1997). To give a context regarding culture, it is a collective programming of the mind which manifest itself not only regarding values but also in more superficial ways; symbols, heroes, and rituals (Hofstede, 2001). Furthermore, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) synthesized the meaning of various definitions of culture by stating that culture consists of patterns of and for behavior acquired which is transmitted by symbols.

Cultural aspects have got much more attention in communication and internationalization studies, yet there is still room for research focusing on such study areas. This study managed to conduct research based on the foundation of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, however, this paper will be focusing on the uncertainty avoidance and individualism/collectivism dimensions to explore the communication challenges whereby video conference is commonly utilized. Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd, is the object of this study.

Messages exchanged among individuals in an organization play a significant role in forming the team's communication substance, which in turn influence the communication climate and execution (Skudlarek et al, 2020). Additionally, the work has investigated novel components in communication encounters, i.e., emotion, communication safety, and understanding of trust and control. Diamastuti et al (2020) studied the influence of Hofstede's cultural dimensions on the implementation of corporate social responsibility at a State-owned company and the results show that only power distance and individualism/collectivism have a significant effect on it.

Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd, is a company that has a special type of business as a provider of financial services specifically for financial services in carrying out online gaming activities, and also has a business scope throughout the world which covers Singapore, Jakarta, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Taipei, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Mumbai, Yangon, Manila, São Paulo, Buenos Aires, Istanbul, Los Angeles, and Dubai. The use of connecting language between employees in each branch of a business unit in another country is very important. Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd has several units of work department, one of which is the Customer Service Department which consists of individuals who work directly from several locations in several countries, so intercultural communication is inevitable to achieve the desired target.

Based on the narrative explanation above, this research was narrowed to conduct the study by focusing on the virtual communication experienced by the customer service department. Exploration of the challenges that occurred during the communication which mediated, and cultural background in the organization, the aims of this study are as follows:

- (i) Identify the communication challenges when virtual communication is actively implemented.
- (ii) Analyse the virtual communication that occurred based on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions namely uncertainty avoidance and individualism/collectivism.

The importance of this study is the fact that virtual interaction in an organization becomes one of the choices available for coordination among employees. However, the cultural difference among the individual should be taken into account for they may trigger misunderstanding and conflict. During the pandemic, whereby virtual meeting is experienced by most of the company or industry, the challenges in

the virtual meeting experience are important to be highlighted. The result will be beneficial to map the possible improvement in virtual communication and avoid conflict. In order to attain the objectives of this study, several key literature points are highlighted as the foundation of this study as presented in the literature review section.

Literature Review

Culture also consists of traditional ideas with attached values which can be seen as products of the action of individuals. In an organization's culture, communication and leadership styles apparently affect job satisfaction among individuals (Sadiartha & Sitorus, 2018). Trompenaars (1994) as cited in Frey-Ridgway (1997) emphasizes the importance of leveraging diverse workforce skills by combining the highest quality of teamwork-centric collective culture with an individualist society based on creativity.

The demands of a multicultural workforce are currently forcing large companies to increase the number of employees from various cultural backgrounds. However, the balance of workforce diversity is something that companies have not been able to fully achieve. The demand for workforce diversity has now become one of the important dimensions within a company or business organization in the whole world, including in Indonesia. A number of start-up companies use many experts who are foreign nationals directly in their home countries to ensure a good quality of work given in dealing with challenges that are rooted in cultural differences among individuals in the workplace.

In the attempt to strive to communicate successfully among the organization's members, understanding and knowing cultural factors such as values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of communication agents must be achieved. Cultural insights and knowledge can be accumulated through various sources of knowledge, experiences will be gained through daily conversations and interactions with people in new environments which culturally diverse. Attitude and behavior of employees in a multicultural milieu are influenced by various factors, and information about individual cultural backgrounds is one of the most important of all.

Ponomareva et al (2022) found that cross-country differences as roots of cultural diversity may become less salient in today's increasingly diverse nations that act as global hubs for international firms. Yet, the implication of this is that information related to the rules of communicative culture, nonverbal cues, voice intonation, and general customs can be exchanged, studied, and used during the communication process. Ultimately, the experience of practical communication contributes to the effective adaptation of the employees engaged in such communication in an organizational context. Robins et al (2009), as cited by Sadiartha and Sitorus (2018), identify seven characteristics of an organizational culture namely 1) innovation and risk-taking, 2) attention to detail, 3) results-oriented, 4) people-oriented, 5) team-oriented, 6) aggressiveness, and 7) stability. When people in an organization understand each other and their context of interaction from very different perspectives, in this context culture, there is an increased risk of poor organizational dialogue (Nordby, 2020).

Communication innovation has played an imperative role to enable individuals to work from home during pandemics which creates a distinctive climate in face-to-face communication (Putri & Irwansyah, 2020). The work-from-home mode will probably be implemented continuously for it can be as effective as working in the office. Computer-mediated communication has been hailed as a major force in creating cultural convergence around the world (Leung, 2005), including how a company could possibly operate across countries. Furthermore Hofstede (2001), as cited by Leung (2005: 360), has observed that not only will cultural diversity among countries persist but also new technologies might even intensify the cultural differences between and within countries. Ben-David et al (2021) explored the experience of facilitating virtual video groups during the covid-19 pandemic to address relational processes in virtual video groups which include emotional presence, interpersonal communication, and intimacy among the

individual involves. Besides, the struggle is faced while creating a safe space in an unstable virtual setting where the boundaries between personal and professional lives were reduced.

Born global firms are also characterized by their commitment to innovation, technology, and the design of products according to market specificities (Escandon-Barbosa et al, 2021), and this has brought the adoption of technology in communication such as virtual meetings. Speaking about virtual meetings that previously has no way to be conducted, nowadays become a “normal” way to communicate in an organizational context. When a virtual meeting is becoming a usual way to communicate, we have to further look into the cultural background of the individuals involved. He and Liu (2010) identified from their study of a Swedish multinational firm that the barriers to cross-cultural communication come from the national culture’s influence on the workplace and behaviors of people with different identities whereby culture has shaped individuals’ way of thinking and behaving which resulting different in understanding the vision of the firms.

Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication is basically a process where individuals from different cultural backgrounds attempt to share meaning in their social interaction (Moran et al, 2007). Intercultural communication skills can contribute to the success of negotiations and avoid unintended cultural conflicts (Hofstede et al, 2010). Furthermore, in a group with various cultural backgrounds, intercultural encounters among groups. However, intercultural contact among groups does not automatically breed mutual understanding, since it usually confirms each group in its own identity.

Integration across cultural dividing lines in collectivistic societies is more difficult to obtain than in individualist societies. These understandings could bridge the context of culture, communication, and organization. When communicating with individuals in our own culture, we can more readily assess the communication cues to understand the context better. However, when the cultures are different, or way different from one to another, misunderstanding will probably result. The misunderstanding in communication across cultures involves the high and low context of communication styles (Moran et al, 2007). A high-context culture uses high-context communications: information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person with little communication in the explicit words or message. Meanwhile, a low-context culture employs low-context communications: most information is contained in explicit codes, such as words.

Organization, Culture and Communication

In an organization, the challenges, and problems related to cultural differences usually occur on the level of national culture rather than in the context of corporate culture (Thomas, 2010). Thomas further explains that national culture refers to the culture a population is born into, the development to which they have contributed, and which they consider to be binding and essential for survival. Thelen & Formanchuk (2022) stated ethical organizational culture plays a critical role in nurturing transparent communication and perceived relationship investment.

Organizational culture is related to a system of shared values and beliefs that subconsciously drive the choices and behaviors made by all members of that particular organization (Ortega-Parra & Sastre-Castillo, 2013). Leadership also style plays an important role in managing communication in an organization by taking culture into account as the influential factor. Communication skills, managerial communication skills, as well as corporate communication skills affect leadership communication which effectively supports internal corporate communication (Mulyana et al, 2019). Besides, socio-emotional skills owned by a leader have also played an important role to face stress and adapt to rapid changes (Mulyana et al, 2022).

To conclude, challenges in terms of cultural differences occur at the national culture level, hence affecting the ethical organizational culture which becomes the foundation of the member's relationship. From the above context, the role of a leader has crucial role in developing a communication culture in an organization.

Virtual Communication and the Challenges

Modern business is facing challenges that require a quick response, hence new communication and information technologies have enabled the organizational structure to be more efficient and flexible in conducting their business (Baltezarevic et al, 2015). Popescu, F., & Warmenhoven, R. (2019) highlighted the intercultural academic experiences in providing students with a preview of the real world in a globally interconnected workplace. This activity allows individuals to experience the possible challenges of collaborating cross-culturally, and virtually, to enable them to collaborate across cultural and national borders through virtual means. This experience is also valid in the context of business and organization.

Technological adoption, including unanticipated service interruptions and new skills for organizing meetings (Deakin and Wakefield, 2015; Seitz, 2016). DeFilippis et al (2022) have argued that there are changes faced by organizations and workers who are struggling to adapt and perform in the face of a global pandemic. Along the adaptation process to the pandemic situation, the results furthermore show that employees significantly changed their communication behavior in response to the pandemic. Digital communication for meetings and email activity are two types of ways to undergo the business and professional process under the circumstances.

In the context of this study, adoption and quick response during virtual meetings and interactions are highlighted to seek how the communication occurred. Medium of communication is also identified to understand the professional communication process in the organization.

Cultural Dimensions: Uncertainty Avoidance and Individualism/Collectivism

This study is basically conducted with the six foundations of cultural dimensions initiated by Hofstede namely power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term vs. short-term orientation, and lastly indulgence vs. restraint. However, this article will only be focused on uncertainty avoidance and individualism vs. collectivism. Uncertainty avoidance is related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future, whilst Individualism vs. collectivism is related to the integration of individuals into primary groups (Hofstede, 2001). With regards to the narrow understanding of communication through virtual meetings in an organization, and the consideration of informants' cultural backgrounds, this paper seeks communication and challenges by focusing on two cultural dimensions; uncertainty avoidance and individualism vs. collectivism.

Methodology

This study is qualitative research with a single case study on Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd. with regards to communication activities during the pandemic strikes. The constructivist paradigm accommodates the research to understand how communication occurs along the way and what are the challenges behind it. The qualitative approach enables this study to explore and elaborate on the communication experiences of each of the informants affected at the managerial level through in-depth interviews. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select seven (7) informants involved in this study with the details as follows:

Tabel 1. Informants

Initial	M/F	Country of origin	Position
BA	F	Singapore	Director
CL	M	Philippines	Manager
MS	M	Indonesia	Supervisor
YM	F	Thailand	Supervisor
MD	F	Philippines	Supervisor
MV	M	Brazil	Supervisor
SJ	M	Myanmar	Supervisor

The informants of this study are holding director, manager, and supervisor positions whereby the positions require them to communicate with each other for coordination. The characteristics are selected based on the position and consideration of the cultural backgrounds of each individual. Due to restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic, the fieldwork was conducted virtually through the Google Meet application with prior appointment and consent from each of the informants listed above. Interviews were conducted between 15th – 20th March 2021 with a duration between 54 minutes to one hour. Details of the data gathering schedule and its duration are presented in the following timetable:

Tabel 2. Virtual interviews schedule

Initial	Date	Duration
BA	15 th March 2021	54:05
CL	16 th March 2021	1:12:07
MS	16 th March 2021	58:56
YM	17 th March 2021	1:12:27
MD	18 th March 2021	1:40:48
MV	19 th March 2021	1:35:28
SJ	20 th March 2021	53:11

In-depth interviews were conducted to gather primary data for this study. However, for further understanding of the organizational culture in the company, non-participatory observation was conducted in order to identify the communication pattern among the organization member, especially among the managerial levels and staff. Participatory observations were conducted during the meeting or group discussion process. Secondary data were also gathered from literature and related sites that support the analysis. Data gathered was analyzed using three stages of analysis based on Miles and Huberman (as cited in Sugiyono, 2013). The process of data analysis includes data reduction, data presentation, and verification. However, the varied background of the informants enables the study by triangulating each of the data gathered to ensure its validity.

Results and Discussion

The result and discussion of this section will be divided into several parts (i) cultural background and organization communication milieu, (ii) communication challenges during the implementation of virtual communication, and (iii) communication occurred: an intercultural perspective.

(i) Cultural Background and Organizational Communication Milieu

This organization is providing digital content for various companies in more than 30 countries since its establishment in 2011. With 200 employees, this company is expanding its networking from its headquarters in Singapore to several cities such as Jakarta, Bangkok, Buenos Aires, Dubai, Hangzhou, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Kuala Lumpur, Los Angeles, Manila, Moscow, Mumbai, Phnom Penh, Sao Paulo, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Taipei, Vientiane, and Yangon. Based on the expansion, results in multicultural company background.

Based on observation conducted, it is identified that the communication pattern that occurred in the organization is employing the star-communication pattern whereby egalitarian culture lay in the communication activities among the members despite their status; director, supervisor, or leader. Staff is also not bound by a boss-staff hierarchical structure that restricts their interaction and communication. It is known that staff can directly communicate with the higher level of the managerial level if necessary. The communication pattern applied in Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd. is an open communication pattern. With the various cultural background among the organization members, including the fact that this organization operated in several cities in different countries, the open communication pattern could accommodate the possible uncertainty among the members in order to achieve company goals.

In order to discuss further pertaining the challenges and virtual communication at Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd, the following are the data on uncertainty avoidance and individualism index of informants' country of origin to give a context of analysis:

Tabel 3. Informants uncertainty avoidance and individualism Index
Source: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/>
(retrieved 10 September 2022) and Rarick et al (2006)

Initial	Country of origin	Uncertainty Avoidance	Individualism
BA	Singapore	8	20
CL	Philippines	44	32
MS	Indonesia	48	14
YM	Thailand	64	20
MD	Philippines	44	32
MV	Brazil	76	38
SJ	Myanmar		51

From the above data, this study could withdraw the bigger picture that Myanmar is the most individualistic country, whilst Indonesia is the least one. Individualism is the degree of interdependence an individual maintains among its members. However, the society with the highest uncertainty avoidance score is Myanmar, whilst Singapore is the least. Uncertainty avoidance is basically the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations, and have created beliefs and institutions that try to avoid these. The cultural dimensions addressed in this paper will further be used in the discussion. Before that, we will explore the communication challenges found among individuals based on observation and interview data.

(ii) Communication Challenges During the Implementation of Virtual Communication

The employees at the customer service department at Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd originated from eleven (11) different countries, whereby English is not the mother tongue in their place of origin. The company uses one single language of instruction, namely, English, in communicating with each other in a professional manner. Besides, the various cultural backgrounds among employees

Based on the data gathered, there are challenges that occur in carrying out communication in the Customer Service at Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd department including:

1. Language barrier – There is a gap in using the language of instruction. In some countries, English is used as the main or at least second language and individuals are familiar with English communication as instruction. Due to differences in cultural background, hence language becomes one of the crucial barriers for not every individual in the company are master of English. Therefore, some employees need more time to deliver the right information as intended.
2. Cultural background difference – There are differences in cultural backgrounds among individuals that make each employee have different values and ways to act. Employees who live in the eastern countries are more relaxed and do not express their opinions too actively, in contrast to employees who are likely in western countries to be more open and active in conveying their opinions.
3. Time difference – There is a time difference that occurs between employees who work, considering the location of each employee who works separately in various countries and with different time zone, therefore, individuals face difficulties in simultaneous communication with the rest through an online application.

There are many challenges in the work the data shows, starting from the challenges that come from the outside of the company and from the inside. However, the findings show that the company has taken these challenges into account and that they provide facilities for personal growth for every employee who wants to excel and improve their personal abilities, the company has provided the opportunity for it. The employee has the opportunity to take training to improve their skills.

"So, the company actually provides a numerous budget where people can go and get training and whatever they want. So, we do have people who go and use this budget. To go and learn English or we have a number of people who want to use this budget to know how to manage customers. We also have people who want to go and learn how to do good and proper communication." BA

Meanwhile, other informants think that the provision of training benefits can make it easier for employees to find the desired training in accordance with the skills they want and need to improve their performance:

"I think the most important thing is that there are benefits that the company provides to every employee who wants to improve their abilities so that employees can get the training they want to increase their skills. and it will ultimately improve the quality of themselves and the performance of their work" CL

Above all the challenges found in this study, the biggest challenge faced by the employees is actually the language used in the company, i.e., English.

"For now, my biggest challenge is only in terms of language, because I am not fluent in English or other foreign languages, so I am currently only dealing with local consumers." SJ

One of the communication functions is socialization. Socialization becomes the provision of sources of knowledge that allow people to behave and act as effective members of society and make them aware of their social functions so that they can be active in a group. The company's support in providing English language training shows good collectivism in supporting its group members to be proficient in English so that even though employees are made up of various cultural backgrounds and languages, they can unite their understanding in communicating using one language of instruction, namely, English.

This study sees that this company provides incentives in the form of benefits that can be given to every employee to get the training they need to support their work so that the training obtained can really be applied to their work. In addition to the training that is urgently needed by each employee, the environmental conditions in which employees work greatly affect the performance of employees so that it will eventually affect the communication that will be carried out.

Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd also guarantees that each of its employees provides the skills they have gained to be used in their work and can provide the expected results. The leaders have managed to have a system that can control the volume of the workload of individuals, thus, they could decide whether or not they need additional manpower. As well as have visuals of the individual's workload to ensure they are not overburdened. All these challenges, obstacles, or problems faced by the department are well communicated between superiors and their subordinates. This way of communication can ensure the leaders towards the work-life balance of every individual in the department.

On the other hand, the subordinates ensure their productivity is high, as the consequences of good leadership are portrayed by their immediate supervisor. Due to that, each individual will try not to burden one another in tackling the assignments they have. It is concluded that incomprehension in the language of instruction does not occur.

The company also supports the self-growth of its employees. It is evident from the financing of skill courses, one of which is English language skills for their employees. Both those held within the company itself and also third parties. In addition, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the company decided that all employees could work from their respective homes so as to avoid extreme risks. And it doesn't stop there, the company also ensures that employees can work as comfortably in the office by financing office equipment for their homes. Starting from furniture to internet services, considering that one hundred percent of the work is done online.

The above identifications are reflected in how the leadership at Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd would accommodate the needs of communication flow in the company. The next sub-topic will cover the discussion regarding virtual communication occurring from the perspective of intercultural communication.

(iii) Virtual Communication Occurred: An Intercultural Perspective

The explanation of the data and discussion in this sub-section is put in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic whereby working from home is the mode applied. Interaction and communication are conducted virtually through a meeting application. As stated by Deakin and Wakefield (2015) and (Seitz, 2016), technological adoption, including unanticipated service interruptions and new skills for organizing meetings, and is the one that has been adopted by Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd.

In general, Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd has a culture in which employees, both superiors and subordinates, support each other to ensure the working system can run as expected. The flexible-egalitarian communication pattern as organizational culture is shown in the interview quotation below:

“Ideally employees should not be afraid of their leader. We are no longer in school. We are in a corporate environment where most people have to work together, one can provide convenience and everyone should work at the same level. So, in my case, I don't want any of my employees to feel afraid to come and tell me something negative or anything wrong because I still want that feedback so we can improve the process of its performance. From the feedback, I think the team is very confident to give feedback, even if it is negative, and not afraid... Fortunately Coda, we don't work in autocratic leadership or the autocratic way of working feedback is appreciated

from every little person to every big person and recognition is given to everyone who works.” – BA

Each of the employees has gained enough time to do things other than what they do besides work. Then it is important for an employee to have freedom in using his own approach in doing his job. In carrying out communication, there are individuals who are more concerned with themselves or family only, or there is the one who joins into a social environment and forms a collectivity relationship with each other.

"It's enough for the present moment. Previously we faced problems in figuring out the performance of each employee, especially in CS because we did not have a system for it. Now that we have a system for it, we have understood what kind of volume of work each person does and as such, we have hired more people and we have seen an improvement in the work-life balance of people... A few months ago, we introduced a system where each agent can show how much work he or she is doing and it depends on that we decide wherever the agent works more than what is required. You don't have to work more than 8 to 9 hours or more of your shift. We also went ahead and looked at the OT, the others, and anywhere else was done because of the backlog, then looked back at it and then hired more people." BA

Whereas the informant is further of the view that the work must have a predetermined time or limit:

"I think I got enough time for it; I work like infinity. But I know when to stop. Because I also have to do other things. I think the work should have its own limits and time so that when we have to work, we just do our job and after that, we can use our time according to our wishes." MS

From the data above, it is concluded that each of the employees has gained enough time to do things other than what they do besides work. Then it is important for an employee to have freedom in using his own approach in doing his job:

"I think in some ways, yes, but in some ways, it's not. The reason for this is because in the end we still need to live with what is and has been determined by the company. For instance, I want to communicate with someone about something, but there are rules that the company imposes in carrying out these communications so that as an employee cannot directly communicate, they must pass the regulations set by the company..." BA

DeFilippis et al (2022) have argued that there are changes faced by organizations and workers who are struggling to adapt and perform in the face of a global pandemic, thus as a result of the adaptation process, it is shown that employees significantly changed their communication behavior in response to the pandemic. MS gives his views on this matter:

"I wouldn't say it's some kind of freedom. Because there are still rules that we have to follow, we can't just do that, because there are rules that bind every employee in doing the work that has been given to them." MS

The data shows there is freedom in doing their work as long as it is still within the boundaries of the rules that have been imposed by the company. Whether or not the employees who work at Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd have any challenges in doing the work done, the following are the arguments:

"Of course, they do that, and especially in a service industry that puts customer service first, it's very challenging. You know, sometimes that customers are wrong, but you have to continue to provide

services to those customers because it is to maintain the image of the company and to complete the services that have been provided, so it is a challenge in itself when working here" BA

The dimension of individualism-collectivism, at the customer service department of Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd, in particular, shows a culture of collectivism rather than individualism, which describes a strong social framework in which companies and employees support and protect each other. People born from this kind of culture continue to be strongly integrated, United in groups. As Hofstede states that the image of a person in a group within this dimension of collectivism is reflected in the word "we" in communication. intercultural contact among groups does not automatically breed mutual understanding, since it usually confirms each group in its own identity. Even though the sense of being individualistic seems visible, the collectivist culture lies in how the managerial levels put concern on the rest of the employees.

BA as the director has low uncertainty avoidance points, whereby the numbers are reflected in how she manages to overview the workload of individuals under her supervision. In avoiding uncertainty, employees in the customer service department are of the view that communication between fellow employees and existing superiors will make it easier if there is uncertainty in carrying out a job. With this uncertainty, employees will feel motivated to make changes or innovate for an existing work process. Uncertainty happens in any circumstances:

"I think operations are driven by existing departments and therefore regular feedback is always expected especially given to the employee in terms of what his status is, where he fails, where he needs to argue, and that is very important in managing the uncertainty that occurs in his work. "

BA

MD gave his remarks regarding uncertainty in the workplace, as follows:

"In my opinion, there are many factors that affect uncertainty in doing a job, ranging from external such as weather, traffic, internet connectivity, equipment needed, to internal factors such as body health and knowledge of the work itself, so if we can find the problems that occur whether they are internal or external so that we can find solutions. "MD

To conclude, uncertainty can come from within (internal) such as sick employees and employee knowledge or ability in response to an ambiguous job, and also the uncertainty that come from the outside (external) such as weather, traffic, and so forth. The factors that influence the uncertainty in doing work can change factors that come external such as weather, traffic, and so on, as well as factors that come internal, including the health of the employee himself and the employee's knowledge of how to respond to uncertainty in his job. Intercultural communication skills can contribute to the success of negotiations and avoid unintended cultural conflicts (Hofstede et al, 2010). These skills were clearly seen in how the individuals in this study responded to the question given and explained the organizational situation.

Messages exchanged among individuals in an organization played a significant role in in forming the team's communication substance, which in turn influenced the communication climate and execution (Skudlarek et al, 2020). Information is exchanged in the context of messages exchanged in Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd and one of them is information, namely the collection, storage, processing, dissemination of news, data, images, facts, and messages, opinions, and comments that have an influence on the environment, as well as making appropriate decisions. In this case, employees in the customer service department perceive uncertainty in intercultural communication, where when a group discusses a project that is carried out using English, of course, there are uncertainties such as business jargon used in the language that is not understood or work orders that they do not understand, employees consider it an incomplete information challenge and must be solved. And this is what motivates them also in learning while working in this multinational company.

That way it can be concluded that employees feel motivated in responding to uncertainty in communication and then trying to solve the uncertainty and turn it into a new innovation in work. Like what is meant by the dimension of uncertainty avoidance that reveals the extent to which a person feels uncomfortable with uncertainty. Where a person who comes from a culture with low uncertainty avoidance tends to be more tolerant and likes innovations and ideas and is interested in something different, such as the language or culture of a different country. Meanwhile, a person who comes from a culture with a high uncertainty avoidance tends not to like something different or ambiguous. They are more tolerant of familiar risks.

Conclusion

The findings of this study show that communication challenges were identified due to the different a) cultural background, i.e country of origin, b) proficiency in English, and 3) time difference. However, virtual communication occurred in the context of intercultural is well organized due to several factors, i.e (1) employees have an adequate intercultural communication understanding within a multinational organization context, (2) similar job orientation eases the organizational communication process, and (3) fluid communication has accommodated uncertainty that possibly arises. Data presented in this paper is part of research conducted using the six cultural dimensions of Hofstede, therefore the analysis and discussion are not comprehensively presented.

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank Coda Payments, Pte, Ltd. for granting us to conduct this study and publish the findings in an academic manner.

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