

**Culture and Team Leadership Communication Effectiveness:
A Cross-cultural Study from Japanese and German Leadership
Communication Literature**

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A dissertation (option A) submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of International Communication

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Declaration



Name of candidate: Sigit Kuncoro

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the Unitec degree of Master of International Communication.

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Abstract

This extended literature review investigates the relationship between culture and communication. It analyses the effect of culture on team leadership communication. Specifically, this project focuses on the discussion about Japanese and German team leaders' communication behaviours. The analysis is based on the literature in cross-cultural management, business, leadership, and intercultural communication. The collected data are analysed by cultural variability theories and the adapted model of communication roles of team leaders. This dissertation argues that communication is at the centre of team leaders' activity. Cultural values affect team leaders' communication behaviours. The findings suggest that the effective team leadership communication across cultures involves the combination communication styles of Japanese and German team leaders. For the implications of this study, a model for team leadership communication across cultures is developed.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

This project investigates the relationship between cultural differences and team leadership communication effectiveness of a team whose team members are culturally different. Specifically, it focuses on communication acts of team leaders from Japanese and German culture. People may identify cultural differences in terms of gender, generation, and class culture. In this project, however, cultural differences refer to national culture. As Hofstede (1984) agrees that four (later five) cultural dimensions are identified for national culture; the categorisation such as gender, generation, and class culture are only parts of integrated social system: national culture. Furthermore, he suggests that those categorisations should be studied in their own terms, based on specific studies of each culture.

A high level of communication effectiveness leads to a high degree of similarities of understandings between the sender and the receiver (Gudykunst, 2005). In this sense, the communication effectiveness of the team leaders correlates positively with maximising understanding or minimising misunderstanding of team members. The researcher is aware that team members also bring some impacts to team process. However, this project focuses on the team leaders' communication behaviours, because team leadership still plays a crucial role to the success of team.

This research utilises current literature to answer the research questions. Given the nature of the subject, the resources are largely from areas of leadership, business, cross-cultural management, and intercultural communication. The cross-cultural study

was chosen because this research compares communication behaviour of Japanese and German team leaders.

Aim of the Project

The purpose of this project is to explore and analyse the effects of cultural differences on leadership communication effectiveness in a team. It focuses on the analysis of communication behaviours, particularly of Japanese team leaders and German team leaders. These two cultures provide a sophisticated analytical discussion, because they both are significantly different culturally. According to Hall's (1976) study, Japanese is a High-context culture, while German is on the other side of the continuum, a Low-context culture. This bi-polar categorisation may explain their contradictive communication behaviours. This extended literature review also provides the foundation for a further empirical study of this area.

The research result will contribute to the comprehension of culture by those who are interested in the field of cross-cultural communication, particularly the relationship between culture and leadership communication effectiveness. Furthermore, the conclusions of this study could be the basis of recommendations to organisational leaders of teams.

Rationale

As is explained in the literature background section, the use of teams in organisations has increased significantly in response to global competitive environment. Team has become an integral part of the majority of today's businesses, because of its characteristics. Although team performance is also determined by team process, the evidence often show that the roles of team leaders still contribute

significantly to the whole performance of the team. Cultural diversity adds the challenges to team leaders' role. Communication is the core of leadership activities. "Leadership communication is a much bigger affair than simply delivering information or making effective presentations" (Mai & Akerson, 2003, p. 14). It is a new challenge for team leaders to communicate effectively with team members which are culturally different.

Based on that view, this research investigates the effects of culture on leadership communication; particularly it focuses on the discussion of the impacts of culture on leadership communication of Japanese and German team leaders. The research questions are answered by analysing both theories from literature and findings from current studies about team leadership communication, particularly the data from Japanese and German culture.

Research Questions

In order to achieve this objective, this research addresses the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between culture and team leadership communication as identified by current literature?
2. To what extent do cultural factors affect specific leadership communication acts in a team that has
 - a. a Japanese team leader?
 - b. a German team leader?

Assumptions

1. In communicating vision and strategy, Japanese team leaders are less concerned with ambiguity; German team leaders are more concerned with ambiguity.
2. In communication interaction, Japanese team leaders tend to use indirect forms of verbal communication; German team leaders tend to use direct forms of verbal communication.
3. In communication interaction, Japanese team leaders tend to use a monologue mode of communication; German team leaders tend to use a dialogue mode of communication.
4. In communication interaction, Japanese team leaders tend to use the understated style of verbal communication; German team leaders tend to use the elaborated style of verbal communication.
5. In communication interaction, Japanese team leaders prefer face-to-face communication; German team leaders prefer multiple communication channels.
6. In communication interaction, Japanese team leaders count on non-verbal communication more; German team leaders count on non-verbal communication less.
7. In communication interaction, Japanese team leaders spend more time listening to the members; German team leaders spend less time listening to the members.
8. In communication interaction, Japanese team leaders tend to be people-oriented leaders (develop relationship and trust); German team leaders tend to be task-oriented leaders.

9. In giving feedback, Japanese team leaders tend to give implicit feedback; German team leaders tend to give explicit feedback.

Methodology

In order to answer the research questions, this dissertation reviews and analyses the literature in the related subject. It mainly focuses on reviewing the literature and studies about Japanese and German culture, particularly in the area of team leadership, business, cross-cultural management, and intercultural communication, which will provide the answer for this research's questions.

This approach is appropriate for this topic for several reasons: (a) the subject involves hypothetical, representative team leaders from two different cultures, Japanese and German cultures; (b) a wide variety of studies about Japanese and German cultures are available from highly qualified scholars, which makes possible to conduct this research utilising those secondary data; and (c) with consideration of time and budget, the researcher believes that this approach is the most appropriate for this project.

Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection

In order to answer the research questions, this project collects, synthesises, and analyses data, particularly on the subjects of culture and team leadership communication, including:

1. Survey of literature in the area of leadership
2. Survey of literature in cross-cultural management
3. Survey of literature in national culture, and

4. Survey of literature in intercultural communication.

In order to increase the validity and reliability of the findings, this project mainly consults 60 different resources such as from the internet, online database, books, and academic journals. Some academic journals include *MIT Sloan Management Review*, *Journal of World Business*, *Journal of Business Communication*, *The Leadership Quarterly*, *Cross-cultural Management: An International Journal*, *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, with some of the key authors including William B. Gudykunst, Edward T. Hall, Geert Hofstede, Stella Ting-Toomey, Takeo Doi, H.C. Triandis, J. P. Kotter, Stephen J. Zaccaro, Robert House, and Mansour Javidan, to name a few.

Data Analysis

For the purpose of this research, the research questions are answered by relevant key concepts and findings from current research, including the studies about leadership, intercultural communication, business, cross-cultural management, teamwork, and managerial activities in organisational context. The data were cross-analysed by using cultural variability theories and the integrated model of team leader communication roles from several scholars. Specifically, the cultural variability constructs related to this project include those from Hall (1976), Hofstede (1984), Trompenaars (1993), and the GLOBE study (2004). This extended literature review will provide an excellent foundation for further empirical study on the same area.

Outline of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 introduces the background of this dissertation. It also presents the aim of this extended literature review, including the research questions. The methodology of this project is given.

Chapter 2 discusses the definition of team, and the increased use of teams in contemporary organisations, because of the competitive markets. It includes the discussion of the impacts of cultural diversity of team members on team outcomes. Team leadership plays a key role in team performance, even in self-managed teams. Accordingly, the discussion leads to the importance of team leadership communication with an integrated model of two key communication roles as the basis of the analysis in chapter 5.

Chapter 3 presents the cultural variability constructs; the categorisations of culture into several dimensions as developed by scholars, including Hall (1976), Hofstede (1984), Trompenaars (1993), and the GLOBE study (2004). This chapter describes the impacts of cultural values on the behaviour of the society. The cultural dimensions related to this topic include Individualism-Collectivism, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Achievement-Ascription, Assertiveness, Future Orientation, Performance Orientation, and High- and Low-context communication.

Chapter 4 presents the cultural values of Japanese and German as found in the literature. Accordingly, this discussion leads to the analysis of the impacts of culture on Japanese and German communication behaviours.

Chapter 5 analyses the impacts of culture on Japanese and German team leader communication behaviours based on the discussions in the previous chapters. It aims to investigate the characteristics of effective team leadership communication across cultures with the data from Japanese and German culture. This chapter concludes with a conceptual model for team leadership communication across cultures for the implication of team leadership in a multicultural setting.

As a conclusion, Chapter 6 reviews the main points from the previous chapters with suggestions for a further empirical research.

Chapter 2

Team Leadership

Team

The concept of teamwork is not a new idea; however it is increasingly common as the way of organising works in contemporary organisations due to a more complex, challenging, and competitive environment. This is particularly obvious in multinational corporations (Barlett & Ghoshal, 1998). “Over the last 15 years, many companies have adopted some form of work teams and have ‘exported’ this organizational structure to their global affiliates” (Kirkman, Gibson, & Shapiro, 2001, p. 15). Teams have become an integral part of the majority of today’s organisations, which are characterised by the flattening of traditional and hierarchical structures (Salas, Stagl, & Burke, 2004). It is common that organisations across industries rely increasingly on project teams or product development teams to compete in their respective markets (Brennan & Braswell, 2005). A study shows that approximately 80 percent of Fortune 500 companies assign half of their employees on teams (Robbins, 2005).

Evidence suggests that having teamwork benefits the organisational life. The advantages of teamwork include increased productivity and effective decision making (Limon & France, 2005), quality improvement, greater innovation, and higher employee satisfaction (Daft & Lane, 2005). Teams are likely to be more flexible and responsive to new challenges of today organisation than are traditional forms of group work, because of their characteristics, such as quick assembling, easy deployment, and disassembling. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) agree that teams have the ability in

responding to the challenges, because of integrated complementary skills and experiences they have. A study done by the Center for Creative Leadership also indicates that in the future, organisations are expected to focus more on the areas such as teamwork, long-term objectives, and innovation (Martin, 2005). However, teams are not always the solution to every organisational situation. The need for teamwork varies depending on the complexity, the nature of task, and the need for different perspectives (Robbins, 2005).

A wide variety of definitions have attempted to describe what constitutes a team. In order to give a clear description, a number of authors distinguished between a team and a group (as shown in Table 1). “Not all groups are teams..., but all teams meet the qualification of being a group” (Dainton & Zelle, 2005, p. 153). Huszczo (2004) considers a team as a group of individuals who work interdependently to reach a common goal. Other scholars have considered some other characteristics of a team, for example short term membership and team members’ specific roles or functions to perform (Salas, Dickinson, Converse, & Tannenbaum, 1992). A group is considered as a team when the level of dependency and the degree of commonality among the members are high (Williams, 1996). Teams are typically self-directed and self-regulating, therefore they are empowered to complete a project from start to finish (Dainton & Zelle, 2005). Katzenbach and Smith (2005) agree that the members of a team have complementary skills, so they can work in a mutual relationship. Daft and Lane (2005) provide a clearer definition that a team is comprised of two or more people who interact and coordinate their work to achieve a shared goal. Moreover, they highlight three key elements of their notion: (a) teams mostly have fewer than 15 people, (b) they work together regularly, and (c) they share a goal/purpose.

Table 1

The differences between a team and a group

	TEAM	GROUP
Size	Limited	Medium/large
Selection	Crucial	Immaterial
Leadership	Shared/rotating	Clearly focused leader
Performance	Individual & collective	Individual
Member	Common goals & commitment	Common goals
Spirit	Dynamic interaction	Togetherness, no opponents
Work products	Collective	Individual

Note. The data are adapted from “Beyond the team,” by R. M. Belbin, 2000, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann; and “The wisdom of teams: Creating the high-performance organisation,” by J. R. Katzenbach, & D. K. Smith, 1993, New York: McGraw-Hill.

In order to understand teams, Daft and Lane (2005) distinguish three fundamental types of teams according to the need of leadership: (a) functional team, (b) cross-functional team (project team), and (c) self-directed team (as shown in Figure 1). Besides, they recognise a new challenge for today’s organisations when the members are dispersed in different geographical settings, and separated by language and cultural diversity. With the use of technological communication as the main tool for connecting teams, virtual and global teams are increasingly the common practices in contemporary organisations (Daft & Lane, 2005).

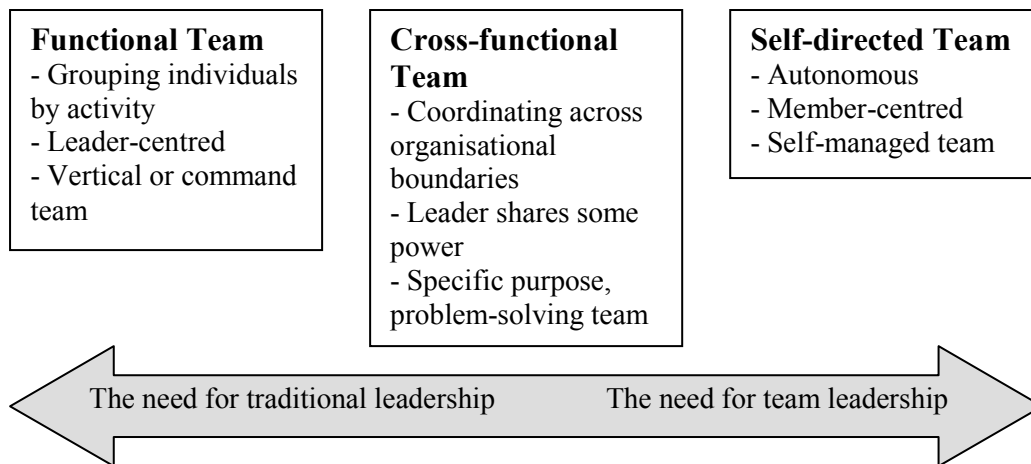


Figure 1. The Evolution of Teams

Note. The data are adapted from “The leadership experience,” by R. L. Daft, & P. G. Lane, 2005, Mason, Ohio: Thomson/South-Western.

In this project, the working definition of a team is “a group of individuals who have complementary skills and commitment, and work interdependently for a certain period of time to achieve a common goal.” In this sense, the size and the membership period of a team are often limited, because the individuals may be brought from different departments in organisation into a team for a specific purpose. As a consequence, this type of teams requires a different type of leadership because of the nature of work they do (as shown in Figure 1).

A recent study of 70 global business teams done by Govindarajan and Gupta (2001) concluded that only 18 percent of teams considered their performance “highly successful” and the remaining 82 percent fell short of their intended goals. Fully one-third of the teams rated their performance as largely unsuccessful. This research shows that working in teams still presents some challenges to individuals as well as organisations. The efforts have become challenging when the global and multicultural context occur in this collaboration.

The Impact of Cultural Diversity in Teams

Organisations have gradually shifted their ways of organising work towards work teams. The use of multinational or multicultural teams has increased dramatically (Adler, 2002). Basically, multicultural teams can be located in a country or can be dispersed across many different countries (Kirkman & Shapiro, 2005). Earley and Gardner (2005) differentiate multicultural teams from multinational teams clearly by conceptualising multicultural teams as teams whose members are culturally diverse but nationally homogeneous for example a cross-functional team consists of members with variety of demographic variables associated with subcultures (age, race, ethnicity, to name a few). Multinational teams have been described as teams whose members originate from two or more different national, and hence, cultural backgrounds. Moreover, Earley and Gardner (2005) suggest that successful multinational teams have an integrated and synergistic culture, referred to by them as a hybrid culture.

Multicultural members may bring different perspectives and ideas into teams. Similarly, teams may benefit from their members, who are functionally diverse. Because of the different perspectives of team members, cultural diversity results in more creative and higher quality of decisions (Elron, 1997). The study done by Kirkman and Shapiro (2005) concluded that cultural diversity has significantly increased cooperation and productivity of teams. Moreover, they argue that cultural value diversity is a strong predictor of multicultural team performance. On the other hand, a study done by Lovelace, Shapiro, and Weingart (2001) found that cross-functional teams often fail to achieve their goals in generating new products, because of the tendency of the members to have different views of skills. Multicultural teams rather than homogeneous teams are more likely to result in ineffectiveness of team

processes. Compared to homogeneous teams, the cultural diversity of the members brings different background and perspectives that make conflicts and misunderstandings are likely to occur (Campion, Medsker, & Higgs, 1993). As van Vianen and De Dreu (2001) argue, individuals are more attracted to others who are closer to their characteristics rather than to the others who are very different to them. The diversity leads to a less team cohesion. Cohesion is considered as a contributing factor to team outcome (Higgs, Plewnia, & Ploch, 2005). Thus, less team cohesion is likely to result in less team performance. “Heterogeneity provides an opportunity for learning, but high heterogeneity in itself does not guarantee strong team performance” (DeSanctis & Jiang, 2005, p. 118). Therefore, cultural diversity within teams can be seen as a “double-edged sword,” because it can be the advantages as well as the disadvantages of the teams (Gibson & Zellmer-Bruhn, 2001). From reviewing the literature, Salas et al. (2004) summarised that multicultural teams often produce several negative outputs, including process loss, lower level of cohesion, trust issues, and an increased use of inappropriate stereotypes to assign attributions. In addition, the three top challenges of leading global teams include (a) cultivating trust among members, (b) overcoming communication barriers, and (c) aligning goals of individual team members (Govindarajan & Gupta, 2001). This evidence highlights the importance of having competent team leaders who are capable to deal with those challenges.

Leadership

Western Leadership Theories

Leadership is frequently defined as the ability to influence a group to achieve shared goals (Robbins, 2005). A more recent notion has been offered by the GLOBE

study which considers leadership as “the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members” (House & Javidan, 2004, p. 15). This concept highlights the roles that leadership holds in generating the effectiveness and the success of business organisations. To date, there is a wide variety of notions about leadership, because the “conceptions of ideal leadership change from one time and culture to another” (Chemers, 1997, p. 21). However, some scholars have attempted to investigate the ideal leadership that might be applied across cultures for example the GLOBE study. The discussion about this study will be presented later in the following chapter. Some theories have emerged to describe leadership. The three most often cited leadership theories in Western leadership literature are (a) the trait theory, (b) the behavioural theory, and (c) the contingency and situational theory.

Early studies in leadership have largely focused on the characteristics and innate attributes of the leaders. This is known as a trait theory of leadership. This theory believes that effective leaders possess certain qualities or personal characteristics, such as physical appearance, intelligence and ability, personality, and social background (Daft & Lane, 2005). The “Great Man Theory” implies that great leaders are born to have some special traits or characteristics naturally that make them to rise to positions regardless of other contextual factors. Leaders are “born, not made” (Kayworth & Leidner, 2001). Stated differently, this theory identifies the leaders’ traits that distinguish leaders from non-leaders. Robbins (2005) uses the term charismatic leadership to emphasise that leaders are likely to have unique personality characteristics. However, the trait theory has failed to take into account the behaviour of leaders, and the other factors which may determine the success (Rost, 1991). Research often found a weak correlation between personal traits and leader success.

Stated differently, leaders can be learned, can be made, not born. Specifically, the motivation of one to keep learning is likely to be the way of producing leadership. As Cohen (2000) has given an example, although Bill Gates did not graduate from college, “he was working on computer systems and had started a successful computer business when he was in high school. He never stopped learning and getting experience” (p. 28).

A behavioural theory has emerged to uncover the critical behaviours that make a good leader. It focuses on determining leadership behaviour or style, in opposition to innate characteristics for success. For example Blake and McCauley's Leadership Grid model in 1991 (formerly known as a Managerial Grid) described major leadership styles based on measuring both the emphasis on people and the emphasis on production (Daft & Lane, 2005). The Vertical Dyad Linkage Model discusses the importance of the relationship developed by a leader with each member of the group. According to this model, there are four stages of development of individualised leadership theory (as shown in Figure 2): (a) Vertical Dyad Linkage: leaders' behaviours and traits have different impacts across subordinates, forming in-groups and out-groups; (b) Leader-Member Exchange (LMX): leadership is personalised for each member; (c) Partnership building: leaders can create a positive exchange with every subordinate; and (d) Systems and networks: relationship can be created in all directions across level and boundaries to build networks that enhance performance (Daft & Lane, 2005). In relation to the effectiveness of certain behaviours, the literature on leader behaviour still has the same issue that was discussed within trait approach. Several scholars hold a belief that certain leadership behaviours determine a good leader. For example Cohen (2000) developed the combat model of leadership that consists of eight “universal” laws of leadership. However, in his later book about

10 essential principles for leading a company to victory, Cohen (2004) put a note in the foreword that “sensitivity to environmental factors and a willingness to change strategy, but not objectives, are an integral part of the process” (p. vii). Furthermore, in a recent research, the GLOBE (2004) study found the concept of an ideal leadership that might be accepted and effective “universally” across cultures, but the conclusion is still derived from the analysis of each individual culture. This evidence indicates that leadership is likely to be contingent and situational.

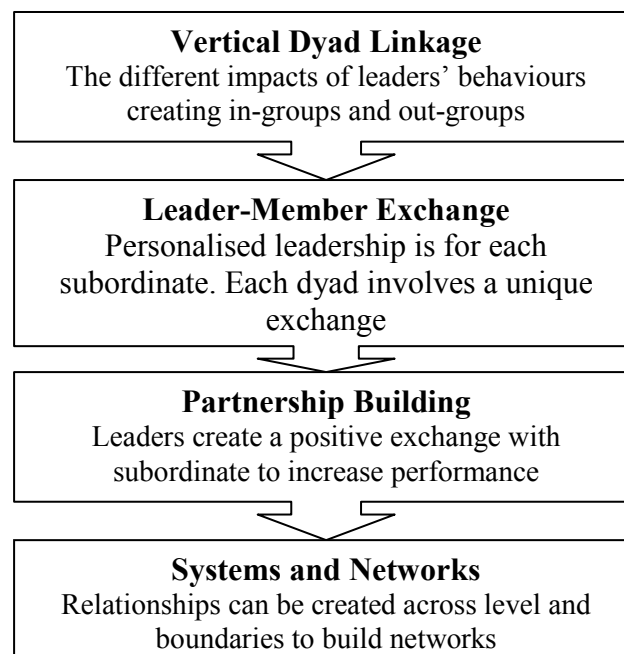


Figure 2. Stages of Development of Individualised Leadership

Note. The data are adapted from “The leadership experience,” by R. L. Daft, & P. G. Lane, 2005, Mason, Ohio: Thomson/South-Western.

The contingency and situational theories of leadership reflect a belief that effective leadership depends on several factors, such as leaders' variables and situational variables (Kayworth & Leidner, 2001). “Effective leadership is that which best meets the needs of a group at a particular point in time” (Barker, Wahlers, & Watson, 2001, p. 145). Moreover, the most important contingencies to leadership are

followers (their needs, maturity, and cohesiveness) and situation (task, structure system, and environment). As an example, Fiedler's contingency model distinguishes two types of leadership: (a) a task leader who focuses on accomplishing organisational goals that associated with productivity, and (b) a relationship leader who focuses on positive relationships between all members; this style is associated with satisfaction, emphasising maintaining group harmony (Dainton & Zelle, 2005). This model has three variables, referred to as situational control: (a) leader-member relations, (b) task structure, and (c) position power (Patton & Downs, 2003). In addition, it is recommended that there are at least three determining factors to effective leadership in an organisation: (a) from the leader: styles, traits, behaviour, position; (b) from the followers: needs, maturity, training, cohesion; (c) from the situation: task, structure, systems, environment (Daft & Lane, 2005).

Non-Western Leadership Theory

Misumi's (1985) Performance-Maintenance (PM) theory of leadership distinguishes four types of leaders based on two basic dimensions of leadership: performance or maintenance. The Performance (P) dimension reflects two aspects: leader's behaviour directed toward achieving group goals and the pressures on subordinates to get the work done. The Maintenance (M) dimension implies the leader's focus of group stability and social processes. These dimensions are conceptually similar to the task-oriented and relationship-oriented dimensions previously introduced in Western theories of leadership. According to this theory, the four types of leaders are the leaders who: (a) high in both dimensions (PM), (b) low in both dimensions (pm), (c) high in P and low in M (Pm), and (d) low in P and high in M (pM).

The Performance and Maintenance dimensions are concerned with behaviours as expected by followers. Therefore, the behaviour of the leaders will differ depending on the context in which the behaviour occurs. In the Japanese context, Misumi's (1985) findings suggest that effective leaders must emphasise Performance (P) and Maintenance (M) elements together. It also can be predicted that leaders who concern with both Performance and Maintenance behaviours are effective in some Asian cultures, because the M behaviours gives followers the feeling that they are included as members of the leader's in-group and the P behaviours will result in high performance (Hui, 1990).

In sum, the trait theories were applicable in the early time, because there was less developed concept and less education program for leadership development at that time. The development of leadership study and educational programs over time supports the perspective that the leaders can be made. However, to some extent, the personal attributes of the leaders contribute to shaping their leadership skills, just like the talent that not all people have the same one. In contemporary business, leadership in organisations can be best explained by the contingency and situational theories. This concept of leadership may vary depending on several contexts: the leaders, the followers, and the situation. As one of contributing factors to leadership, the leaders' behaviours will differ depending on the leader's personal background such as culture, personality, age, and education to name a few.

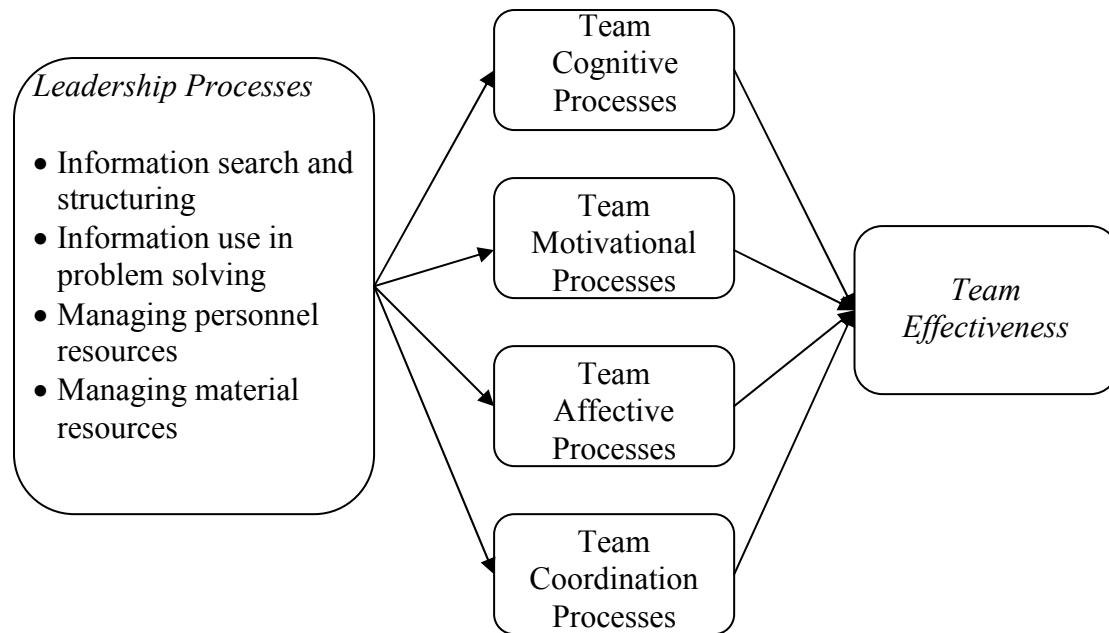
It is interesting to observe the finding from Misumi's (1985) work, which is conceptually similar to that of Fiedler's contingency model. One seems to be missing from Misumi's (1985) theory is the element of leader's power. Perhaps, the power is not considered as an important factor in Japanese culture considering that both the leaders and the members emphasise group harmony and relationship. As the

leadership also varies according to the situation, the next section presents a discussion about leadership in a team.

Team leadership

Most teams have certain individuals, often referred to as team leaders, who are responsible for the life of the whole team, including defining team goals, developing and structuring the team. Managers are the team leaders of their direct reports; however it is uncommon for a manager to have several teams to coordinate. Project leaders are often team leaders, because they are responsible for the completion of the project. In another case, a team member may fill the role of a team leader or the role of team leader may be rotated among team members (Rees, 2001). The focus of the literature in team leadership can be categorised into two major themes: teams with assigned leaders and teams with emergent leaders.

Firstly, team leadership can be viewed as an input to team processes and performance. Therefore, this functional leadership theory suggests that effective team leaders are those who do whatever it takes to solve the problems in a complex environment (Zaccaro, Rittman, & Marks, 2001). The success of the leader in defining direction and coordinating the team lead to team effectiveness. This traditional approach acknowledges the contribution of an individual leader on team processes and outcomes. Team leadership is "...perhaps the most critical factor in the success of organizational teams" (Zaccaro et al., 2001, p. 452). In addition, Zaccaro et al. (2001) argue that leadership affects team effectiveness through four sets of team processes: (a) cognitive, (b) motivational, (c) affective, and (d) coordinative (as shown in Figure 3).



*Figure 3. A Model of Leader Performance Functions
Contributing to Team Effectiveness*

Note. The figure is adapted from "Team leadership," by S. J. Zaccaro, A. L. Rittman, M. A. Marks, 2001, *The Leadership Quarterly*, 12, p. 458.

Their recent model using this approach suggests that leadership processes affect team performance; likewise team processes influence leadership effectiveness. In this sense, team leadership and team processes can affect one another and be affected by prior team performance. This is the "interface" notion of leadership and team processes, "the various ways that leadership and team processes become intertwined so as to influence collective performance" (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002, p. 6). The belief that interdependence exists between team leader and team members seems to be linked with the contingency and situational approaches of leadership study, which hold a belief that effective leadership depends on several factors, such as leaders' variables and situational variables. In general, Zaccaro et al. (2001) agree that effective team performance is determined by three factors: (a) successful integration

of individual/team member's roles, (b) the adaptation of team members on work coordination, and (c) team leadership.

Secondly, in another situation, where team members may not have clear and well-defined roles, each member has the opportunity to demonstrate his or her natural ability as a leader by engaging in leadership roles. In line with this concept, unlike in the past business environment, every team member may be assigned the position of leader by other team members in contemporary businesses (Natale, Sora, & Kavalipurapu, 2004). Emergent leadership theory has appeared to investigate the leaders from these teams which do not have prescribed roles. In other words, emergent leaders are not formally assigned from the top, but are perceived by the team as capable of running the leadership roles (Limon & France, 2005).

In spite of those contributing factors to team performance above, a team leader still holds a significant role for team success. This role even exists in self-managing teams, regardless of the dissimilarities from traditional teams. In their study, Cohen, Lei and Ledford (1997) have investigated the role of leaders in both self-managing teams and traditional work teams. The finding indicates that self-management leadership behaviours are perceived more in the self-managing than in the traditional teams. However, self-managing teams are not totally different from traditionally managed teams regarding the correlation between self-managing leadership and team outcomes. This, furthermore, suggests that the role of the leader (known as external team leader) is still crucial in self-managing teams (Cohen et al., 1997). Therefore, it is argued that effective leadership is the most critical factor to the success of organisational teams.

To summarise, team leadership is defined as “the role of the leader who is responsible for coordinating team process that affects team performance.” This role is

still crucial even in self-managing teams, where the leaders act more as a facilitator. As included in the discussion above, team leadership concepts can be categorised into two major themes: teams with assigned leaders and teams with emergent leaders. In line with this, a team member may fill the role of a team leader or the role of team leader may be rotated among team members. This significantly brings the issues of power and relationship among the other members.

Although the evidence frequently indicates that team leadership affects the success of team performance, interestingly, not many studies have been conducted to explore team leaders and their leadership of teams. Previous leadership studies were likely to focus on the leaders' influences on their subordinates, without considering how the leaders may generate team processes (Zaccaro et al., 2001). This issue becomes more complex considering that the features of traditional leadership theories cannot be generalised into the area of team leadership because teams have specific characteristics on their work process that differentiate them from the traditional work process of organisation. Thus, more research within this subject is needed.

The Role of Team Leaders

To date, the leadership literature has little agreement about the specific roles and responsibilities of a team leader as organisations must adapt the roles of the leaders to their team needs (Rees, 2001). A number of scholars believe that the team leaders should have significant roles for the teams. The majority of studies have identified two key roles of team leaders: (a) facilitating the team process (problem solving, coaching, and supporting team members); and (b) managing the team's external boundary (linking the team to other units and higher level employees, clarifying others' expectations of the team, sharing information, gathering

performance data, and securing key resources) (Kirkman & Rosen, 2000; Salas et al., 2004; Steckler & Fondas, 1995). In a similar vein, from a study of high-performing teams, Yeatts and Hyten (1998) have identified three major roles of the team leaders: (a) the facilitation of interpersonal processes, particularly the team's ability to reach decisions and solve problems; (b) the responsibility for the team logistics of the team meetings; and (c) the maintenance of open, positive communications, and good working relationships with the members and with those who are outside the team.

In addition, according to McCauley and Van Velsor (2004), leadership effectiveness is determined by three skills: (a) self-management capabilities, (b) social capabilities, and (c) work facilitation. Leadership communication is considered as crucial to enhancing social capabilities and work facilitation. Moreover, leader communication effectiveness involves a two-way process: (a) communicating information, thoughts, and ideas clearly; and (b) listening and understanding what others are saying, thinking, and feeling (McCauley & Van Velsor, 2004). "To be effective and efficacious, (leadership) capabilities need to be contextualized with each company's unique organizational cultures, histories, technologies, and socially complex interactions" (Hoppe, 2004, p.347).

The Role of Communication in Teams

In their framework on understanding the interrelationships between teamwork processes, Dickinson and McIntyre (1997) consider communication as the glue which binds together all of the other teamwork processes, including team orientation, team leadership, monitoring, feedback, back up and coordination. A research done by Kayworth & Leidner (2001) has investigated the relationship between leadership roles and leader effectiveness, and they concluded that while team leaders perform multiple

leadership roles simultaneously, and that the most effective leaders are those who act as mentor, importantly, effective leaders communicate intensively and provide role clarity to their members (Kayworth & Leidner, 2001). In another case, Webber (2002) agrees that successful teams are ones engaging in effective team processes such as communication. It is the vital task of team leaders to promote and maintain all communication in team process. In a study of multinational teams, Joshi and Lazarova (2005) have listed communication as one of the three most important leader competencies identified by 89 team members and 50 team leaders from the software development division of a Fortune 500 computer hardware and software company. Specifically, communication competency of the leaders includes enabling communication between team members, ensuring the message is delivered appropriately, creating an open communication climate, being proactive, verifying information exchange, being visible to team members, listening to team members, and developing personal relationships. Moreover, DeSanctis and Jiang (2005) also recommend communication as one of the important predictors of team performance. They believe that frequent communication and incorporating the views of all members are significant to team performance. It is the task of the leaders to encourage the frequency of communication and maintain the balance of contribution among team members. Those findings above consistently point out communication as a key variable in a team success.

Considering all the discussions above, communication is likely to be a key activity of team leaders. In a case where a team member may fill the role of a team leader or the role of team leader may be rotated among team members, the issue of power for example, becomes increasingly significant. However, as Shockley-Zalabak (2006) agrees, leadership occurs not from the assignment, but through communication

behaviours in interaction with team members. In this sense, team leadership communication also reflects their power and responsibilities for team performance.

Team Leadership Communication

Shockley-Zalabak (2006) defines leadership communication as the process of influencing and convincing followers to attain specific shared goals. In this sense, “leadership communication is a much bigger affair than simply delivering information or making effective presentations” (Mai & Akerson, 2003, p. 14). Kotter (2001) agrees that leadership roles include (a) setting a direction in terms of vision and strategy, (b) aligning people, and (c) motivating people. In order to perform those roles, leadership occurs through communication. The leaders communicate the needed change, new strategies, vision, and value in relation to business, technology, and corporate culture. Furthermore, Kotter (2001) suggests that vision should consider the interests of customers, stakeholders, and employees and should be translated into realistic strategies. Aligning team members is a communication challenge. Several other communication challenges include: (a) getting team members to comprehend a vision of an alternative future, and (b) gaining credibility from team members to believe the information (Kotter, 2001). Communication is essential to bind people together around a shared goal and identity. Therefore, Daft and Lane (2005) believe that the leader is a communication champion. This notion implies communication as the core of leadership activities that involves persuading and influencing others. Equally, Kotter (2001) believes that through communication, leaders motivate the team members by coaching, giving feedback, role modelling, and rewarding.

Barker et al. (2001) agree that effective leadership depends on communication skills of the leaders. They distinguished two approaches based on the assumption that

leadership relies on communication skills: task competency, and relational competency. The task competency refers to communication skills to perform tasks and to manage group goals, such as analysing the problems, establishing criteria or meeting objectives, evaluating the positive and negative consequences of the solutions, and establishing operating procedures. The relational competency refers to communication skills for managing interpersonal relationships and group climate, including balancing participation and conflict management. In a similar vein, Patton & Downs (2003) categorised two “functions” of leadership: task and maintenance functions. The task functions of leaders include setting and clarifying goals, stimulating research, maintaining operating procedures, introducing suggestions, evaluating ideas, to name a few. The maintenance functions include encouraging participation, responding to emotional concerns of team members, promoting open communication, listening, encouraging with positive feedback, to name a few.

In general, communication is at the central of team leaders’ behaviours. The key communication roles of team leaders can be categorised into two major themes: (a) task communication (setting a vision and strategy, coaching, giving feedback); and (b) relational communication (promoting open communication climate, listening, conflict management) (Barker et al., 2001; Kotter, 2001; Patton & Downs, 2003; Shockley-Zalabak, 2006). With regard to the cultural diversity, which is increasingly common in team works, it is crucial to recognise cultural differences exist in the workplace. As Trompenaars and Woolliams (2003) have suggested, recognising and reconciliation of cultural differences are pre-requisites to successful cross-cultural interaction. The next chapter presents the cultural differences by discussing cultural dimensions developed by several scholars. Accordingly, it will focus particularly on

contrasting Japanese and German culture. The Japanese and German communication behaviours will also be analysed in the following chapter.

Chapter 3

Culture

Culture is complex, multidimensional and persistent. Samovar and Porter (2003) define culture as:

the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, social hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relationships, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving. (p.8)

This sophisticated notion implies many possible descriptions of culture. Although the definition of culture varies widely, in the GLOBE study, Dorfman and House (2004) observed that one common theme of culture is the “sharedness” of cultural characteristics among their members: shared ways of thinking, feeling, and reacting; shared meanings and identities; shared socially constructed environments; common ways in which technology are used; and commonly experienced events including the history, language, and religion of their members. The GLOBE study particularly focuses on the assessment of beliefs and values of certain society. This results in the presentation of practices and values scores of cultures (Javidan & House, 2001). Other scholars have described culture as “the coherent, learned, shared view of a group of people about life’s concerns that ranks what is important, furnishes attitudes about what things are appropriate and dictates behaviour” (Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 5). This notion emphasises culture as the reference of the values, attitudes and behaviours of particular group of people.

Culture manifests itself on different levels. According to Trompenaars (1993), there are three different levels of culture (from the highest to the lowest): (a) national culture or regional society; (b) corporate or organisational culture; and (c) professional culture and ethical orientation such as marketing, research and development, to name a few. This project focuses on the first level, the differences at a national level. The (national) cultural dimensions distinguished by a number of scholars are presented in the next section.

Cultural Dimensions

Individualism-Collectivism

Based on a survey of IBM employees in 40 countries, Hofstede (1984) identified Individualism-Collectivism among four (and subsequently an additional) cultural dimensions that explain the differences in thinking and social action that exist among members of more than 40 modern nations. Hofstede's (1984) cultural dimensions are as follows: (a) Individualism-Collectivism, (b) Power Distance, (c) Uncertainty Avoidance, (d) masculinity versus femininity, and (e) Long term versus Short term orientation (the latest dimension added in the 2001 edition). For this project, the three cultural dimensions related to team leadership communication will be discussed: Individualism-Collectivism, Power Distance and Uncertainty Avoidance.

Individualism-Collectivism is one of the cultural dimensions identified by Hofstede (1984) in understanding cultural differences. Individualism-Collectivism is the major cultural dimension used to explain differences and similarities in cross-cultural communication (Andersen, 2003). The majority of authors tend to locate cultures along a continuum from primarily individualist to primarily collectivist

although people can be individualists and collectivists at the same time (Kirkman et al., 2001). One study has concluded that people may be high in both Individualism and Collectivism, because they were raised in a collectivist culture and then lived in an individualist culture (Yamada & Singelis, 1999).

Triandis (1995) listed four characteristics of individualist cultures: (a) individual is the most important entity, (b) the self is independent in Individualism, (c) the reward for individual achievement, and (d) the emphasis on the uniqueness of individual. On the other hand, four characteristics associated with collectivist cultures are as follows: (a) the group's goals, views, and needs are more important than those of individual, (b) obligation to the group is the norm, (c) the self is defined in association with others, and (d) the emphasis is on cooperation rather than competition (Triandis, 1995).

In an individualist society, the task is valued more than personal relationship. On the other hand, personal relationships are established first and are more important than tasks in a collectivist society (Hofstede, 1984). Individualists tend to have many groups, but their relationships are superficial, while collectivists tend to form a few of these, because they tend to maintain intimate relationships (Triandis, 1995).

People from individualist cultures are likely to communicate in a direct fashion, while people from collectivist cultures are likely to communicate in an indirect fashion (Gudykunst & Lee, 2002). Triandis (2003) observed that collectivists often use action verbs (for example "she offered to help") rather than state verbs (for example "she is helpful"). This indicates the indirectness of collectivists to state clearly that someone is helpful. In individualist cultures, speech tends to be more focused, shorter, with more reference to 'I' and to specific goals, while in collectivist

cultures, speech tends to include more qualifiers such as maybe, perhaps, somewhat, and probably (Smith & Bond, 1999).

Highly individualist cultures come from the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Denmark, Norway, and Germany. On the other end of the continuum, collectivist cultures include Venezuela, Thailand, Singapore, and the Philippines (Hofstede, 1984). The moderate individualist/collectivist cultures include Japan, Spain, Argentina, and Brazil.

Moreover, the latest findings from the GLOBE project (see GLOBE study section later in this chapter) still validate Hofstede's ranking of Individualism-Collectivism. The GLOBE project is a collaboration of a global network of more than 170 management scholars and social scientist from 62 countries for the purpose of examining the interrelationships between societal culture, organisational culture, and organisational leadership, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data from over 18,000 managers, representing a majority of the world population (GLOBE, 2006, February 13). As will be explained later, the GLOBE study measures both cultural practices and values at the organisational and societal level of analysis. There are two types of scores in the societal level of analysis in which a culture differs from the others: society practices scores and society values scores (as shown in Table 2) (Javidan, House, & Dorfman, 2004). The practices scores are the beliefs; people's perceptions of how things are done in their culture (referred to as "As Is" construct). The values scores are people's aspirations about the way things should be done; their preferences (referred to as "Should Be" construct) (Javidan & House, 2001). The top third of Hofstede's individualist cultures are in the most individualist band (band C) in the GLOBE data of societal institutional Collectivism value. These cultures include the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and Denmark. Equally, the most

collectivist cultures in Hofstede's ranking are in the most collectivist band (band A) in the GLOBE score. These include Colombia, Thailand, Mexico, and the Philippines. Interestingly, according to societal in-group Collectivism values scores, New Zealand is considered as a collectivist culture (Gelfand, Bhawuk, Nishii, & Bechtold, 2004). This recent finding clearly contradicts Hofstede's study. This latest result suggests that the respondents in New Zealand believe that they should be more collectivist from the existing practices.

Table 2

Society Practices and Values Scores

Society Scores	Measurement	The GLOBE construct
Practices	How things are done	"As Is"
Values	The way things should be done	"Should Be"

Note. The data are adapted from "Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies," by R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta, 2004, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Overall, these findings confirm that rankings on Individualism-Collectivism have been significantly steady over the last 30 year period (Gelfand et al., 2004). However, this is not a surprising fact in the sense that cultures change slowly because of their complexity that consists of interacting forces of ecology, institutions, groups, and individuals (Gelfand et al., 2004).

Power Distance

Individualism correlates negatively with Hofstede's Power Distance index (Hofstede, 2003). Power Distance is defined as "a measure of the interpersonal power or influence between B (boss) and S (subordinate) as perceived by the less powerful

of the two, S (subordinate)” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 83). The Power Distance Index (PDI) describes a scale from high to low Power Distance. In relation to the individualism-collectivism dimension above, many countries that score low on the individualism index (IDV), score high on the Power Distance Index (PDI). High Power Distance countries are likely to be more collectivist; low Power Distance countries are likely to be more individualist (Hofstede, 2003). However, Triandis (1995) observed that there was inconsistent correlation between Individualism-Collectivism and Power Distance dimensions.

People from high Power Distance cultures consider power as a basic factor in society. In contrast, people from low Power Distance cultures believe that power should be used when it is legitimate (appropriate and legal) (Gudykunst, Lee, Nishida, & Ogawa, 2005). In a high Power Distance culture, supervisors and subordinates consider their status as unequal. There is a rigid hierarchical system in organisations in this culture, with power concentrated in few hands. The hierarchical system is made for an inequality of roles and harmony for the interaction in the workplace. Subordinates are expected to be told what to do. Contacts between supervisors and subordinates are initiated by the supervisors only. The ideal boss/supervisor is a beneficent autocrat or the good father, in the subordinates’ point of view (Hofstede, 2003) therefore the subordinates expect the supervisors to act in a more autocratic and directive style (Connerley & Pedersen, 2005). In a low Power Distance culture, supervisors and subordinates mostly consider each other as equal. Most organisations in these cultures are decentralised, with flatter hierarchical pyramids. Supervisors are often accessible for subordinates. The ideal boss/supervisor is a democrat (Hofstede, 2003); therefore the subordinates expect to be consulted (Connerley & Pedersen, 2005).

Power Distance scores also imply the dependence relationship in a specific culture. In a low (small index) Power Distance cultures, subordinates and supervisors have a limited dependence, and a preference for consultation. In other word, there is an independent relationship between boss and subordinate. Subordinates are likely to approach and contradict their supervisors directly (Hofstede, 2003). In high Power Distance cultures, on the other hand, subordinates and supervisors have a considerable interdependence. Subordinates are unlikely to approach and contradict their supervisors directly (Hofstede, 2003).

Low and high Power Distance exist in all cultures; however, one is likely to predominate. High Power Distance cultures can be found in Malaysia, Panama, Philippines, Mexico, Arab countries, and India. Cultures that tend to be mainly low in Power Distance include Austria, Denmark, New Zealand, Sweden, Norway, and Germany. The moderate Power Distance cultures include Greece, Taiwan, Spain, Japan, and Argentina (Hofstede, 2001). Moreover, this dimension is correlated positively with the GLOBE Power Distance construct. Specifically, it is likely that Hofstede's PDI indicates more of societal Power Distance practices than values (refer to Table 2) (Carl, Gupta, & Javidan, 2004). In relation to this project, this concept will be useful to investigate the correlation between culture, power, and communication of team leaders.

Uncertainty Avoidance

In organisations, Uncertainty Avoidance takes the form of technology, rules, and rituals. Hofstede's (2001) Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) implies the tolerance for uncertainty as indicated by the willingness to follow rules, expectation to continue work with a company and the level of stress at work. Hofstede (2001) suggests that low Uncertainty Avoidance cultures are more open to change and

innovation, more comfortable with ambiguity and chaos, more risk taking, more tolerant of diversity than high Uncertainty Avoidance cultures. High Uncertainty Avoidance cultures can be found in Greece, Uruguay, Japan, Spain, and France. Low Uncertainty Avoidance cultures predominate in the United States, India, Ireland, Denmark, New Zealand, and Singapore. The moderate Uncertainty Avoidance cultures can be found in Taiwan, Germany, Thailand, Finland, and Netherlands.

Triandis (2004) believes that this dimension is theoretically similar to the notion of tight or loose culture. They agree that there are many rules, norms, and standards for “proper” behaviour in tight cultures. Chan, Gelfand, Triandis, and Tzeng (1996) observed that in tight cultures, norms are explained clearly, and society is formal, disciplined, and orderly. In these cultures, deviation from normative behaviour is unacceptable. One is expected to have a “tight” observance of cultural norms. Compared to those of the tight cultures, less of rules and norms operate in loose cultures. The society in these cultures is unlikely to strictly observe others’ attitudes and behaviours. As a consequence, these societies tend to tolerate the deviation from normative behaviour (Chan et al., 1996). In loose culture, people may have different perspectives about “proper” behaviour, so there is much tolerance when others behave improperly. Furthermore, the tight or loose cultures are determined by the influence by other cultures, cultural homogeneity, and population density (Triandis, 2004). The tight – loose dimension is correlated with Hofstede’s (1984) Uncertainty Avoidance. High Uncertainty Avoidance cultures are tight, because the society wants to have structure and wants members to know how to they are supposed to behave (Triandis, 2004). Hofstede (1984) suggests that high Uncertainty Avoidance societies tend to follow and impose the rules strongly; breaking the rules/normative behaviour is inappropriate. Thus, following rules and being punished

for breaking the rules are predominant in these societies. Conversely, low Uncertainty Avoidance societies believe that rules can be broken or changed for certain reason.

Achievement-Ascription

This dimension has been developed by Trompenaars (1993). Originally rooted in a Trompenaars study (1993), Trompenaars and Woolliams (2003) identified Achievement-Ascription as one among seven dimensions of culture that cause dilemmas because of the tension between different values in business across cultures. The other six are: (a) Universalism-Particularism, (b) Individualism-Communitarianism, (c) Neutrality-Affectivity, (d) Specificity-Diffuseness, (e) Sequential-Synchronic, and (f) Internal-External Control. This classification focuses on businesses and organisations in different cultures.

The concept of Achievement-Ascription differentiates status among societies by two major bases: their achievement or by virtue of age, class, gender, education (Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2003). This dimension originates from a study conducted by Parsons and Shils in 1951 (Javidan, 2004). Achieved status refers to achieving (what an individual does) and Ascribed status refers to being (who an individual is). Achievement-oriented cultures tend to value the performance of each individual regardless of the other contributing factors that Ascription-oriented cultures have (Trompenaars, 1993). The Achievement-oriented cultures tend to confer status on the basis of the individual's accomplishments (Javidan, 2004). In Ascription-oriented cultures, several factors are valued for business performances, including age, experience, education, and professional qualifications. This Ascription-oriented cultures confer status largely on the basis of who the individual is (Javidan, 2004).

In Achievement-oriented cultures, the position of the leader is a result of an individual's performance and achievement. For example, the United States culture

believes that anyone can be a president in the United States (Javidan, 2004). In Ascription-oriented cultures, seniority and long-term loyalty are much more important. For example in Japan, historically, promotion to higher positions has been based on seniority, gender, and age, although it seems to be changing toward achievement oriented (Javidan, 2004). According to research by Trompenaars and Woolliams (2003), the Achievement-oriented cultures include the United States, Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. On the other hand, the Ascription-oriented cultures include Egypt, Argentina, Korea, and Japan. The middle between Achievement and Ascription-oriented cultures can be found in Russia, Hong Kong, France, and Germany.

This dimension seems to correlate positively with the GLOBE Performance Orientation construct (see the Performance Orientation section in the GLOBE study). The Achievement-oriented cultures also score high in Performance-oriented cultures, for example the United States, Australia, and Canada. On the other hand, the Ascription-oriented cultures also score low in Performance-oriented cultures, for instance Japan and South Korea. However, there is inconsistent correlation for several cultures, for example Egypt and Argentina.

Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) Study

To date, the Global Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness (GLOBE) research program is the largest study on leadership effectiveness ever undertaken (Phatak, Bhagat, & Kashlak, 2005). It is a collaboration of a global network of more than 170 management scholars and social scientist from 62 countries for the purpose of examining the interrelationships between societal culture, organisational culture, and organisational leadership, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to

collect data from over 18,000 managers, representing a majority of the world population (GLOBE, 2006, February 13). The GLOBE study objectives were to investigate the leader behaviours, attributes, and organisational practices that may universally applied and effective across cultures. Their analyses of their data resulted in the identification of nine cultural dimensions and six global leader behaviours of culturally endorsed implicit theories of leadership (CLT). These cultural dimensions serve as the independent variables of project GLOBE. The GLOBE measures both cultural practices and values at the organisational and societal level of analysis. This dissertation concentrates on the societal level of analysis as it focuses on the societal cultures. There are two types of scores in the societal level of analysis in which a culture differs from the others: society practices scores and society values scores (Javidan et al., 2004). The practices scores are the beliefs; people's perceptions of how things are done in their culture (referred to as "As Is" construct). The values scores are people's aspirations about the way things should be done; their preferences (referred to as "Should Be" construct) (Javidan & House, 2001).

The major question developed by the GLOBE study focuses on the relationships between those nine cultural dimensions and several dependent variables. These dependent variables comprise of leadership dimensions from culturally endorsed implicit leadership theory (CLT), the Human Development Index, indices of economic prosperity (gross national product [GNP] per capita), measures of the psychological and physical welfare of members in each culture, as well as several additional variables related to the human condition (House & Javidan, 2004). The Implicit Leadership Theory believes that "individuals have implicit beliefs, convictions, and assumptions concerning attributes and behaviours that distinguish

leaders from followers, effective leaders from ineffective leaders, and moral leaders from evil leaders” (House & Javidan, 2004, p. 16).

The nine cultural dimensions studied in GLOBE are as follows: (a) Uncertainty Avoidance, (b) Power Distance, (c) Collectivism I (Institutional Collectivism), (d) collectivism II (In-Group Collectivism), (e) Gender Egalitarianism, (f) Assertiveness, (g) Future Orientation, (h) Performance Orientation, and (i) Humane Orientation (House & Javidan, 2004). The first six cultural dimensions above are rooted in Hofstede’s (1984) dimensions of culture and the adequate data provide a replication of Hofstede’s seminal work. Collectivism I (Institutional Collectivism) is a new construct as a result of a factor analysis to measure collectivism in general. It mirrors Hofstede’s Individualism index. This dimension may take the form of laws, social programs, or institutional practices designed to encourage collective behaviour. The In-Group Collectivism was developed from a study done by Triandis in 1995. This dimension measures the level of pride and loyalty in families and organisations (House & Javidan, 2004). The Gender Egalitarianism and Assertiveness scales were developed on the basis of Hofstede’s dimension of masculinity-femininity. Future Orientation is rooted in Kluchkhohn and Strodbeck’s past, present, future orientation dimension. The future orientation dimension is conceptually similar to Hofstede’s Confucian Work Dynamism or later referred to as Long-Term Orientation (House & Javidan, 2004). The six global leader behaviours are as follows: (a) Charismatic/Value-Based, (b) Team-Oriented, (c) Participative, (d) Humane-Oriented, (e) Autonomous, and (f) Self-Protective (House & Javidan, 2004). For this research, the three cultural dimensions of the GLOBE study (besides Hofstede’s originated dimensions) related to this research will be reviewed: Assertiveness, Future Orientation, and Performance Orientation.

Assertiveness

The GLOBE project findings show that Assertiveness is an important factor of culture, but has received little attention in the cross-cultural literature (Hartog, 2004). Assertiveness as a cultural dimension reflects the degree of assertiveness, dominance, and aggressiveness of individuals or societies in social relationships. The GLOBE study considers Assertiveness not only as behaviour, traits, or stereotypical national characteristics, but also as a cultural dimension that reflects shared societal beliefs about whether people should be assertive and tough-minded or non-assertive (Hartog, 2004).

This concept originates partially from Hofstede's cultural dimension of masculinity vs. femininity (Hartog, 2004). Hofstede (1984) has observed that Assertiveness is likely to be a behaviour that people associate more with men than with women. Assertiveness is likely to link with the stereotype of successful managers. Schein's (as cited in Hartog, 2004) study in 2001 found that this pattern still exists to large extent, especially among male respondents in five cultures studied (China, Japan, Great Britain, Germany, and the United States). In a conclusion of this study, the successful managers are seen as assertive and dominant. Assertiveness is also associated with the preferred use of language in society. Assertive cultures tend to use Low-context language (direct, clear, and explicit) (see the discussion about High-Low context later in this chapter); while less-assertive cultures tend to use High-context language (less direct, more ambiguous, and more subtle) (Hartog, 2004). The most assertive cultures can be found in Germany, Austria, Greece, the United States, and Spain; the least assertive cultures can be found in Sweden, New Zealand, Switzerland, Japan, and Kuwait. The moderate-oriented cultures predominate in Egypt, Ireland, the Philippines, Ecuador, and France (Javidan & House, 2001).

However, the GLOBE findings discovered that most Asian countries such as Japan, China, Malaysia, and Indonesia highly value the Assertiveness in practices. Perhaps, this latest finding reflects the desire of Japanese society to be more assertive, tougher, and more direct in their communication style, because their current usual practices are being less-assertive with the preferred use of indirect communication style (as shown in Table 3). In other words, “societies scoring relatively high on current Assertiveness practices want less and societies scoring relatively low want more Assertiveness” (Hartog, 2004, p. 410).

Table 3

Assertiveness: Society Practices and Values of Japanese and German

	Society Practices Scores	Society Values Scores
Japanese	3.59 (least assertive)	5.56 (most assertive)
German (west)	4.55 (most assertive)	3.09 (least assertive)
German (east)	4.73 (most assertive)	3.23 (least assertive)

Note. The data are adapted from “Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies,” by R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta, 2004, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Future Orientation

The GLOBE study defines the Future Orientation dimension as The extent to which members of a society or an organization believe that their current actions will influence their future, focus on investment in their future, believe that they will have a future that matters, believe in planning for developing their future, and look far into the future for assessing the effects of

their current actions. (Ashkanasy, Gupta, Mayfield, & Trevor-Roberts, 2004, p. 285)

In this sense, this dimension is reflected in future-related behaviours, such as planning, preparing and investing for the future. To some extent, it is associated with the notion of short-term vs. long term orientation (Hofstede, 2001). Low Future-oriented cultures or high present-oriented cultures tend to show the capability to enjoy the moment and be spontaneous. The societies are free from the past worries and the future anxieties. On the other hand, high Future-oriented cultures are likely to have a strong ability for planning future goals, seeking to achieve those goals, and developing strategies for their future dreams (Ashkanasy et al., 2004). In this sense, the Future-oriented societies tend to maintain self-control in the workplace, in saving money, to name a few, in order to achieve their future goals. The high Future-oriented cultures predominate in Singapore, Netherlands, Denmark, Japan, and Germany (west). The moderate-oriented cultures predominate in Egypt, Ireland, Australia, Germany (east), and India. The low Future-oriented cultures can be found in Russia, Poland, Italy, Greece, and New Zealand (Ashkanasy et al., 2004).

Performance Orientation

Performance Orientation implies “the extent to which a community encourages and rewards innovation, high standards, and performance improvement” (Javidan, 2004, p. 239). High Performance-oriented cultures tend to value individuals and groups that achieve results and accomplish their tasks. They are likely to focus on task more than social relationships. In communication, they tend to be direct, explicit, and to the point. They view feedback as necessary for improvement. On the other hand, less Performance-oriented cultures are likely to value social relationship more than task. They tend to use a less direct, more ambiguous, and more subtle mode of

communication. They view feedback and appraisal systems as judgemental and discomfoting (Javidan, 2004).

According to the GLOBE study, the high Performance-oriented cultures can be found in Singapore, New Zealand, the United States, and Malaysia. The low Performance-oriented cultures can be found in Russia, Argentina, Greece, Venezuela, and Italy. The moderate orientation cultures predominate in Germany (west and east), Japan, England, Spain, and Sweden (Javidan, 2004).

The finding about Japanese culture as moderate Performance-oriented seems to contradict the facts found in much literature that Japanese are hard workers and have high loyalty to their company (see The Japaneseness section later in this chapter). It is even more interesting to find out that Japanese increasingly value of being less Performance-oriented as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Performance Orientation: Society Practices and Values of Japanese

	Society Practices Scores	Society Values Scores
Japanese	4.22 (moderate)	5.17 (less-oriented)

Note. The data are adapted from “Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies,” by R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta, 2004, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

One possible explanation for this is the considerable impacts of *amae* which have made the Japanese focus more on group and harmony than task. Another possible explanation is the existence of consistent feedback in a working relationship. The Japanese feedback is likely on the drinking session after working hours. After all, the Quality Circles and Continuous Improvement movements that were so very big in

Japan counted on feedback (Varner & Beamer, 2005). Although the significance of self-discipline (*seishin*), loyalty, and obligation (*giri-on*) in the workplace is unquestionable in this culture, Japanese is still considered as a collectivist culture (Hofstede, 1984). Moreover, Performance-oriented cultures do not correlate with the possibility to be a success economically (Javidan, 2004). To some extent, this GLOBE finding also confirms the Japanese as an Ascription-oriented culture (Trompenaars, 1993).

The Cultural Context of Communication

Culture is shared through communication. Communication is the process of creating, sustaining, and managing meaning among people (Conrad & Poole, 2005). The socio-cultural perspective defines communication as the creation and enactment of social reality. This point of view is based on the assumption that people communicate to produce and reproduce culture (Griffin, 2003). Communication enables people to share and develop culture. Thus, communication and culture are inseparable, so that communication acts affect and are affected by culture.

Cross-cultural communication is significantly more demanding than communication in a single culture, because culturally different individuals have less common information and understanding. Successful communication requires not only that the message is transmitted, but also that it is understood. For this understanding to occur, both speaker and listener must share knowledge about several contexts in which communication occurs. The next section will discuss communication and context and how context is implicit in communication.

High- and Low-context Communication

Hall (1976) distinguishes cultures according to the context in which the communication process occurs: a scale from High- to Low-context. High-context communication cultures focus on the information in the communication context surrounding the message; the receivers of the message take into account the context, including gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, and silence, to name a few. “What is unsaid but understood carries more weight than what is actually written down or said” (Connerley & Pedersen, 2005, p. 47). In contrast, Low-context communication cultures rely on the words and written message. Hall (1976) described those two contexts as follows:

A high-context (HC) communication or message is one in which most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. A low-context (LC) communication is just the opposite; i.e., the mass of information is vested in the explicit code. Twins who have grown up together can and do communicate more economically (HC) than two lawyers in a courtroom during a trial (LC), ... (p. 79)

Similarly, Gudykunst and Lee (2002) agree that High-context cultures tend to use indirect, implicit and ambiguous words, because these cultures focus on the building of relationship, face, and belonging; therefore, High-context cultures tend to be more group oriented and hierarchical (Varner & Palmer, 2005). On the other hand, Low-context cultures tend to use direct, explicit, and precise words.

Hall's (1976) research concludes that the Low-context cultures include Swiss, Germans, Americans, and Scandinavians, and other northern Europeans. The High-context cultures can be found in Asia, particularly China, Japan, and Korea. Cultures

such as the French, English, and Italian are located somewhere in the middle of the continuum. In this project, comparison will be made between Japanese and German, two cultures on the opposite ends of the continuum for context-based communication, to give a better understanding in the effects of this culture difference on effective team leadership communication. The concept and practice of Low- and High-context communication is found in all cultures (Andersen, 2003; Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Hall, 1976). However, one type of communication is likely to predominate. Moreover, it is believed that High-context cultures are also somewhat more collectivist and less individualist than Low-context cultures (Andersen, 2003; Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988).

Individualists who use Low-context communication often assume that indirect communication is ineffective, because they are not familiar with ambiguity. However, this assumption may lead to misunderstanding and conflict in the worst case if one does not understand about the cultural differences in communication. The effectiveness actually comes from the receivers' knowing how to interpret the senders' indirect messages in specific contexts (Gudykunst & Lee, 2002). These cultural variables highlight the importance of understanding effective communication across cultures, because cultural differences bring significant impacts to effective communication behaviour.

Chapter 4

Culture and Communication of the Japanese and German

The Japaneseness

This section reviews the key elements that are significant to Japanese cultures and values: (a) harmony (*Wa*), (b) pride (*Kao*), (c) the way of doing things (*Shikata*), (d) dependency (*Amae*), (e) spirit (*Seishin*), (f) obligation (*Giri-On*), (g) the group and decision making, and (h) rank and hierarchy. These are the contexts that lead to the explanation of specific Japanese communication behaviour. The Japanese communication will be discussed later in this chapter.

Harmony (Wa)

The Japanese are homogeneous people. Historically, a considerable number of Japanese originated from Korean peninsula until 8th century A.D (Gannon, 2004). Between the 4th and 6th century, Japanese had substantial developments in agriculture and had been influenced by Chinese culture from the Korean peninsula in the forms of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Chinese scripts (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1994). The Japanese tradition of rice farming (*mura*) borrowed from Chinese is believed to encourage the individuals becoming tightly knit communities with strong family relationships, because planting and harvesting rice need a collaborative work of many people. The on-going tradition of working in group seems to lead to the emphasis on the importance of group activities and group harmony (*wa*) in this culture (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1994). In the 7th century, this harmony was reflected in the country's first constitution, developed by Prince Shotoku. The first of the 17 articles emphasised harmony as the foundation for all of the others. The Japanese always have an

awareness of the difference between things foreign and native (Gannon, 2004). They value their Japaneseness while borrowing things from “outsiders”. However, Chinese culture had a considerable impact on the Japanese, because they studied Buddhism from the 7th to the 9th century. They even adopted the Chinese writing system, which has specific characters, but they speak differently (Gannon, 2004). In the further development, they also created characters not in classical or modern Chinese, and some of the kanji mean different things from Chinese.

During the shogun era, about 10 percent of the population comprised of samurai or warriors, who had high loyalty to their lord, who in turn swore loyalty to the shogun, who swore loyalty to the royal family, then it subsequently reflects the loyalty to the ultimate family, the nation (Gannon, 2004). The basic integrated value of the samurai system is *Bushido*, the way of the warrior. In general, *Bushido* is the unwritten code influencing the Japanese culture. *Bushido* covers virtues, such as “rectitude, justice, honour, loyalty, and self-control, as well as institutionalized suicide and redress” (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1994, p. 16). In addition, there were four main classes of occupation during shogun era: (a) samurai, (b) farmers, (c) artists, and (d) merchants, in descending order of status. There were also courtiers, doctors, and priests. Everyone was born and automatically belongs to his or her own class (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1994).

Honna and Hoffer (1989) agree that harmony (*wa*) within the group is significant to Japanese society. It refers to “the quality of human relationships and involves cooperation, trust, sharing, and warmth, based on a caring attitude toward others” (Hall & Hall, 1987, p.78). People in this culture are likely to think and behave as a group. As a consequence, the emphasis on the group causes the individual to avoid being totally different from the majority. Thus, *wa* emphasises groupness and

anti-individualism (Wierzbicka, 1997). The concept of “*wa*” (harmony) is the most often emphasised element in organisational philosophy (Tang, Kim, & O'Donald, 2000).

Pride (Kao)

The Japanese term *kao* contributes to the indirectness of the language. English has no word comparable to *kao*. *Kao* means pride, self-esteem, and reputation, the vital features of the Japanese (Hall & Hall, 1987). Japanese often apologise by using the apologetic expressions (e.g. *sumimasen*) (Lincoln, Kerbo, & Wittenhagen, 1995). They avoid saying “no” by using the replacement words that have a similar function to “no”, because they concern other people’s feeling (Hall & Hall, 1987). They do so in order to maintain another person’s *kao*. In relation to maintaining another person’s *kao*, a foreigner cannot criticise the Japanese directly in any way, because the Japanese have a strong behaviour to maintain harmony (*wa*) and relationship with others (Nishiyama, 2000). The emphasis on achieving harmony and protecting face is the norm in order to avoid losing each other’s prestige and self-respect. The fundamental concept of *kao* is likely to be associated with the notion of face.

Facework refers to “specific verbal and nonverbal messages that help to maintain and restore face loss, and to uphold and honor face gain” (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998, p. 190). Face negotiation theory focuses on three face concerns that occur in interaction: (a) “self-face” is concern for one’s own image, (b) “other-face” is concern for another’s image, and (c) “mutual-face” is concern for both images and the image of the relationship (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Oetzel et al. (2003) agree that the concept of facework has commonly emphasised face as a secondary focus that supports the primary focus during interaction, such as influencing or managing issues. However, they then argue that face-saving is used as a primary concern in social

interaction in cultures, such as Japanese and Mexican. In those cultures, saving others' face is crucial for maintaining harmony. The significance of the notion of face-saving in Japanese culture can be illustrated with several frequently used expressions: *kao ni doro wo nuru* (having face smeared with mud), *kao wo tsubushu* (having face crushed), *kao ga hiroi* (having a widely recognised face) (Nishiyama, 2000, p. 20).

The Way of Doing Things (Shikata)

Japanese believe that there is an inner order (the individual) and a neutral order (the universe) and both are bound together by form; form (*kata*) for addressing someone, doing business, and treating foreigners, to name a few. “*Shikata* is the way of doing things, with special emphasis on the form and order of the process” (Gannon, 2004, p. 33). In this society, an individual is assumed to have categorised and defined life roles (*bun*) in which obligations are described in detail. Perhaps it is also the explanation behind the shift of communication style used by the Japanese from Low-context to High-context style when dealing with foreigners, because there is a way (*kata*) of dealing with foreigners. When meeting for the first time, Japanese often follow the *kata* or form of exchanging business cards, *meishi*, to introduce each person's specific rank and group affiliation for reducing uncertainty (Lincoln et al., 1995).

Dependency (Amae)

Amae is the glue that keeps Japanese society together. There is no English word equivalent to it, but the closest one is “dependency” (Gannon, 2004). It is the real ingredient of Japanese psychology (Doi, 1981). *Amae* strengthens the loyalty, the tie felt between members within the group. This emphasis on the group actually starts from birth. Mothers tend to give a lot of love and attention to their children, especially

boys. All of these behaviours lead to a high degree of dependence on the mother and in an attitude referred to as *amae* (Gannon, 2004). *Amae* functions psychologically to foster a sense of oneness between a mother and a child. It also indicates “helplessness and the desire to be loved” (Doi, 1981, p. 22). According to Hall and Hall (1987), the essence of *amae* is that “one’s personal identity is rooted in the soil of one’s dependent and interdependent relations to others as a member of a group” (p. 55). Moreover, it is the concern for and dependence on another. In addition, in her literature review, Tezuka (1993, cited in Miike, 2003) observed that *amae* is comprised of three interrelated and interdependent elements operating in combination: (a) a need for “oneness” with others, (b) a need for dependence on others, and (c) a need for acceptance by others.

Even a Japanese male in starting his career will develop a dependency relationship with men of power, status, and influence. This attaches him to them in a reciprocal relationship with their mentor (*senpai* or *sempai*) (Gannon, 2004). This *senpai-kohai* relation is reflected in the responsibility of a senior employee (*senpai*) to train a junior (*kohai*) in the ways of the company (Lincoln et al., 1995). It is easier for the Japanese to communicate with others if they are in a dependency relationship with that person (Hall & Hall, 1987). Generally speaking, *amae* is a type of relationship that provides a model of human relationship especially when one person is senior to another. It could be the kind of relationship of parents-children, teacher-student, and supervisor-subordinate (Smith & Nomi, 2000).

Most Japanese companies generate *amae* in their employees by providing health and life insurance. In return, employees develop a close relationship with the company, which gradually becomes at least as important as their family (Hall & Hall, 1987). Therefore, employees in Japanese companies have a strong loyalty and

dedication to the organisation (Tang et al., 2000). Japanese focus on the group relationship, usually the group with which they work in a company. They usually identify themselves according to the group or organisation they belong to. The Japanese often address someone by saying, “He is a Toyota man.” A company is considered as an individual’s family, as a result of the dependency of Japanese on their company (Hall & Hall, 1987).

Spirit (Seishin)

Seishin emphasises the importance of self-discipline and devotion to duty. It is an integral part of the Japanese life. *Seishin* training has been commonly applied to the martial arts, flower arrangements, and the tea ceremony (Gannon, 2004). This training is associated with Zen Buddhism, a unique form of Buddhism that is common in Japanese. Although conceptually the expected result of *seishin* is an improved personal spiritual growth and freedom, the Japanese use it to achieve practical goals, such as better performance in school or work. As Wierzbicka (1997) agrees, *seishin* training primarily emphasises the individual level, but it also can be used for encouraging positive group interaction. As evidence, a number of large Japanese companies use this element through their training programmes, in order to encourage a sense of self-discipline and devotion to the companies. In contemporary transformations of this philosophy, the Japanese are likely to believe that the individual has to try very hard in order to overcome any obstacle. *Seishin* helps people to stand on their own, to endure personal hardship, and to live in a group-oriented society, because group’s interests often need the individual’s sacrifice (Gannon, 2004).

Interestingly, the GLOBE study found that Japanese scores only moderate in the Performance Orientation dimension. Perhaps this is due to the conceptualisation of

the Performance Orientation dimension from the GLOBE study. According to this study, high Performance-oriented cultures refer to the cultures that focus on accomplishing task. In this sense, Japanese culture is likely to suit with the finding above, because this society values social relationship more than task.

Obligation (Giri-On)

Japanese are famous for their motivation to work hard to achieve their goals. This behaviour can be explained by the existence of many Japanese words involving obligation, duty, and perseverance, such as *giri*, which is commonly translated as duty or obligation. As a result, most Japanese have an intense obligation to do good work and to remain loyal to the company. Rhody and Tang (1995) have observed that Japanese view their works as an obligation to society and to oneself as a human being, rather than a form of economic transaction. Although this behaviour can be seen as a positive attitude, there is an increasing number of *karoshi*, death from overwork, which may imply a negative image of this behaviour. They also noted that the prospect of lifetime employment (*shushin koyou*), formerly common among Japanese workers, is believed to be a key factor behind Japanese industrial success. Interestingly, in a survey Turpin (as cited in Rhody & Tang, 1995) interviewed Japanese managers and found three favourite words among them are effort, persistence, and thank you.

On refers to the English words, such as “favour”, “kindness”, “grace”, “goodness”, “benefit”, “obligation”, and “a debt of gratitude” (Wierzbicka, 1997). This concept originated from the samurai ethics. “When a feudal samurai received an *on* from a lord, he repaid the favour by offering his service (military service)” (Wierzbicka, 1997, p. 254).

The difference between *giri* and *on* is the target (person) of the obligation. *Giri* refers to an obligation to another person, with whom one can interact face to face, and an emphasis on individuals and private relations, while *on* refers to “a kind of obligation which can have as its target one’s ancestors, a faraway inaccessible emperor, one’s country, and so on ...” (Wierzbicka, 1997, p. 263).

The Group and Decision Making

Japanese culture focuses on the importance of loyalty to family, harmony with one’s environment, and human relationships. Because of this national culture, the organisational structure in Japanese companies emphasises the group. Japanese encourage and place responsibility on groups rather than on individuals (Tang et al., 2000). In a group work, Japanese are likely to have a generalist and diffuse view of responsibility (Salk & Brannen, 2000) as they work and share the responsibility as a group, because group’s goal is more important than individual’s goal. Often, there is no formal and well-defined job description for each individual in a group. The use of teams is more common among Japanese than other cultures. Relationship and trust in the work group are crucial (Rhody & Tang, 1995). Therefore, a company sometimes rewards the work group, not the individual.

In many roles, there is a difference between the “public self” and “private self” (Swierczek & Onishi, 2003). In relation to this, Triandis (2001) believes that in-group and out-group relationships affect behaviours even within the same culture. This perceived categorisation confuses foreigners therefore they consider Japanese as two-faced (Swierczek & Onishi, 2003). The clear examples of this behaviour will be given in the section of Japanese communication. Moreover, Japanese use multiple behaviour styles according to the situation, but their private self seems to be dominated by their public self based on group identity (Swierczek & Onishi, 2003).

The Japanese prefer to work as a group rather than as individuals. In this sense, Japanese managers prefer sharing the office space with subordinates to ensure that information is shared equally. It can be reflected into a classroom setting style: the manager in front of the subordinates and they work in subgroups with their own supervisors. If the group is small, everyone will sit around the table with the most senior member closest to the manager (Gannon, 2004).

Decision making also reflects the emphasis on the group. Harmony and consensus are crucial in the life of Japanese. Decision making in this culture seems too complicated and involves every member of the organisation. This is particularly true in large firms. In business, *ringi-sho* is a proposal of the project. It includes the project's goals, benefits, analysis, costs, and time frames (Hall & Hall, 1987). The proposal is actually coming from the top, and is given to the management levels, lowest first, to consider (Varner & Beamer, 2005). The *ringi-sho* works slowly on its way through many layers of the organisation, with some revisions and clarifications. This process of consultation is called *nemawashi* (literally means root binding) (Varner & Beamer, 2005). This process of collective decision making consults every layer hierarchical structure of organisation until consensus is achieved. This process of consultation encourages the collective agreements from middle and lower levels in the organisations. However, the final decision making is often the big boss (Varner & Beamer, 2005). Once a decision is made, it can be implemented quickly and precisely, because it has been approved by everyone in the department (Lincoln et al., 1995). It is commonly believed that this consensus decision making contributes to Japan's success (Tang et al., 2000). In contrast, decision making in small companies and family owned-companies can be authoritarian; the owners make the decisions and tell the subordinates to follow (Varner & Beamer, 2005).

Rank and Hierarchy

Japanese believe in a natural order in society. In modern Japan, different ranks and status are considered natural. Ranking is highly respected in this culture (Hall & Hall, 1987). A person's rank is usually more important than his or her name. For example, the principal of the school is simply addressed by the Japanese word for principal, *kocho sensei* (Gannon, 2004). In the workplace, honorific terms are used to address higher status managers. Those terms also have been used to address senior employees. However, this seems to be declining in practice today: 59 percent of companies with more than 3,000 employees do not use honorific terms, compared to 34 percent in 1995 (Gannon, 2004). In a group, the person of higher rank usually walks slightly in front, goes through the door first, and sits down first. Another sign that indicates rank is the appearance: clothes that are conservative and well-tailored. The sensitivity for the rank also extends to the wives of Japanese executives (Hall & Hall, 1987).

A hierarchical system exists within and between different groups. The formal structure of the Japanese organisation is characterised by the standard ranking system that situates employees in a vertical status hierarchy. The titles for most organisations include (a) *bucho*: department head, (b) *jicho*: assistant department head, (c) *kacho*: section head, and (d) *kakaricho*: assistant section head, to name a few (Lincoln et al., 1995). As Shibata (1999) has observed in a study of Japanese plants in the United States, the hierarchical structures commonly found include section managers, first-line supervisors, assistant first line supervisors, and group leaders.

Because of Japan's team orientation, there are few distinctions between management and employees at the Japanese-managed company. Moreover, hierarchy is so embedded in Japanese society so that the Japanese do not need status symbols

such as private offices to express rank (Hall & Hall, 1987). Therefore, the office space is organised as having no other private work areas; Japanese executives do not have executive dining rooms and reserved parking spaces, except ceremonial and meeting rooms. There is less adversarial (employee vs. management) relationship in the Japanese-managed company (Tang et al., 2000). However, the position of the desk or the chair in a large room still communicates the rank. The chair farthest from the door is the place of honour (Hall & Hall, 1987).

This fact contradicts Hofstede's (1984) finding that Japanese is a high Power Distance culture. According to this concept, there is an unequal power between supervisors and subordinates. In this sense, the supervisors are perceived to have different (higher) status from their subordinates, which can be reflected on the special facilities for supervisors such as parking spaces. In this case, it is likely that the Japanese team orientation is more predominant than the Power Distance value.

Japanese Communication Behaviour

Direct and Indirect Communication

Japanese tend to choose the ambiguous and indirect mode of communication because it is considered polite. This is particularly true when Japanese interact with foreigners. As Gannon (2004) noted, Japanese use a High-context style when interacting with foreigners, but they use a Low-context style when interacting among themselves. As an explanation to this situation, Triandis (1972, cited in Triandis, 2001) have argued that collectivists differentiate more between in-group and out-group than do individualists. In this sense, the Japanese, as collectivists will use different behaviours and strategies from "regular" interaction with themselves (in-group) when interacting with foreigners (out-group).

Japanese are most often characterised as being indirect in terms of saying “no.” Japanese will say replacement words that have a similar function to “no”, because they focus on other people’s feelings (Hall & Hall, 1987). Some example of “no” equivalents in Japanese include *chigau* (it is different), *dame* (no good), *sonna koto wa nai* (it is no such thing), *iya desu* (that is hateful), and *betsu ni* (not especially) (Miller, 1994). In order to avoid saying “no”, Japanese usually utilise silence, evasions, repetitions, and pretended misunderstandings. Miller (1994) noted that indirectness is the characteristic of the words in their language. *Domo* is a Japanese word often cited as an ambiguous word. Several variety meanings of *domo* include “very”, “quite”, “really”, “thank you”, “sorry”, “excuse me”, and “somehow”. In line with the ambiguity, the “yes” answers from Japanese do not always mean exactly “yes”. It may have a variety of meaning. Nishiyama (2000) believes that this tradition originated from the habitual use of “*hai*” (means Okay, or I am here, or Yes, or Fine), because Japanese often say “*hai, wakarimashita*” or “Yes, I understand” when they hear something. It simply means “Yes, I hear what you are saying,” but may not necessarily mean “Yes, I agree with you.” This style of answering is called *kara henji* (empty answer).

Maynard (1997) considers *amae* as the fundamental element for the Low-context style of interaction in this culture. Japanese frequently use direct and confrontational communication with those that have close relationships, for instance their family members, and this behaviour is associated with the existence of *amae* relationships among family members. “Everyday conflicts are mostly among *uchi* [in-group] members. Blatant and blunt confrontations often occur among close friends, where the *amae* relationship is well established” (Maynard, 1997, p. 156). In a similar vein, the indirectness feature of Japanese communication is believed to be

associated with *amae* (Miike, 2003). *Amae* generates the predominance of “we” over “I” in Japanese interaction. The group’s opinion is more important than the individual’s opinion; therefore it consequently prevents Japanese from expressing their opinion in exact and explicit style, because of their *enryo* (see the next part: *enryo-sasshi* communication style).

Enryo-sasshi Communication Style

One distinct feature of Japanese communication is *enryo-sasshi* style. *Enryo* is frequently translated into the English word “reserve”, or “self-restraint.” Nishiyama (2000) believes that *enryo* is the impact of the emphasis on harmony and consensus so that it generates social pressures for conformity. From the early age, Japanese children are taught to conform to the pressures vertically (from their family members and teachers) and horizontally (from their schoolmates). In the workplace, they are expected to conform to the group norms (Nishiyama, 2000). The pressure of conformity often leads to “self-restraint” (*enryo*), avoiding different opinions from or disagreements with the majority opinion (Wierzbicka, 1997). In this sense, conformity to the majority is valued more than disagreement. In line with maintaining harmony (*wa*), to the Japanese this social conformity is a result of inner strength and self-discipline (Nishiyama, 2000). Thus, avoiding confrontational arguments is predominant in this culture, because Japanese restrain themselves from expressing different view from the group. Wierzbicka (1997) observed that *enryo* concerns not only the individual’s personal opinions, but also his or her desire, preference, and wish. *Sasshi* refers to the acceptance. *Enryo* is a part of the speakers, while *sasshi* is on the part of the listeners. Miike (2003) believes that the successful interaction of *enryo-sasshi* communication relies on the balance between *enryo* (from the speakers) and *sasshi* (the acceptance from the listeners).

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

Although Japanese is considered as a homogeneous culture, the different dialects of verbal communication exist in this culture, for example people from Honshu have their own dialect different from people from Kyushu (Varner & Beamer, 2005). Compared to the majority of Western cultures, nonverbal communication is valued more in this culture. Hall and Hall (1987) argue that indirectness appears in this culture because of the social relationships, which are High-context in Japan; so over explication is less important in this tight culture. Varner and Palmer (2005) believe that tendency towards nonverbal and indirect mode of communication is a result of emphasising harmonious relationships in this culture. This is also due to the different hierarchical system within society, which encourages indirectness in Japanese interaction. Because of their indirect communication style in interacting with foreigners, the Japanese are comfortable with a wide range of kinesics behaviours, especially gestures. The Japanese are expressive within their in-group. Away from in-group, they may restrict their expression. For example, it is common to find both Japanese males and females sitting quietly in public, with hands folded. This gesture in out-group (*soto*) situation communicates avoiding attention and maintaining situational harmony or balance (McDaniel, 2003). The smile in Japanese culture may be used to express a happy and pleasant face to outsiders, with the main purpose of avoiding conflict, avoiding answering an awkward question or giving a negative answer (Nishiyama, 2000). This culture considers direct eye contact in communication interaction as aggression, rudeness, insistence of equality, assertiveness, threatening, and disrespectful (Nishiyama, 2000). By avoiding direct eye contact, the Japanese maintain situational *wa* (McDaniel, 2003). Another common activity associated with Japanese kinesics is the bow. The Japanese bow is used for

meeting, asking, apologising, offering congratulations, acknowledging, and departing, to name a few (Hall & Hall, 1987). It is an integral part of daily social interaction. It communicates respect and denotes hierarchical status, for example the person with the least status usually bows first, lowest, and longest (Hall & Hall, 1987). Because of its significant feature, the next part discusses the value of silence in Japanese communication.

Silence

Silence is considered valuable as well as a sign of respect and trustworthiness, just like a common Japanese proverb, “those who know do not speak; those who speak do not know” (Gannon, 2004). Yamada (1994) also has given an example of another proverb that shows the value of silence: “*bigen shin narazu*” (beautiful speech lacks sincerity). Those old sayings in Japanese support the Japanese perspective that verbal communication is flawed and insincere, while silence is pure and ideal (Yamada, 1994). This is unlike the majority of Western cultures’ communication, in which verbal communication is a tool for exchanging messages and reaching mutual understanding and thus the absence of communication is considered a breakdown in communication. Silence is a way of structuring worded communication in Japanese culture (Yamada, 1994). Silence may also be employed to indicate disagreement, non-acceptance, or an uncomfortable tension (McDaniel, 2003). In addition, a feature of Japanese conversations involves many short pauses or breaks (*ma*). These pauses may indicate meaning, show respect, or assess the other person or the situation (McDaniel, 2003). This is probably what Yamada (1994) has introduced as talk-distancing, because she believes that talk-distancing, the conversational style of communication that pauses a conversation, is the impact of silence in Japanese communication.

Moreover, she argued that talk-distancing features contribute to the indirect and implicit Japanese conversation.

Oral and Written Communication

Japanese prefer to communicate orally, face-to-face, because they are tied to information networks based on personal relationships. To some extent, as Nishiyama (2000) explained, Japanese count on their sixth sense (*kan*) or intuition in interpersonal communication; they are expected to observe and understand the situation from contextual information, rather than asking directly. In other words, they prefer face-to-face communication, because this kind of communication enables them to understand true meanings from nonverbal elements, such as gestures, facial expression, and body movement of the other speakers. Japanese value a feeling of shared responsibility, trust, and commitment developed during communication processes more than a legal document (Hall & Hall, 1987). The use of paralinguistic in their conversations is a common practice in Japanese culture. Japanese regularly use small, culturally unique gestures (*aizuchi*) and utterances (*hai, soo, un, or ee*) to express their attention to the speakers (McDaniel, 2003). They nod frequently when they are listening. This is the unique gesture of *aizuchi* (agreeing signal) (Nishiyama, 2000). This kind of feedback from the listeners helps maintaining positive social relations (*wa*) in communication process.

Japanese utilise five major writing systems: (a) kanji; (b) kana (hiragana, katakana, furigana); (c) romanji; (d) arabic numerals; and (e) chinese numerals (Belote, 2001); therefore it is considered as one of the most complicated languages (Nishiyama, 2000). Kanji writing includes more than 3,000 characters that originated from Chinese characters with more than 5000 possible pronunciations and covering at least 5000 possible meanings (Belote, 2001). The adoption of Chinese characters is a

result of the interaction with Chinese in the fourth century A.D. *Hiragana* developed by women at court because they were not allowed to learn *kanji*, appears to be more cursive (rounder) and is phonetic. School children learn it before *kanji* and *katakana*. *Katakana* is used for writing the sounds of borrowed words (especially words from non-Japanese origin) and for emphasis. *Katakana* is more angular and linear in the form than *hiragana*. *Furigana* is a smaller than usual syllable sign (usually *hiragana*) that is written alongside or above a *kanji* to show the correct pronunciation. *Romanji* is the Roman alphabet. Most Japanese also use the Arabic numerals. Chinese numerals are actually characters or *kanji* (Belote, 2001).

Politeness

Politeness reflects a specific culture's behavioural norms. It is associated with the operation of conventional styles of communication and the levels of formality (deference) (House, 2004). This latter element is related to making appropriate choices in planning, formulating, and articulating utterances. Many foreigners agree that Japanese is a very polite culture as it can be seen in

the ritual gestures of deference and humility (bowing); the verb endings and forms of address that vary with the status of the parties and the formality of the occasion; the frequent insertion in normal speech of apologetic expressions (e.g. *sumimasen*). (Lincoln et al., 1995, p. 421)

This also seems to be associated with face-saving behaviour, because the Japanese “no” (*ie*) sounds rather formal and too straightforward, unlike English, in which the word “no” may cause no discomfort or offence to the listener (Ueda, 1974, cited in Miller, 1994).

Relationship and Identity

A personal relationship is very important to the Japanese; however it takes a long time to solidify, especially for foreigners. Because Japanese emphasises harmony (*wa*) and membership within groups, the important relationships are within an individual's family, business or professional group (Hall & Hall, 1987). It can be predicted that Japanese also pay more attention in the relationship gradually developed during business than particular details in business contract, because they focuses more on the process rather than on the result (Rhody & Tang, 1995). Japanese males socialise and drink after working hours at bars. At this time, there is no different status between supervisors and subordinates. Therefore, subordinates may criticise their supervisor freely, without having any fear of termination from work (Rhody & Tang, 1995).

The Japanese collectivism is reflected in the use of the term *nihonjinron* (Japaneseness), the self-perceived uniqueness as both a nation and a people (McDaniel, 2003). This perception of distinctiveness encourages social cohesiveness among Japanese society. *Uchi-soto* (inside-outside), a social context for a group relationship is created. Thus, Japanese, according to foreigners, are likely to display two different faces: *uchizura* (face toward insiders) and *sotozura* (face toward outsiders) (Nishiyama, 2000). This context can also be seen as in-group (processing membership) and out-group (no involvement) relationship. In practice, Japanese can be quite expressive within in-group communication (*uchi*) and less interaction will occur in an out-group (*soto*) situations (McDaniel, 2003).

The Germaness

This section reviews the four elements that are significant to German cultures and values: (a) orderliness (*Ordnung*), exactness, and punctuality; (b) the educational and apprenticeship system; (c) the group and decision making; and (d) power, hierarchy, and status. These are the contexts that lead to the explanation of specific German communication behaviour. The German communication will be discussed later in this chapter.

Orderliness (Ordnung), Exactness, and Punctuality

German life is controlled by many rules and regulations which is the reflection of *ordnung*. *Ordnung* means order, arrangement, organisation, and system (Hall & Hall, 1990). “*Alles muß seine Ordnung haben* (everything must have its order). Order is a main concern, and detailed provisions are made to guarantee that order” (Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 197). Because *ordnung* (order) is valued high in this culture, the German team leaders tend to live by rules. Order is achievable when there are constant rules, regulations, and procedures, particularly in this culture, for example noise of any kind is *verboten* (forbidden) during afternoon time (between 1:30 – 3:30 PM) rural area of the city (Flamini, 1997), golfers need to obtain a special license to drive a golfing cart (Gannon, 2004), never wash a car on a Sunday morning (Foster, 2000). However, there is one exception to orderliness: Germans do not form queues in lines for service, for buses or streetcars, in stores, and at ticket counters (Hall & Hall, 1990). Germans tend to do one thing at a time, therefore the schedules are strictly observed and the punctuality is highly important in this culture.

Germans value correctness and exactness in everything they do; they hate to make mistakes. “Doing things right” is the core value of this society (Hall & Hall, 1990). In relation to their value of precision, Tominaga (1997, as cited in Schneider &

Littrell, 2003) concluded that the German exactness is found not only in engineering, but also in the administration (bureaucracy) in the state, governmental apparatus, and even in the firms. Germans emphasise precision and promptness; they believe that the future result depends on the current analysis therefore they are conscious of planning and using time efficiently, to avoid the possible uncertainty in the future. They also differentiate work time and leisure time, but in both cases, they believe that time should be used rationally and efficiently (Gannon, 2004). They have a desire to complete one action before starting on another because of their compartmentalisation. As a result, flexibility and spontaneity are not highly valued in this culture. In addition, Germans compartmentalise time with appointments and schedules; they compartmentalise space by covering themselves from other people with a solid wall and doors to discourage interruptions and ensure privacy (Hall & Hall, 1990).

Punctuality is important in Germany. Germans are the most punctual of all peoples. Arriving late may mean a delay for only two minutes (Lewis, 2006) but it is taken as a sign of inefficiency and disinterest (Flamini, 1997). The schedules and appointments are kept promptly; from the schedule of public transportation to the meetings, all are strictly observed (Hall & Hall, 1990). As McCarthy (2005) noted, German supervisors have “open door” policies at the precise time and day of the week when the office doors open. They distinguish clearly the time when they work (on duty) from the personal time. Interestingly, staying late at the office is not necessarily taken as a good behaviour in this culture; it may indicate that the individual is incapable of organising him- or herself well enough to accomplish the task in a particular time frame (Foster, 2000).

The Educational and Apprenticeship System

Germans attach major importance to *Bildung* (education and culture) (Flamini, 1997). Germans are recognised as a highly educated society with the existence of a complex and formal education system (as shown in Figure 4). This orderly education system determines Germans life career at an early stage. In this sense, from the early age, Germans are used to choose and plan their “future career.” Gannon (2004) believes that German educational system reflects the German cultural values of orderliness and the uniformity of quality. Because the education is free for Germans from kindergarten to the university, the typical Germans are highly standardised educated, therefore they form a well-qualified work force and the working environment is highly competitive.

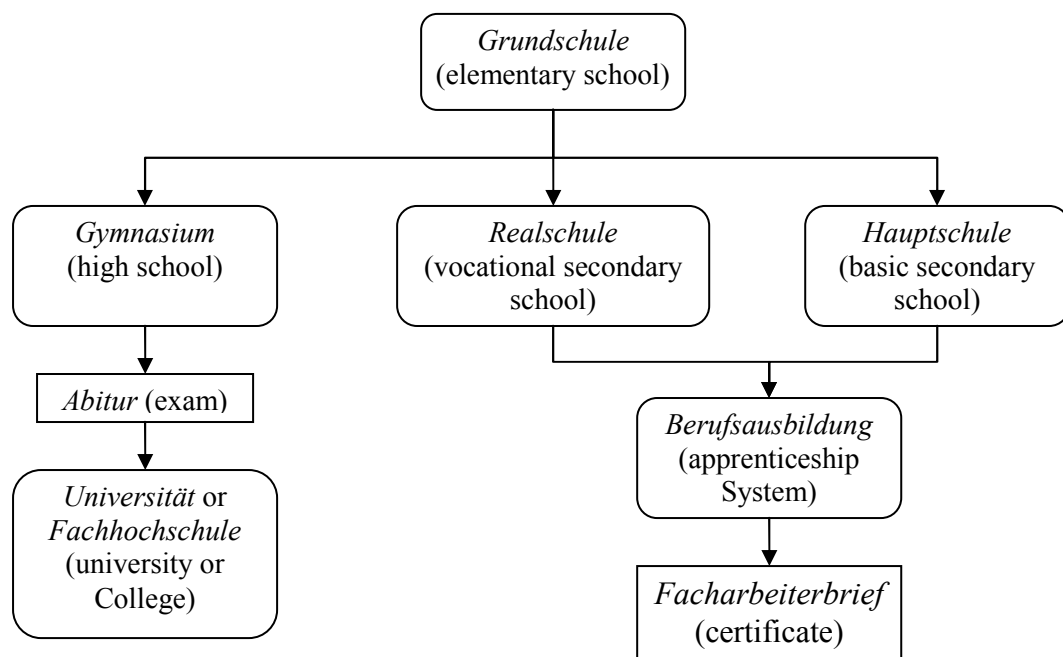


Figure 4. The German Educational and Apprenticeship System

Note. The data are adapted from “The global etiquette guide to Europe: Everything you need to know for business and travel success,” by D.A. Foster, 2000, New York: J. Wiley & Sons.

An effective apprenticeship system exists both on the shop floor and in the office. At the end of this training, the Germans will receive a certificate, the *Facharbeiterbrief*, which is recognised throughout the country (Schneider & Littrell, 2003). This is a typical for German workforce educational development. As a result, a technical background (starting with apprenticeship) is a typical for German managers. Germans are analytic and conceptual in their information process. Thus, the professional criteria (such as technical skills and experience) are the most important promotion consideration (Schneider & Littrell, 2003). Because of the complexity of educational system that takes a long time to finish, the Germans do not freely share information. The knowledge is attached to individual; not shared easily. Having knowledge and information is the symbol of status and power according to this culture.

The Group and Decision Making

In a group work, privacy and individual accomplishment of the tasks are critical to team process. Germans believe that following the procedure is the most effective way of accomplishing task in a group (Foster, 2000). Therefore, there will be many rules, norms, procedures, and roles established in a group in order to maintain the balance of the contribution of each individual.

In business, Germans approach decision making slowly, because of their exactness; all concerns must be taken care of in the process. Their decision making requires many lateral clearances as well as considerable research, as a consequence of their compartmentalisation (Gannon, 2004). Their consensus is achieved by clarification and justification, not by persuasions or open discussions (Lewis, 2006). Once a decision is made, it is unchangeable as the flexibility and quick responses necessary to deal with certain kinds of issues are often absent in German business

(Hall & Hall, 1990), because of their compartmentalisation and their tendency to avoid the risk and uncertainty. Hall and Hall (1990) believe that this behaviour is also due to the inflexibility of their leaders, because the decision makers are usually the business leaders with their “top-down” decision making (Lincoln et al., 1995). Moreover, German hierarchical structure must be followed and key people must be informed about all progress.

Power, Hierarchy and Status

Germans do not share information freely, except with their own particular work group, because they consider knowledge as power (Hall & Hall, 1990). In this sense, German supervisors are expected to solve their own departmental issues independently. Intellectual power is the highest rank in German society among other types of power on financial, political, entrepreneurial, and managerial. Germans also value titles, but compared to the Japanese, German ranks are fewer and are less rigid (Lincoln et al., 1995). In this culture, material possessions, social position, and professional level symbolise power. “People of power and authority in German business have the usual accoutrements of success – large offices, expensive automobiles, and handsome homes” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 42). A corner office space also indicates power in this culture.

Most organisations are organised as having two types of boards: a supervisory board (*Aufsichtsrat*) and a management board (*Vorstand*). The supervisory board approves major decisions, sets the strategies for the organisation, and appoints and dismisses the *Vorstand*. The management board conducts day-to-day business of the organisation (Hall & Hall, 1990). Foster (2000) gives the example of the hierarchy of German business as follows (these titles usually appear on business cards):

<i>Vorsitzender</i>	chairman/president
<i>Stellvertretender Vorsitzender des Vorstandes</i>	deputy chairman
<i>Ordentliches Mitglied des Vorstandes</i>	regular member of the board
<i>Stellvertretendes Mitglied des Vorstandes</i>	deputy member of the board
<i>Generalbevollmächtigter</i>	general manager
<i>Abteilungsleiter</i>	division/department head
<i>Prokurist</i>	corporate secretary

Germans are specialists; Typical German managers have a technical background. They consider their technical expertise as the most important basis of their authority. In other words, German managers gain authority and respect on the basis of technical expertise (their professional status) (Schneider & Littrell, 2003). It is common for the managers to explicitly transfer their knowledge to their subordinates thoroughly. They tend to establish their authority by giving clear, precise, and often blunt directions. It is reflected on the use of language that is characterised by “*verboten, nicht erlaubt, and sie müssen* (forbidden, not allowed, and you must)” (Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 213). They also monitor subordinates closely for ensuring that the subordinates accomplish task properly according to the established procedures. Thus, Lincoln et al. (1995) agree that the top-down (command and control) communication style predominates among German managers.

German Communication Behaviour

Direct and Indirect Communication

German is considered a Low-context culture (Hall & Hall, 1990); they value openness and directness communication style and they like using examples. The word

zum beispiel ('for example') is frequently used by Germans for giving a clear description (Hall & Hall, 1990). They also prefer facts, factual texts, figures, charts, and projections for future events, because Germans are very linear thinkers (Foster, 2000). The advertising of products and services are full with facts and figures, rather than with solely emotional appeal. As one of the characteristics of Low-context communication, information communicated in the workplace is not shared except with certain people. In this culture, people use information as an instrument of command and control in this society. Being orderly and logical in communication are essential in a business interaction. In business across cultures, they also expect the foreign business counterparts to give all the information in detail, because of their value of directness and exactness.

Goldman (1994) notes that Germans share the roots of adversarial, individualist, aggressive, and confrontational communication style through Graeco-Roman (rhetorical lineage) expressions, such as Graeco-Roman rhetoric and debate. It is natural to speak to the point and confront others for the sake of truth, productivity, and efficiency (Goldman, 1994). Thus, "Germans are too argumentative" is one of the stereotypes of this culture (Lincoln et al., 1995).

In giving feedback, Germans expect their supervisor to communicate this directly and clearly straight away. Hall and Hall (1990) give an illustration about the preference of German employees of this directness by citing the comment from a supervisor:

I have many German employees and I must make a periodic evaluation of their performance. Then I must meet with each employee and discuss his evaluation. Sometimes the German will say, "Why did you give me only an average rating?" I

tell him, “You come in late and you are not working hard.” He will say, “But why didn’t you tell me this before?” (p. 63)

Equally, Germans do not hesitate to correct others in public since unusual behaviour makes them uncomfortable. They are concerned about enforcing proper behaviour in each other and consistently correct each other and even correct strangers (Hall & Hall, 1990). In relation to giving a positive feedback in business, German supervisors seldom compliment their subordinate for accomplishing the task. On the other way, criticism is often given as a way for improvement in this culture.

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

German verbal communication is characterised by directness. Germans choose each word to communicate a specific and explicit meaning. There are three types of German language: Low German (*Plattdeutsch*: the dialect, spoken in the north), *Swabian* or *Bavarian*: the dialect, spoke in the south, and High German (*Hochdeutsch*: the standard German) (Varner & Beamer, 2005). The latter is generally used by writers and upscale newspapers (Flamini, 1997). Traditionally, the *Plattdeutsch* was the preserve of spoken language, while standard German (*Hochdeutsch*) formulate the written mode of communication, particularly in public, media, and government. However, in recent years, it is increasingly common to find dialects in public and media texts, such as advertising and television (Kelly-Holmes, 2002).

Germans tend to use a direct and explicit mode of verbal communication; they spell everything out in words. According to foreigners, Germans’ explanations are lengthy and detailed, because they value the explicitness and the clarity of the messages without leaving any ambiguity. Gannon (2004) has observed that Germans tend to use a deductive way of thinking that relies on their past history and theory. In

order to explain something, they usually begin with the description and logical analysis of the background/history related to the topic. This background will provide foundation for the explanation of current situation and future prediction related to the topic.

Germans tend to use few nonverbal modes of communication, such as gestures and facial expression in interacting with foreigners. The most common one is handshake. German handshake is done quickly and firmly with a few quick shakes between two men, but not as strongly between men and women or two women (Foster, 2000). The handshake is usually accompanied by an appropriate greeting such as *Guten Tag*. Germans do not smile when introduced. They save their smiles for friends and family (Gesteland, 2005). Therefore, smiling and other nonverbal behaviours do not accompany the handshake when it is an interaction with the stranger. However, they maintain eye contact in the conversation to show their attentiveness. Germans focus on verbal more than nonverbal behaviour in communication because they focus on the content of the information more than the context surrounding the information, therefore Hall (1990) categorises German as a Low-context culture.

Oral and Written Communication

In terms of German oral communication, Friday (2003) identifies the differences between *Gespräch* (casual talk) and *Besprechung* (the more formal discussion about an issue). *Besprechung* is a discussion based on the basic assumption that there is always logically and philosophically truth. It is a common mode of social intercourse, which is characterised by high level of discussions about books, political issues, and other serious topics. These subjects refer to a high level of education, which is valued high by traditional Germans. Other topics include current events, the

arts, sports (especially football), music, and philosophy (Foster, 2000). Therefore, having a discussion about those subjects with Germans may develop deeper relationships. On the other hand, the topics that should be avoided include personal financial discussions, private family matters, personal background, World War II, and the like (Foster, 2000). In addition, *besprechung* is crucial in a society in which the individual's intellectual credibility establishes the individual's position in the group (Friday, 2003). In oral communication, Germans do not immediately get the point because in their language, the verb often comes at the end of the sentence. Besides, Germans are very print-oriented, so that written communication is more dependable than face to face communication therefore some foreigners agree that Germans stereotypes are curt, blunt, and arrogant (Lincoln et al., 1995).

Formality

The old German aristocracy is still an element of the society. An obvious behaviour of this class system is the importance of good manners. Germans in business are expected to display good manners, especially those who are educated. First naming is considered taboo and makes Germans uncomfortable in the early stage of relationship (Hall & Hall, 1990). It takes time before the foreigners may address Germans with their first names, otherwise they will perceive foreigners as rude. Like the Japanese, Germans address others with their family names, usually starting with the honorific terms (Lincoln et al., 1995), for example the professor is formally addressed as "*Herr Professor Doktor*" for male followed by his last name or "*Frau Professor Doktor*" for female (Gesteland, 2005). Hall and Hall (1990) note that only within those who have a close relationship, they may tolerate the formal rules of this behaviour. This includes family members, friends, and coworkers. In addition, there are two forms of addressing *you*: the formal *sie* and the familiar *du* (Hall & Hall,

1990). *Sie* is used in almost all situations, especially in interaction with any new acquaintances when first met on a neutral public occasion. It is also used for addressing subordinates, including the drivers and the doormen. *Du* is used only within family members and close friends (Hall & Hall, 1990). With regard to the age of the speakers, *sie* form is used among the speakers over 30 years of age, while *du* form is commonly used among teenagers up to their twenties (Hickey, 2003).

Relationship and Identity

Like the Japanese, Germans make friendships that are deep and lasting. However, they are not open to strangers for casual relationships, because they are serious and dislike small talk (Hall & Hall, 1990). They also rarely socialise outside the workplace (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). In this sense, there is less informal communication in the working environment. A study done by McCarthy (2005) concluded that 61 percent of German respondents agree that socialising outside workplace is desirable, but only 18 percent of them consider this as a usual practice. Lincoln et al. (1995) agree this culture is tight with many rules and norms, dense, and in some extent closed cultural and social system that resists foreigners. Therefore, according to some foreigners, the “Germans are too blunt” (Lincoln et al., 1995). However, the bluntness is value high in this culture. Germans are likely to move less often (less mobility) and develop friendships slowly, because they have a strong sense of history, tradition, family, and life-long friendships (Friday, 2003). As a result, the family reputation is still considered as part of one’s own identity, which may bring individual in a stable social position.

Germans are less comfortable with strange situations and newcomers as Hofstede’s (2001) study concluded that German culture scores moderately high in Uncertainty Avoidance. An exploratory study done by Littrell and Valentin (2005)

also confirmed that German respondents rated tolerance of uncertainty as undesirable. Germans seldom invite anyone who is not a close friend to their home. They maintain the formal rules of behaviour that give one another distance and privacy. An invitation to visit a German home may indicate that Germans want to explore the possibility of becoming closer friends. The German executives prefer to work in a private office with solid doors and soundproof walls. As at their home, the door is also a protective barrier, which is usually thick and heavy. Germans prefer to keep the doors closed. This reflects an assumption that they are responsible for their own department, without the interference from other groups (Hall & Hall, 1990).

Chapter 5

Culture and Team Leadership Communication

Communication is the basis of team leaders' activity. Leadership communication is the process of influencing and convincing followers to attain specific shared goals. From the possible variety of roles of team leaders as discussed in chapter 2, this project focuses on two key communication roles in team working: (a) task communication (directing, coaching, giving feedback); and (b) relational communication (promoting open communication climate, listening, conflict management) (Barker et al., 2001; Kotter, 2001; Patton & Downs, 2003; Shockley-Zalabak, 2006).

Based on the integrated concept above and the previous chapter's discussion about cultural dimensions of the Japanese and German (the summary as shown in Table 5), this chapter will investigate the effects of culture on team leaders' communication behaviours, particularly of Japanese and German team leaders. The researcher is aware of the contribution of team members and other contingency factors in the process of interaction and the outcomes; however, this project focuses largely on the Japanese and German team leaders' communication behaviour with regard to their nationality and citizenship, because this discussion will provide an analysis of their communication behaviours at the societal level.

Table 5
The Cultural Dimensions of Japanese and German

CULTURAL DIMENSION	JAPANESE	GERMAN
<i>Hofstede (1984)</i>		
• Individualism-collectivism	Collectivist	Individualist
• Power Distance	High	Low
• Uncertainty Avoidance	High	Moderate-high
<i>Trompenaars (1993)</i>		
• Achievement-Ascription	Ascription-oriented	Moderate-Achievement
<i>The GLOBE Study (2004)</i>		
• Assertiveness	Low	High
• Future Orientation	Moderate-high	Moderate-high
• Performance Orientation	Moderate-high	Moderate-high
<i>Hall (1976)</i>		
• Communication Context	High	Low

Note. The data are adapted from “Beyond culture,” by E. T. Hall, 1976, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday; “Culture's consequences International differences in work-related values,” by G. Hofstede, 1984, Newbury Park, Sage; “Riding the waves of culture: Understanding cultural diversity in business,” by A. Trompenaars, 1993, London: Brealey; “Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies,” by R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta, 2004, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Japanese Team Leadership Communication Behaviour

Task Communication

Directing

As Japanese is a moderate-high Future-oriented culture, it can be predicted that Japanese team leaders will prepare a long-term plan carefully with many details, because one of the characteristics of Future-oriented cultures is the tendency of the

society for encouraging and rewarding future-oriented behaviours such as planning. As considered high Uncertainty Avoidance culture, Japanese team leaders take a long time for thinking and the decision making process because they will ensure that every aspect has taken into consideration for making a best decision that affect the team process and performance. They will also establish team norms and rules for maintaining the team process stability. The summary is presented in Table 6.

Coaching

As a High-context communication culture, Japanese team leaders prefer face-to-face meetings for interaction with team members, because they value nonverbal behaviours. Because Japanese is considered as a high Power Distance culture, the Japanese team members are usually perceived as having different (lower) status from team leaders. There is a rigid hierarchical structure with well-defined roles for every team member. In this sense, they are perceived as having passive roles; they expect the leaders to give detail instructions and directions to team members. The team members are unlikely to contradict and argue their team leaders, because they believe that their team leader have more power and a higher status than them. An authoritarian leadership is likely to be an ideal style in high Power Distance cultures. Therefore, Japanese team leaders will use formal a chain of command (top-down communication). Hofstede (2003) agrees that the ideal team leader of this culture acts as a good father, in team members' point of view. The high Uncertainty Avoidance element indicates that Japanese team leaders will also establish a variety of rules, procedures, and even punishments for those who break the rules in teamwork. Moreover, because *Amae* (dependency) exists in the relationship between team leaders and team members, in terms of coaching the Japanese team leaders will give clear instructions, suggestions, and advice related to task, and even those related to the

team members' personal issues. They do not distinguish the task-related from personal-related suggestions clearly.

Table 6

The Impacts of Culture on Team Leaders' Task Communication

COMMUNICATION	JAPANESE	GERMAN
<i>Task Communication</i>		
	<i>M-FO, H-UA</i>	<i>M-FO, M-UA</i>
Directing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * A long-term plan with a space for further interpretation * Shared roles * Process-oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * A long-term and detailed plan, no ambiguity * Well-defined role for each * Result-oriented
	<i>H-C, H-PD, COL</i>	<i>L-C, ACV, IDV</i>
Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * F2F interaction * Autocratic and directive style * Both task- and people-oriented leaders * A mentor (related to person) * Encourage the development of a whole team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * F2F and written * Democratic style with high expectation * Task-oriented leaders * Exact and detailed instruction * A coach (related to task) * Encourage autonomy and opportunities for individual
	<i>ASC, M-PO, COL, H-PD</i>	<i>ACV, IDV, L-C, L-PD</i>
Giving Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Indirect feedback (Direct feedback in socialising time only) * Consider the individual's role and position in team * Consider kao, group harmony, and relationship * unlikely to encourage feedback from team members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Direct and explicit feedback straight away * Written and formal feedback * Constructive and critical feedback for improvement * likely to encourage feedback from team members

Note.

ASC = Ascription

COL = Collectivist

H-C = High-context

H-PD = High Power Distance

H-UA = High Uncertainty Avoidance

M-FO = Moderate Future Orientation

M-PO = Moderate Performance Orientation

ACV = Achievement

IDV = Individualist

L-C = Low-context

L-PD = Low Power Distance

M-UA = Moderate Uncertainty Avoidance

Giving Feedback

As a Collectivist culture, Japanese team leaders emphasise group work and harmony. They identify themselves as part of the group. They will avoid giving explicit and critical negative individual feedback directly to team members, because it is considered inappropriate in this culture. Any direct criticism will be perceived as threatening the harmony, status, and other person's "face" (*kao*). As a High-context communication culture, Japanese team leaders will use an indirect and implicit mode of communication. The context of communication, such as gestures, silence, and other nonverbal signs also play a significant role in communication interaction. As a high Power Distance culture, Japanese team leaders tend to emphasise top-down communication and control. They are unlikely to encourage participation or feedback about their performances from team members. As a moderate-high Performance-oriented and an Ascription-oriented culture, in giving feedback, Japanese team leaders will consider other factors than merely individual performance, such as age, experience, and qualifications, to name a few.

Beyond that, Japanese actually have their own way to communicate feedback directly and frankly. As many authors have observed, Japanese "socialising/drinking time" after working hours is the appropriate time for a direct and explicit communication, including giving feedback between team leaders and team members, without any fear of disciplinary acts (Hall & Hall, 1987; Rhody & Tang, 1995). This is a "*kata*" for the Japanese in giving the appropriate feedback. In this sense, it can be predicted that the Japanese team leaders will encourage the team members to go socialising after working hours, because this informal activity gives a positive impact associated with seeking the truly feedbacks.

Relational Communication

Promoting an Open Communication Climate

As Japanese is a High-context culture, information flows freely in this culture (Hall & Hall, 1987). Information is shared quickly by every individual in a team, including the team leader, because “team-ness” is more important than “individual-ness”. As Collectivists, Japanese team leaders emphasise people-oriented communication to maintain team harmony. They focus on the total individual and view each of them as a person rather than an employee. Perhaps, that is the reason that categorises Japanese as an Ascription culture. The team leaders will be mentoring (related to the person rather than task), rather than coaching (related to the task) subordinates, because of their long-term relationships and their culture (Tang et al., 2000). In this sense, they are relationship-focused rather than task-focused leaders (the summary is presented in Table 7). Relational communication is required for maintaining harmonious relationship in a team and for supporting the team process to achieve the team goals. Open communication is possible whenever a close relationship is developed within a team. The example of this application from the Japanese team leaders is the use of socialising time to promote informal communication. This informal communication will lead to higher team cohesiveness.

Listening

Japanese leadership is defined as the capability to listen to others and to collaborate to achieve group consensus and harmony (Hall & Hall, 1987). As the members of a Collectivist culture, the majority of Japanese perceive the organisation as a family. As a result, Japanese team leaders are likely to listen to team members’ issues and concerns, both work-related and personal-related issues. Because the Japanese is considered moderate Performance-oriented and Ascription-oriented,

therefore the communication style of Japanese team leaders involve listening.

Listening includes silence; knowing the complete messages or information from the speakers, before the listeners give feedback about the messages have been sent.

Table 7

The Impacts of Culture on Team Leaders' Relational Communication

COMMUNICATION	JAPANESE	GERMAN
<i>Relational Communication</i>		
	<i>H-C, ASC, M-PO</i>	<i>M-PO, ACV, L-C</i>
Open Communication Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Information shared freely * F2F and informal interaction * Both task- and people-oriented leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Information does not flow freely (knowledge as power) * Formal meetings * Less informal interaction * Task-oriented leaders
	<i>COL, H-C</i>	<i>M-UA, IDV</i>
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Good listeners (group-oriented) * Non-verbal (such as silence) is valued in interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Unlikely to be good listeners * Likely to be argue, contradict, and questioning clarification
	<i>COL, H-C, L-A</i>	<i>IDV, L-C, L-PD, H-A</i>
Conflict Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Others and mutual oriented * Face saving strategy * Less emotional expression * Avoiding style --> harmony * use the third party help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Self-oriented * Strong argumentation * Confrontational & competing style

Note.

ASC = Ascription

COL = Collectivist

H-C = High-context

H-PD = High Power Distance

H-UA = High Uncertainty Avoidance

L-A = Low Assertiveness

M-FO = Moderate Future Orientation

M-PO = Moderate Performance Orientation

ACV = Achievement

IDV = Individualist

L-C = Low-context

L-PD = Low Power Distance

M-UA = Moderate Uncertainty Avoidance

H-A = High Assertiveness

As a High-context communication culture, silence is considered valuable as well as a sign of respect and trustworthiness, just as stated in the earlier chapter that “those who know do not speak; those who speak do not know” (Gannon, 2004). The emphasis on the group or the majority opinion is in line with the preferences of the Japanese to work in groups, not alone. The Japanese team leaders are likely to be open to questions from team members, because the team leaders perceive themselves as “good father” for team members. They are responsible for the success of team process, both individually and collectively. This is also likely to be the impact of *amae* in the relationship between team leaders and team members therefore team leaders hold a considerable responsibility for a whole team in both task-related and personal-related issues.

Conflict Management

Japanese is considered as a Collectivist culture. As Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) agree, collectivism emphasises the representation of collective opinion/ideas, the restraint of personal emotional expression, and the protection of in-group members. There are numerous approaches for understanding conflict handling style, but most scholars acknowledge Thomas and Kilmann’s model of conflict management, which consists of five styles: (a) competing: high in assertiveness and low in cooperative, (b) accommodating: unassertive and cooperative, (c) avoiding: unassertive and uncooperative, (d) collaborating: high in both assertiveness and cooperation, and (e) compromising: intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002). According to the Japanese perspective, conflict is a lack of harmony (Swierczek & Onishi, 2003). It can be predicted that the Japanese team leaders will perceive conflict as threatening team harmony and relationship. Subsequently, this will affect team performance, because

team relationship is crucial for a team work. As a low Assertive culture, it can be predicted that the Japanese team leaders do not predominate over others, because group goal is more important than individual goal. In this sense, conflict with team members is likely to be avoided by the Japanese team leaders. Instead, they will use more indirect and accommodating approaches for managing conflict in this culture, so that the direct/confrontational style of managing conflict may be avoided in order to maintain relationships.

In dealing with conflict, the Japanese team leader is likely to discuss an issue with a team member privately. By doing so, they avoid the other team members to observe the conflict interaction may occur. Japanese team leader will also encourage the team members to socialise after working hours, so that the team members may have an opportunity to deal with certain issues in a more direct way. This informal meeting provides the way for both Japanese team leaders and team members to temporarily be in an equal status, so that they may communicate directly and informally. This style of managing conflict of the Japanese team leaders indicates the desire to always maintain harmony and relationship in a team process, because the success or the failure of the team is also determined by the individual relationship in a team. Moreover, the Japanese team leaders may use third party/mediator to manage conflict (Siira, Rogan, & Hall, 2004).

German Team Leadership Communication Behaviour

Task Communication

Directing

As a moderate Uncertainty Avoidance and a moderate Future-oriented culture, the German team leaders will set goals and directions carefully for a long-term plan to

avoid ambiguity and uncertainty. Because they value exactness, orderliness (*ordnung*), and promptness, they tend to set a very detailed plan with a clear timeframe and well-defined expectations. As Littrell & Valentin (2005) in their study of preferred leadership behaviours concluded, German respondents rated “tolerance of uncertainty” as undesirable. Because of a Low-context oriented, the German team leaders tend to clarify the message explicitly. Order is achievable when there are effective rules, regulations, and procedures, particularly in this culture. Therefore, the German team leaders will define and develop rules and procedures in detail. They are likely to enforce rules and monitor teamwork to ensure that their team will generate positive results. Also, they will not tolerate the team members who break the team norms and rules by giving them a punitive action.

This is also in line with the expectation of German workers. In the same study as above, Littrell and Valentin (2005) concluded that German workers prefer to work alone, after a considerable planning with the manager, but little managerial direction/guidance after the plan has been made. This finding is consistent with Hofstede’s (1984) study that considers German as an Individualist cultures, as the individual is likely to work alone independently. In terms of communication, the German team leaders tend to focus on delivering personalised messages. For example there will be personalised instructions, targets, and expectations for each individual in a team.

As a low Power Distance, the German team leaders perceive themselves as having an equal status. Therefore, democratic leadership is likely to be an ideal style in this culture. In this sense, team leaders may encourage the participation from their team members in decision making for planning the process.

Coaching

In terms of coaching, German team leaders will give clear information, procedures, and instructions (the summary in Table 6). This is in line with the characteristic of Low-context communication cultures, in which leaders are expected to be explicit and precise in meaning. As an Achievement-oriented culture, the German team leader will act as a coach. Team leaders will focus more on task-related communication rather than relationship-related communication. In this sense, the German team leaders are likely to give suggestions and instructions towards achieving team goals and increasing team productivity; they are unlikely to give advice to team members regarding their personal issues. Because technical expertise is an important basis for people in the top position, the German team leaders will transfer their knowledge explicitly to their members (Schneider & Littrell, 2003). In terms of giving task-related instructions, this is the “telling” style of typical German team leaders. Team leaders from this culture will explicitly give the detail instructions about what should be done and what is forbidden. The moderate Performance-oriented culture reflects the leader’s orientation and constant effort of improvement. German team leaders have highly ambitious goals and high expectations for their team members. They constantly communicate the effort of improvement and the productivity by giving critical feedback.

Giving Feedback

In terms of giving feedback, German team leaders will use constructive and critical feedback as a way for improvement, because they are a moderate Performance-oriented and an Achievement-oriented culture. In particular, task-related feedback is seen as a natural and an essential way to improve performance. They will communicate it face-to-face directly and in the form of written communication as they

are print-oriented, because of their desire to be exact and explicit. Everything is spelled out in words without the ambiguous message of nonverbal communication. In this sense, it can be predicted that German team leaders will give a written feedback explicitly with a long list of the reasons that leading into certain conclusion of feedback. These are the characteristics of Low-context communication cultures. German team leaders seldom give compliments to team members who have done a great job, because they assume that every individual will perform well; performing well is a regular expectation, as a moderate Performance-oriented culture.

German team leaders will also provide the opportunity for team members to give feedback to team leaders' performance. This is possible in a low Power Distance culture, where team leaders and team members consider each other as equal, with flatter hierarchical pyramids in organisations. The directness way of giving feedback is supported by Hall and Hall (1990) by stating "Germans will correct foreigners' behaviour, but they are equally concerned about enforcing proper behaviour on each other and constantly correct each other, even strangers, in public" (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 52). This is also true from the perspective of German team members; they expect to hear the feedback/criticism directly and frankly.

In a recent study of leadership practices, McCarthy (2005) found the opposite practices from those predictions above. McCarthy (2005) concluded that 39 percent of German respondents consider seeking feedback from subordinates as a usual practice. Interestingly, 78 percent of German respondents consider that behaviour as a good practice. This finding indicates the desire of German leaders to seek feedback from employees. Perhaps, this project's prediction of team leaders' communication will become a real practice of German team leaders in the near future.

Relational Communication

Promoting an Open Communication Climate

German team leaders will conduct formal meetings to facilitate teamwork. As McCarthy (2005) noted, German has “open door” policies at the precise time and day of the week when the leaders’ doors open. They distinguish clearly the time when they work (on duty) from their personal time. In those “open door” times, the German team leaders are available to approach as a consultant for technical difficulties. In this sense, German team leaders are unlikely to be easily approachable at any time. Certainly, there is less informal communication in team practically, because only 18 percent of German respondents consider socialising with co-workers as a usual practice (McCarthy, 2005). This practice highlights the crucial task of German team leaders for encouraging informal communication within a team to create an open communication climate. However, this is in line with German as a moderate Performance-oriented and Achievement-oriented culture, where individual performance is the basis of the status, because Individualism is predominant in this culture. As one of the characteristics of individualist cultures, the individual is more important entity than the team, therefore team members in this culture are likely to work independently as long as each individual fulfils his or her role in a team. By analysing this kind of working interaction, it can be predicted that each individual do not communicate to each other frequently. Communication interaction is limited only to the communication process associated with accomplishing task.

As a Low-context culture, Germans do not share information freely. The German team leaders are unlikely to share all the information they have with team members, because the knowledge and information is considered as a valuable power and status in this society, so the information should not be shared freely. In a team,

this kind of communication behaviour affects the team process and team performance in a negative way. Unlike the individual work, the team work relies on communication, coordination, and collaboration for accomplishing task and achieving team goals.

Listening

According to the German's perspective, good listening involves displaying an open-minded attitude equally in professional and personal communication context (Imhof, 2003). In communication interaction, rather than listening quietly, German team leaders are likely to argue, contradict, and questioning each other (speaker-listener) to seek clarification. An open-minded attitude is reflected by the desire of the speaker and the listener to seek a clear perception about the topic in a communication interaction. This is true from the view that German is a moderate-high Uncertainty Avoidance culture. In communication, German team leaders will not tolerate ambiguity in delivering and receiving information; they will clarify, even argue each point of message directly after the speaker communicated it. By doing so, they engage in a "German" conversation, because a good interaction involves all processes of understanding a topic clearly and precisely. Therefore, this communication behaviour creates the impression of Germans as bad listeners.

Conflict Management

As an Individualist culture, German culture emphasises the individual as the most important entity. Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) suggest that individualism in interpersonal conflict is characterised by strong assertion of personal opinions, the display of personal emotions, and the importance of personal accountability for any conflict issue/mistake. In relation to that, Hall and Hall (1990) agree that Germans tend to use a Low-context communication mode, which is characterised by

explicitness and directness of communication. In terms of conflict management, German team leaders tend to use a confrontational and competing style as a mirror of their aggressiveness in communication. Therefore German culture is considered high Assertiveness. Goldman (1994) believes that confrontational style is rooted in Graeco-Roman expressions, which are characterised by individualism and aggressiveness in communication acts. It is natural to confront others for the sake of truth, productivity, and efficiency (Goldman, 1994). Oetzel et al. (2003) also agree that members of individualist, low power distance cultures have a greater self-face concern and have lesser other- and mutual-face concerns. In this sense, German team leaders are unlikely to use avoiding and integrating style of conflict management. Because German is a low Power Distance culture, German team leaders consider themselves as having equal status with team members. Therefore, team members may argue and contradict team leaders directly.

In sum, from the analysis of the cultural impacts of team leaders' communication behaviours, it can be seen that the Japanese and German communication behaviours mostly contradict each other (the summary as shown in Table 6 and 7). The concept of High-Low-context communication from Hall (1976) still holds a considerable impact on the differences between the Japanese and German team leaders' communication patterns. However, this description is a result of the analysis of each culture individually. This "black and white" prediction of the Japanese and German team leadership communication behaviours is likely to vary in the real interaction depending on some contingency and situational factors. From analysing this data, the next section investigates the effective team leadership communication behaviour across cultures.

The Effective Team Leadership Communication across Cultures

As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, team leadership communication is considered crucial to the team process and team outcomes. This project focuses on the two key communication roles of team leaders in team working: (a) task communication (directing, coaching, giving feedback); and (b) relational communication (promoting an open communication climate, listening, conflict management) (Barker et al., 2001; Kotter, 2001; Patton & Downs, 2003; Shockley-Zalabak, 2006). Based on the discussion in Chapter 2 about team leadership communication and the analysis of cultural effects on team leadership communication using cultural variability theories, this section discusses the propositions of effective team leadership communication across cultures.

Task Communication

Leading team across cultures is likely to require well-defined rules, norms, roles and expectations for each team member to follow. In this sense, team leader should set and communicate a clear direction and team goal strategically for directing team process. This corresponds to the characteristics of German team leaders' communication, such as the explicitness, directness, exactness in setting and communicating planning in terms of directing team members. On the other hand, the communication behaviour of Japanese team leaders is likely to be ineffectual in a multicultural team setting, because there is a less defined role for each team member, as Japanese culture emphasises the group, not the individual. In a multicultural team, each team member may have his or her own interpretation of doing a task according to his or her cultural values. Therefore this kind of team requires well-defined team rules, norms, and expectations for each team member to follow.

In terms of coaching, the characteristics of Japanese team leaders' communication are likely to be more effective in a multicultural team as they are task- and people-oriented leaders. In a cross-cultural interaction, it would be more effective to focus not only on task-related communication, but also on relationship-related communication, because the team members may come from different culture, with their diverse (national) cultures, subcultures and personality. A team leader should maintain a harmonious team relationship because it affects team process that subsequently leads to team outcomes. However, the communication behaviour of German team leaders in providing clear instruction and direction is also effective for coaching purpose in teams.

The different backgrounds of team members bring different situations in a multicultural team. For example team members from Low-context cultures are more comfortable with direct feedback from their team leaders compared to those from High-context cultures. Nor are the characteristics of Japanese or German team leaders alone effective for giving feedback in a multicultural team. It is likely that the combination style of both communication behaviours is the best suggestion for giving feedback in a culturally-diverse team. In this sense, the team leaders are recommended to be flexible depending on the contingency and situational factors. They should understand the cultural background of each team member, so that communicating feedback can be personalised to each team member.

Relational Communication

With regard to promoting an open communication climate in a team, the Japanese team leader is an ideal prototype of team leaders across cultures. Open communication climate is crucial to promote the cohesiveness of a team. This cohesiveness affects team process and team outcomes. The role of communication

related to promoting cohesiveness becomes more significant in a team with culturally different members. It is the task of team leader to encourage formal and informal communication within a team. As stated earlier in this chapter, Japanese team leaders are both task- and people-oriented leaders, so that they emphasise both on task communication (associated with achieving team goals) and relational communication (associated with maintaining team stability and social process) (as shown in Table 8). It is the challenge for the team leaders to accommodate to all team members' cultural background and characteristics. In this sense, the team leaders should focus on both the task communication and relational communication in order to create good collaboration in teams.

The team leaders as good listeners are needed in a team whose members are different culturally. The team leaders should be a person for seeking clarification about task in a team. Nor are the characteristics of the Japanese team leaders or German team leaders alone effective in a multicultural team. The ideal team leader of multicultural teams is the one who possesses the listening skill of both the Japanese and German team leaders' communication pattern. The team leaders should possess good listening skill like Japanese team leaders as well as the desire for seeking clarification like German team leaders' communication behaviour. By understanding both of these bi-polar communication patterns, the team leaders may adjust their communication style depending on the cultural characteristics of their team members.

Conflict is threatening to team process and team performance. Team leaders should possess good communication skill in managing conflict. In a multicultural team, the team leader is recommended to understand the cultural characteristics of their team members. For leading a team with culturally different team members, the Japanese communication behaviour is likely to be the effective one because it is

characterised by avoiding style, emphasising harmony and focusing on the others and mutual “face.” These characteristics seem to be a bottom line in maintaining conflict in every team regardless the cultural origin of their members, because togetherness, harmony, and good relationship are the crucial ingredients for every team to perform. On the other hand, the characteristics of German team leaders in conflict management are unlikely to be effective because this culture emphasises the self, the individual entity, which is the opponent of the concept of team.

Table 8

The Effective Team Leadership Communication across Cultures

COMMUNICATION	CHARACTERISTICS	CULTURE
<i>Task Communication</i>		
* Directing	Well-defined rules and norms	G
	Clear roles and expectations for each member	G
* Coaching	Clear instructions	G
	Focusing on task and people	J +G
* Giving Feedback	Personalised, considering cultural background	J
<i>Relational Communication</i>		
* Open Communication	Focusing on task and people	J
Climate	Informal communication	J
* Listening	Listening quietly, then responding	J + G
* Conflict Management	Avoiding style	J
	Emphasising team harmony	J

Note. J = Japanese G = German

Table 8 shows the summary of the effective team leaders’ communication behaviours. It consists of two major themes of team leadership communication: task communication and relational communication. Table 8 suggests that task communication corresponds well to the communication patterns of German team

leaders, while relational communication is in line with the characteristics of Japanese team leaders' communication acts.

This project's findings confirm the result of the GLOBE study related to the Japanese and German preferences of leadership. From an empirical study of 62 countries for the purpose of examining the interrelationships between societal culture, organisational culture, and organisational leadership, the GLOBE study attempted to uncover the leadership behaviours that are universally accepted and effective across cultures (House et al., 2004). This study concluded a universal preference for leadership style is Charismatic/Value-Based style, which is "a broadly defined leadership dimension that reflects the ability to inspire, to motivate, and to expect high performance outcomes from others on the basis of firmly held core values" (Dorfman, Hanges, & Brodbeck, 2004, p. 675)

Table 9 presents the three top preferences for "ideal" leadership style of the Japanese and German cultures.

Table 9

The Preference for Leadership Style of Japanese and German

Japanese	(East) German	(West) German
1. Team-Oriented	Participative	Charismatic/Value-Based
2. Charismatic/Value-Based	Charismatic/Value-Based	Participative
3. Participative	Team-Oriented	Team-Oriented

Note. The data are adapted from "Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies," by R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. Gupta, 2004, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

It can be seen that the distinct leadership behaviour preference for the Japanese is a Team-Oriented style. The GLOBE study defines Team-Oriented leadership as "a

leadership dimension that emphasises effective team building and implementation of a common purpose or goal among team members” (Dorfman et al., 2004, p. 675).

According to this definition, it is likely that the ideal Japanese team leaders have the communication behaviours that emphasise team-ness, team building, and relational communication, similar to those of Japanese team leaders as illustrated in Table 8.

Furthermore, this Team-Oriented style also is preferred by the German respondents, but it indicates less desirable.

The Germans are characterised by Participative style as their specific preferences, rather than Team-Oriented (as shown in Table 9). The GLOBE study defines Participative leadership as “a leadership dimension that reflects the degree to which managers involve others in making and implementing decisions” (Dorfman et al., 2004, p. 675). In this sense, this Participative style corresponds to the German team leaders’ communication with their democratic style coaching (as shown in Table 6). Furthermore, this Participative style is likely to be a common situation in the low Power Distance cultures.

Thus, the effective team leadership communication across cultures should consider both task and relational communication in leading a team. The team leaders need to understand the bi-polar categorisations of cultures so that they may adjust their communication behaviours within a continuum. In a similar concept, the characteristics of the effective team leader communication behaviours can be derived from the combination of Japanese and German team leaders’ communication acts. Although there are many cultural dimensions that affect communication behaviours of the Japanese and German team leaders, it is likely that there are 3 major cultural dimensions that bring considerable impacts on communication acts: Individualism-Collectivism, Power Distance, and High- and Low-context communication. Besides,

one should be aware of the existence of individual variations that may cause different communication behaviours from the analysis above.

The Implication for Team Leadership Communication across Cultures

Based on the earlier discussion, it is obvious that (national) culture affects communication acts of team leaders by giving them certain behavioural characteristics that distinguish one culture from another. The impacts of cultural values also determine the effectiveness of team leadership communication across cultures. Considering all the analyses above, this project proposes a conceptual model of team leadership communication across cultures (as shown in Figure 5).

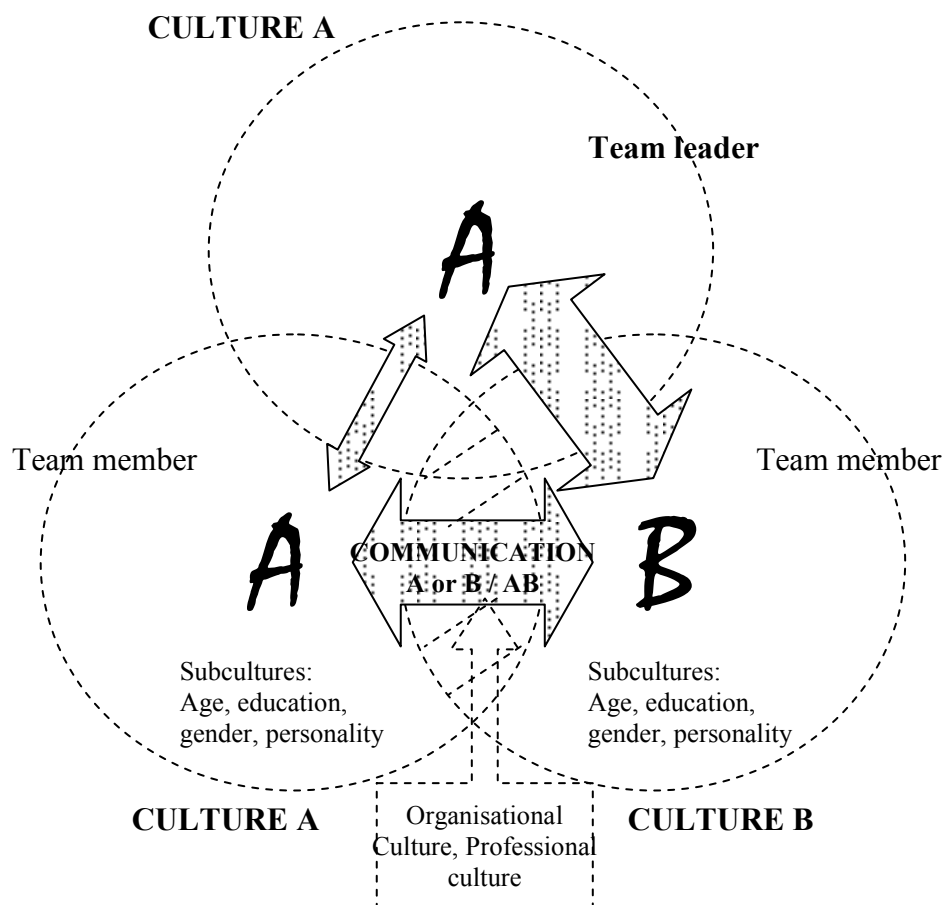


Figure 5. A Conceptual Model of Team Leadership Communication across Cultures

This model describes the communication process between team leaders and team members in an intercultural setting. The (national) culture of team leader affects his or her communication behaviours.

Firstly, in a team whose members come from the same culture as their leader, communication interaction is unlikely to have as many issues (as indicated by a small arrow between team leader from culture A and team member from culture A as shown in Figure 5) as that of a multicultural team.

Secondly, in a team with culturally homogeneous team members that are culturally different from their team leader, the team leader communication acts should consider the majority of the (national) culture of a team (see culture A and culture B in Figure 5). Specifically, the team leaders should understand their own and the other team member's culture. "They need to be able to switch from behavior they use in their own culture to the behavior that will be most appropriate for another culture" (Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 272). Therefore many scholars suggest that (global) leadership across cultures involves flexibility, open-mindedness, and responsiveness to the context (Gregersen, Morrison, & Black, 1998; Kedia & Mukherji, 1999; Stanek, 2000). In this scenario, it can be predicted that one culture will give away to another in terms of the influence on communication behaviour in a team. This is likely to effectively work in two cultures that have a big cultural distance, such as individualist and collectivist, or High-context and low context, to name a few. As an example, in a team that has a Japanese team leader with the German team members, it can be predicted that either one of those cultures will predominate over other in giving the impact to team leadership communication style (as shown in Table 10). The Japanese team leader may stick with his or her Japanese style of communication because a particular team leader has a big power to influence German team members.

In this case, the German team members will adjust their style of communication when communicating with this leader, because of his or her power. On the other hand, the Japanese team leader may accommodate the influence of German culture from their team members because of the strong influence from the majority of individual's culture in a team.

Thirdly, the effort becomes more complex in a situation where a team consists of culturally different team members and team leader (as shown in Table 10). There is no one culture that has "power" to take over the others. It can be predicted that every culture will restrain itself of being too dominant in a team. However, it is likely that the team leader will adjust his or her communication behaviour to the organisational culture or/and professional culture as their first reference. Stated differently, the organisational and professional culture in the workplace may affect the communication acts of team leaders in a multicultural team.

Table 10

The Intercultural Communication Interaction of Team Leadership

	CULTURE		COMM. BARRIERS	REFERENCES OF TL COMMUNICATION
	TL	TM		
1.	A	A	low (subcultures)	Culture A
2.	A*	B*	moderate (national & subcultures)	Culture A or Culture B or Culture AB (transactional/ Hybrid culture)
3.	A	B, C, D, E	high (national & subcultures)	Organisational culture and/ or professional culture or transactional/hybrid culture

Note. TL = Team Leader TM = Team Member

*) the basic concept is the culture of team leader is different from that of team member and there are only two national cultures in a team

Another scenario that seems to be an ideal cross-cultural interaction is the application of combining characteristics of both cultures by team leaders in a team (as shown in Table 10). Varner & Beamer (2005) recognise this as a transactional culture, which is developed and shared primarily by the interaction. As presented in Chapter 2, in a study of multinational teams Earley and Gardner (2005) label this as a hybrid culture. “The context of the interaction becomes more important for molding actions than the individuals’ cultural backgrounds (Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 4). In this sense, the transactional culture only temporarily occurs in a team, when people communicate interculturally. However, this theoretical concept cannot be a predictor of successful intercultural interaction, because it is hard to measure.

By understanding the effects of culture on communication behaviours, team leaders are likely to be able to communicate competently across cultures. In doing so, there are several notes that need to bear in mind: (a) culture (and team leadership) is contingent and situational, so that the cultural dimensions and their prediction as discussed earlier may not apply to all situations; (b) the individual variation exists and contributes to the different behaviours from the prediction; and (c) the contribution of organisational and professional culture in influencing team leader communication behaviours.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Evidence suggests that having teamwork benefits the organisational life. A team is a group of individuals who have complementary skills and commitment, and work interdependently for a certain period of time to achieve a common goal. The role of team leadership is crucial in team process and team outcomes. Specifically, team leadership communication plays a significant role in conducting task-related and relationship-related functions. Culture adds the challenges to team leadership communication.

Culture is the values, attitudes, and behaviours of particular group of people. In this sense, culture dictates attitudes and behaviours of a society. This project focuses on the analysis of national culture. The cultural dimensions developed by Hall (1976), Hofstede (1984), Trompenaars (1993), and the GLOBE study (2004) have been presented in Chapter 3. Although these concepts cannot be generalised into all contexts, the understanding of these categorisations of culture benefits team leaders as in intercultural communication.

Cultural values not only affect the attitudes, but also the communication behaviours of the Japanese and Germans. This cultural description attempts to give explanations for the “why” people behave on certain way. The Japanese and the German cultural research were developed to achieve that purpose. The communication behaviours of these two cultures have been discussed.

Culture also affects team leadership communication acts. As analysed individually, the Japanese and German culture significantly affects their

communication behaviours. As predicted based on the analysis of cultural dimensions, their communication behaviours contradict each other. Japanese team leader communication behaviours correspond to the relational communication while German team leader communication behaviours correspond to the task communication of team leadership. It is suggested that team leadership conducts those two functions: task-related and relationship-related communication consistently in order to result in positive team outcomes. In this sense, the effective team leadership communication behaviours can be understood by knowing both characteristics of the Japanese and German team leader communication behaviours. This finding also confirms the latest “global” study of GLOBE. This project’s finding correlates positively with the preferences of Japanese and German “ideal” leadership style.

As an implication, a conceptual model of team leadership communication across cultures was developed. This conceptual model illustrates team leadership communication across cultures. Firstly, in a “homogeneous culture” team, a (national) culture is likely to be the reference of team leader communication acts therefore intercultural communication barrier is low in this culture. Secondly, in a team whose members are culturally different from their team leader (for example team leader from A culture, team members from B culture, or the other way), the reference of team leader communication behaviours is likely to be either culture A or culture B depending on several contexts, including power issue. The development of a transactional culture may occur in this team interaction as an alternative of the prediction above. Thirdly, in a multinational team (a team with different national culture team members) each individual culture is less likely to be a single predictor of team leader communication acts, because there is no one culture that has “power” to take over the others. It can be predicted that every culture will restrain itself of being

too dominant in a team. Instead, team leader is likely to refer to organisational culture and/or professional culture for his or her communication behaviours.

At the conclusion of this study, the answers to the research questions are as follows. Firstly, culture is the reference of the values, attitudes and behaviours of particular group of people. Specifically, national culture considerably dictates the communication behaviours of team leaders. To the Japanese team leader, the description of cultural constructs developed by scholars and their “Japaneseness” mainly develops their communication behaviours. The same explanation applies to the German culture. It is obvious that the existing cultural dimensions developed by scholars are insufficient to accommodate the “Japaneseness”; the complexity of a culture. However, the effort of the GLOBE study is valuable to the further improvement of this issue.

Secondly, as discussed earlier in Chapter 5, team leaders have two major communication roles: task communication and relational communication. This project’s findings indicate that Japanese team leader communication behaviours correspond to relational communication, while German team leader communication behaviours correspond to task communication. The effective team leadership communication across cultures highlights the significance of combining both characteristics of communication. Furthermore, national culture is the reference of team leader communication acts in a “homogeneous” team and in a team whose members are culturally different from the leader. In other words, it is likely that national culture influences team leader communication behaviours in a team with maximum two different cultures, especially two “big distance” cultures such as individualist and collectivist, high- and low-Power Distance, to name a few. The process of intercultural interaction is explained above. Beyond that, in a multinational

team, team leader is likely to refer their communication behaviours to the organisational culture and/or professional culture.

By understanding the effects of culture on communication behaviours, team leaders are likely to be able to communicate competently across cultures. In doing so, there are several cautions: (a) culture (and team leadership) is contingent and situational, so that the cultural dimensions and their prediction as discussed earlier may not apply to all situations; (b) the individual variation exists and contributes to the different behaviours from the prediction; and (c) the contribution of organisational and professional culture in influencing team leader communication behaviours.

Future Research

As the direction for a further empirical exploration, future research may aim to explore the effectiveness of a team consists of Japanese and German culture. Specifically, it focuses on Japanese team leader with German team members and German team leader with Japanese team members. The research may include the questions such as how does team leadership communication may vary in a team with Japanese team leader and German team members (and the other way around)? How effective is the team leadership communication in a team with the Japanese team leader and German team members, compared to a team with the German team leader and Japanese team members? To what extent, do subcultural factors affect team leadership communication? The appropriate methodology of this kind of empirical research is likely to be the combination of qualitative and quantitative study because this study tends to explore “why” team leader from a certain culture is able to behave “this” way and leads to the effectiveness. It can be predicted that Japanese team leader communication in a team consists of German team members is more effective than

German team leader communication in a team consists of Japanese team members, because the basic cultural values of Japanese are appropriate for teamwork. However, this suggestion of a further research still generates the issue of measuring the effectiveness yet to be answered.

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