

Japan and Indonesia Comparative Study: Changes in Communication and Impact on the Level of Social Presence of University Student Organizations Before and During the Pandemic

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Abstract. This research studies how changes in higher education's methodologies from face to face to computer mediated communication during the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the quality of communication amongst students in university student organizations in Japan and Indonesia. With how immense the COVID-19 pandemic's ramifications in the realm of education, countless studies have covered its impact on a variety of angles and from numerous perspectives, but the same could not be said about university student organizations, thus is why the topic is of value to examine further to better understand it and for future references. In search for the answers, qualitative research method is used, with data collected through focus group discussions held with members from two student organizations, one of Japan's Wakayama University, another of Indonesia's Bina Nusantara University which results are then compared with relevant studies and analyzed. This study established the importance of media's richness and level of social presence within current available selection of discussion methods whilst taking into account whether issues in need of discussion is routine or non-routine in nature, the level of familiarity of each other's way of communication, and differences in context cultures amongst participants.

1 Introduction

This research is done with UN's Sustainable Development Goals no. 4a in mind. Which reads, "Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all" [1]. Education itself is the driving force of establishing sustainability since it is one of main communication vehicles and the basis for the sustainability mindset [2]. Student organizations are an example of teamwork training that introduces the idea of our need in pertaining sustainability in the realm of both education and community itself as a whole. That's why this study approaches university student organizations as research subjects. As higher education is also expected to play a key role in contributing to the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) described in the UN 2030 Agenda [3].

According to [4] effective communication amongst members is integral to the group's success. And one of the main underlying factors that affects this aside from the task given and group size is the level of social presence [5-9]. Unconsciously or otherwise, having vivid access to social cues given by interlocutors' give

way to easy development of mutual dispositions, enabling a harmonious concordance. Which is why it is natural to assume having a good level of social presence is integral to ensure effective teamwork and great results. At the same time, differences between both countries', and even further, each individual's communication culture must be addressed. As said by [10] who coined the term high and low context culture, such differences can and will have an impact on every situation and relationship. And although specific individual differences are apparent, knowing a general stereotype of whether a country falls into the category of high or low side of the spectrum is crucial, as everyone living in said country will be heavily influenced by it [10]. Therefore, seeing the connection these differences have with the social presence level will be paramount for this research. Especially in facing the Corona pandemic, UNESCO has recorded an estimate of 1.3 billion learners that are still affected by school and university closures ("1.3 billion learners are still affected by school or university closures, as educational institutions start reopening around the world, says UNESCO"). Hence, the means of education is then accessible in majority only through computer-mediated communication (CMC). This surely brings forth

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indubitable changes in group dynamics within university student organizations. This issue in its entirety then begs the question of how the level of social presence differs between the initial pre-COVID FTF with the present CMC group interactions alongside its impacts.

Therefore, this study questions; (1) whether there's a difference in the level of social presence, along with its impact in university student organizations' discussions that are held face to face (FTF) with those that are held through computer mediated communication (CMC), (2) if high-low context culture differences between the students have any impact on the level of social presence perceived depending on the media tools used, (3) how do the results' compare between Japan and Indonesia.

1.1 Objectives

This study's objectives are to answer all 3 questions above, in order to understand deeper how the changes in communication method during COVID-19 pandemic impacts the level of social presence of university student organizations. This is done in effort to help further SDGs no. 4 studies, concerning quality education.

2 Literature review

2.1 Social interaction's social presence

Within any group dynamics, social interaction is a given. Social interaction as a whole is the combination of three interrelated constructs which cannot be isolated from one another; social space, social presence, and sociability [11]. For a general understanding, social presence places focus on the awareness of co-presence within the interaction alongside the reciprocity sense of accessibility or insight of their interlocutor's cognition, intention, and emotion, amongst many others [12]. Abstractly it is the sense of 'realness' one might feel, or recognition that they are interacting with another being of intelligence, regardless of it being through mediated representations [12-13]. Mediated representations here can be any form of communication tools available, such as those which allow activities such as messaging, voice calls, or video calls, and also other facilities which offer services using the aid of artificial intelligence to mimic that of a human being's. Since this sense of connectedness within a group setting bears huge importance upon a learners' benefit within a group project, the level of social presence acquired through CMC has an equal amount of importance, as they are connected interchangeably ([11], [14]).

Social presence itself consists of three levels; (1) perceptual level, (2) subjective level, (3) intersubjective level. Level one being the lowest, and level three the highest, and each rise in level brings in a whole new dynamic within this sense of connectedness. Perceptual level can be defined predominantly with the basic cognition of co-presence of another. From the start, this level proves to be difficult to measure, as it is fundament

ally based upon subjective perception, which cannot be observed through sensory means. [12], experts of the field themselves have concluded that though it might be unproblematic in a physical or face to face setting, in mediated environments however is the exact opposite and is highly variable in nature. Using a face-to-face setting, as Biocca and Harms continued in their theory, there are three easy ways to measure whether level one social presence is fulfilled; (1) attentional behaviors or eye fixation, (2) proxemic behavior or movement, and (3) physiological responses.

The second level, naming subjective level gives way to access another's psychological state to a degree. According to [12], level two of social presence, can arguably be measured through; (1) the level of attentional engagement, (2) perceived emotional interdependence or rather the capability to empathize, (3) perceived comprehension, (4) perceived behavioral interdependence or reciprocity ([12], [15]). When level two is fulfilled, one may believe that he or she has insight upon many things regarding their interlocutor's situation and position within their interaction, as an example, their level of comprehension towards the subject at hand, and their implicit opinion towards it.

The final and highest level within the spectrum or the intersubjective level is somewhat similar to the second level, only this time there is reciprocity within the interaction, as in all members of the discussion have an equal or near equal amount of access towards one another's cognition, intention and emotion, making the whole experience dynamic. Or, as Goffman ([12], [16]) stated, "perceived in this sensing of being perceived."

2.2 High and low context culture

High and low context culture is a term that was coined by Edward T. Hall, explaining two distinct communication cultures basing it on the context present within the interaction. The higher the number of shared information within the interaction, the higher the context and the richer the meaning that is conveyed, vice versa. In short, for high context culture, non-verbal aspects' importance is higher than its verbal aspects, and for low context culture, it is the opposite. Edward T. Hall expounded that Japan, like Arabic and Mediterranean countries are considered to have high context culture. While countries such as Switzerland, Germany, The United States of America, amongst many others are examples of those that use low context culture [10]. Though stereotypes certainly exist, this however, does not mean that the particular country's people will always solely use a specific context culture of communication in all situations they may face. As contexting may indicate a number of functions as it shifts up or down during communication. For example, higher context culture usage may mean warming of the relationship, while lowering it could signal displeasure [10]. And the fact that each individual person would have their own set of personality caused not just by natural occurrences but fine differences in how a person is nurtured, in spite of the commonality in their surroundings.

2.3 High and low context culture in Japan

As said before, Japan is a country that uses high context culture communication. Even the term ‘空気を読む’ (read: *kuuki wo yomeru*) or ‘to understand the situation without words’ which literally means ‘reading the air’ was coined by the Japanese [17]. The two main reasons for a community to be a high context culture are; (1) the nature of their language that has numerous homonyms, also many words that are used to convey different nuances depending on the context, for example, the word ‘足’ (read: *ashi*) can mean either ‘leg’ or ‘foot’, (2) and the fact that the community shares a long history together. As an archipelagic nation, it is relatively easier to build upon and keep its own unique culture, not to mention Japan was a 鎖国 (read: *sakoku*) or a closed country for roughly 200 years up until the year 1868 during the Edo period.

However, this does not negate the fact that low-context culture does not exist there. This notion is supported by [18] asking foreigners, mostly Americans, all of low context culture nations about their preferences between Tokyo people and Osaka people. In terms of communication style, while both are polite, Osaka people show it by being warm and friendly, Tokyo people show courtesy by keeping a respectable distance. Positive politeness and negative politeness respectively. The low context nature of Osaka people are also apparent in a business setting, an example can be seen when you want to order during a business related drinking outing. In Tokyo you’d need to be aware of the entire floor’s harmony, not raise your voice and look towards the waiter, wait for them to notice before you speak. Meanwhile in Osaka, the goal is to save your companion’s time and actively call out to the waiter, with a louder voice if needed to draw attention to yourself [19].

2.4 High and low context culture in Indonesia

[20] that explains in detail numerous countries’ nature in the way they communicate through the lens of context culture, especially within the scope of business relations, Indonesia placed at the tip of the high context culture purview, standing side by side with Japan. This of course holds true to a degree in its own respect, however when Indonesia is seen through a wider lens, a slightly different outcome surfaces when basing it upon its language and history. [21] wrote an extensive article containing examples how the language is often used containing ambiguous meanings, and one wouldn’t know the actual message being conveyed without understanding the context, proving the language pertains high context culture’s characteristics. For example, saying ‘aku lapar’ or I’m hungry can mean one or more of the following; the person is indeed hungry, the person is asking for food, the person is asking others if they’d like to eat, or it could even mean that the person would like to end the current meeting or whatever activities they are doing and is stating this as a polite way to excuse themselves. In terms of the language’s history however, the Indonesian language is a relatively

new language that is derived from Malay language. A huge contrast to Japan closing its country, Indonesia was colonized under the Dutch rule for approximately 350 years starting from the 1600s [22]. And only nearing its end was the concern for lingua franca began to be expressed. [22] has done a research on the politics of language during the Dutch Indies rule, he stated that there was a widespread dispute in regards to what language should be used, especially for education, between the Dutch language, Malay language or each and every ethnic’s own local language. And ultimately, Indonesian language finally became the official language during the monumental Youth Pledge Day on October 28th 1928, alongside the proclamation of the existence of Indonesia as a united nation. Therefore, it can be said in general that in terms of history, Indonesia is very young in comparison to Japan.

On top of this, once the country is observed in a broader sense, Indonesia is found as a country consisting of 1,331 number of tribes and 652 local languages will have an equally diverse context and culture [23]. In fact a research conducted by [24] has founded proof that in prominent places of education, such as Yogyakarta, students from different ethnicities and backgrounds would gather and there, a unique intercultural communication method would arise due to the gap between those with high context culture and those with low context culture. The research brought two ethnicities forward, the Batakese and Yogyakarta’s Javanese. Batakese is considered to be low context culture in nature, while Javanese is high context culture. The meeting of different cultures would then bring forth 3 stages in pursuit of harmony; (1) culture exchange, (2) cultural familiarization, and (3) acceptance or adaptation of new culture. This fact would make the process of determining an Indonesian’s context culture, especially in a community where different cultures intermingle, such as within a university’s student organization, might be a bit difficult. Knowing that the longer the different context culture people are together, the higher the likelihood they’ve created their own niche of a hybrid in-between culture.

2.5 Media richness

In an era where online communication is prevalent, further studies have proven that selection of media will heavily affect the richness of conveyable information. Lengel and Daft described that FTF discussions place highest, as emotional cues can be detected through facial expressions and tone of the conversation [25-26]. Meanwhile, impersonal static media, such as fliers score lowest within the spectrum. Unless there is background information where the people who are communicating with each other have a disposition to infer their interlocutor’s intention, written media more often than not fails to convey the intended message clearly. Based on this, [25] then concluded that selecting the richest medium is essential when there’s a need to discuss non-routine issues with team members, since the ability to see physical reactions are important in order to interpret messages correctly, and miscommunication often occurs

when one fails to do so, especially within a high context culture environment.

2.6 COVID-19 pandemic's impact on education in Japan and Indonesia

Amongst all the sectors the COVID-19 outbreak has had an impact on, changes that had to be made to the education sector was one of the few that needed prioritizing, as within it are functions that have direct consequences for health, that are then tackled through social protection [27]. Because of it, countries' governments have declared a policy that requires most if not all learning activities to be carried out through online means in order to break the chain of COVID-19 transmissions and online learning system has now become a panacea, as currently, there is little or no other alternatives available. In April 2020, the first state of emergency was declared in Japan as the Corona virus infection spread. Along with this, at Wakayama University, the class start date was postponed from April 22nd to May 7th due to its geographical proximity to Osaka and the large number of students commuting from Osaka, one of the prefectures affected. Face to face lessons were not held after May 7th, when the lessons started, instead, the lessons became online distance lessons. From June 12th, FTF lessons for some subjects will be held, but most of the lessons remain distance learning. The Indonesian government's Minister of Education and Culture issued a policy on March 14th 2020 to adjust the curriculum according to student's learning needs during the pandemic. Following the policy, starting from March 16th 2020, BINUS University shifts from face to face to online learning during the pandemic. When the pandemic subsided, BINUS University begun adopting a hybrid system starting in September 17th 2021 for 1st to 5th semester students, meanwhile for those studying their 6th semester and above continues their studies online.

2.7 University student organizations

In terms of education, university student organizations gives students learning benefits outside of classroom. Students will be able to build soft skills in leadership, teamwork, amongst many others, gain connections and build relationships, gaining skills that are sought after in the professional world.

2.8 Wakayama university's WAP

WAP is the name of an international cooperation group called Wakayama ASEAN Project, which belongs to the Center for Collaborative Education at Wakayama University. WAP also organizes charity futsal tournaments in Japan. In line with the aforementioned activities, WAP is organized into three groups: TIES, Cube and RIEF. Each of which is led by its own leader and at its core is managed by five people: a representative, three deputy representatives and a treasurer.

2.9 Bina nusantara university's HIMJA

HIMJA, or Himpunan Mahasiswa Sastra Jepang (Japanese Literature Student Association) is a student association at Bina Nusantara University (BINUS University) founded on October 10th, 2002. HIMJA members have four core members and four divisions. The core members consist of the chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and treasurer. Within the organization there are four divisions: (1) Creative, (2) Public Relations, (3) Marketing, and (4) Human Resource.

3 Methods

This study uses qualitative methodologies to explore the subjective perception of social presence level of university students' organization's group discussions before and during the pandemic in Japan and Indonesia. The qualitative endeavor uses a descriptive approach, knowing that there is no need to have control over confounding variables within the data gathering stage of the research. Rather, focus group discussions are held to extract information of the groups' experiences and their input in relation to social presence, before and during the pandemic. And, to further understand the matter empirical research studies are collected to strengthen this study's rationale upon examining the gathered results.

4 Data collection

The gathered literatures are in accordance to the topic; data concerning impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in education, especially within higher education. Keywords that are used includes: COVID-19; higher education; COVID-19 in Japan and Indonesia; COVID-19's impact on education; policy changes' impact on education in Japan and Indonesia; social presence and its impacts; high and low context culture and its impacts. All are articles, reports and journals published on official web pages of reputable news agencies, Research Gate, amongst others by credible sources such as the UNICEF, and OECD. Gathered materials are that of written materials in English, Japanese and Indonesian languages which are then analyzed, summarized and compiled to reach a conclusion.

For the discussions, a total of twenty interview questions were prepared; (1) three preface question, (2) seven questions in regards to changes from FTF to CMC, (3) three comparison questions to help summarize participants' opinion on the matter. In addition, there are 2 post-interview questions given through a simple questionnaire for WAP members on Japan's side. A total of 29 students were interviewed from both Japan and Indonesia. 14 students from Japan's Wakayama University's WAP; 2 fourth year students, 6 third year students, 3 second year students and 3 first year students. Another 15 students from Indonesia's Bina Nusantara University's HIMJA; 9 fourth year students and 7 third year students. A total of 3 separate sessions were done for Japan's side and 2 sessions for Indonesia's side.

Each, consisting not more than 10 participants to ensure the session’s effectiveness.

5 Results and discussion

Below is the result of this study’s focus group discussions in terms of the students’ social presence level depending on the method of communication, according to their context culture and their year. In Japan’s side, 9 out of the 14 people that were interviewed were high context culture, 1 fourth year student, 3 third year students, 3 second year students and 2 first year students. The remaining 5 are low context cultured students, 1 of them is a fourth year, 3 third year students and 1 first year students. And with COVID-19 cases subsiding by the end of 2021, WAP members have started to do a hybrid system (FTF-CMC) for their meetings. On Indonesia’s side, out of the 15, 8 were fourth year students, 3 of them are high context culture, 5 of them are low context culture. The other 7 were third year students, 3 of them are high context culture, 4 of them are low context culture. It needs to be noted that many of the students live outside of Jakarta, rendering the possibility for a hybrid system (FTF-CMC) impossible. Table 1 shows social presence level of Japan and Indonesia’s student organization members based on their context culture and year.

Table 1. Social presence level of Japan and Indonesia’s student organization members based on their context culture and year.

Method of Communication (listed from highest to lowest in terms of its media richness)	Japan						Indonesia					
	High Context Culture			Low Context Culture			High Context Culture			Low Context Culture		
	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	
Face to Face	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Video Call	3	3	3	3	3	3/2	2	2	3	3/2	3	
Voice Call	2	3/2	2	2	2	2/1	3	2	2	2/1	2	
Chat	2/1	3/2/1	3/2	3	1	2/1	1	1	1	1	1	
Social Presence Level												

5.1 Social presence level between FTF and CMC

Results show that FTF meetings holds a constant score of 3 in social presence level, the highest level. This is true despite all and any differences of context culture and country of origin. It’s proven to be the most preferred in regards to the quality of communication, as these are three positive impacts it has; (1) FTF meetings allow reading of body language and communication is more engaging, (2) it is easier in building strong bonds, trust and learn each other’s personality through FTF, (3) it’s more efficient in conveying information, and less misunderstandings occur during FTF discussions. Depending from the angle it is seen, FTF meetings however may have their drawbacks; (1) it is easier for the flow of discussion to deviate from the main purpose of the meeting, (2) when compared to CMC meetings, it is more time consuming and interruptions can reduce productivity, (3) FTF means real time communication, with no lag, giving participants less time to think and process before responding. Whether these 3 points are

indeed negatives or not falls differently from person to person, and other factors, such as the goal of the meeting and the situations they are in would also be in play. In short, FTF meetings’ characteristics are engaging and natural.

In contrast to that, CMC or online discussions through video call, voice call and chat scored sporadically in terms of social presence level. And although it’s not always the case, video call has the highest overall score, and chat discussion on average has the lowest scores. Positive impacts include; (1) very speaker focused, makes it easier for discussions to stay on track with meeting’s objectives, (2) relatively easier to access and easier to arrange in terms of time and location, (3) it is also easier to stick to agendas and time limits. Meanwhile, CMC’s downsides are; (1) it gives more opportunities to multitask on the gadget being used, making it harder to focus for some, (2) sense of personal connection is greatly decreased, making it harder to create bonds, even more so in large meetings, (3) numerous limitations to communicate non-verbally, alongside limitations in technology can cause problems and misunderstandings. To put it simply, CMC meetings are strictly professional in nature. As per the results, in general video call placed the highest, followed by voice call and chat at the bottom end. For non-routine issues, a media placing higher on the media richness roster would be best, otherwise, lower placed media options may suffice.

5.2 High-low context culture’s impact on social presence level depending on the media tools’ used

A person’s context culture, depending on the media tool’s used, has an impact on the level of social presence. Starting from video call meetings, even though there seems to be no significant impact of differences in context culture, as most of both high and low context cultured people scores video call a 3 in social presence level, high context cultured students scored higher in average by comparison. Although limited, having access to visual cues of non-verbal communication significantly puts video call above other forms of CMC discussions for both context cultures. For voice call discussions, most high context culture students gave a score of 2 on the social presence level, low context cultured students’ scores on the other hand are a little bit more scattered, though they have the same average score. Nonetheless, there is a slight tendency for low context culture students to score lower. This might be due to the fact that non-verbal communication method which is preferred by high context culture people is very limited in voice calls, making it hard for low context people to understand. Lastly, chat discussions that offers the simplest form of communication, tend to score very low, with an average of 1 for both context culture. Some high context culture students however, tend to score it higher than their counterpart. The reason behind it is most likely because a number of low context culture people are capable of conveying information clearly through texts. Figure 1

shows the result comparison between high and low context culture participants.

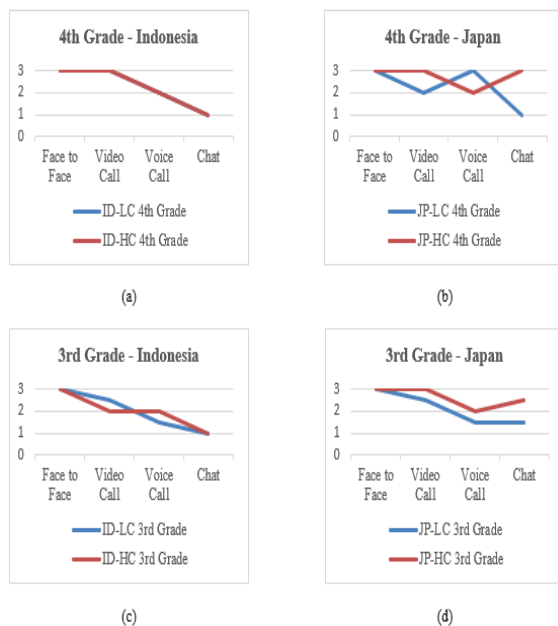


Fig. 1. Result comparison between high and low context culture participants.

Thus, it can be said that on average low context cultured students have lower social presence level than their counterpart. This proves to reason that low context cultured people's nature to use words as is, explicitly according to its meaning is easy for high context cultured people to comprehend, making it possible for high context cultured students here to score chat discussions a 3 on the social presence level. On the other hand, the incapability to access non-verbal messages fully through CMC would naturally makes it significantly harder for low context cultured people to experience the same level of quality communication. Ideally, there should be no significant impact due to these differences, as long as each discussions' participants is capable of carefully explain the intended information they'd like to convey. Nevertheless, in terms of hands-on experiences, differences in context culture will most definitely have an impact in the quality of communication, unless those involved have known each other enough to have an educated guess as to what their interlocutor's trying to convey. Otherwise, there can be a mismatch between what is intended to be conveyed and the conveyed information between high and low context cultured people. For example, high context cultured people often mistook low context cultured people's bluntness as being angry, and low context cultured people often have a difficult time understanding what is the main point that high context cultured people wants to convey.

5.3 Comparison between Japan and Indonesia's results

Outside of the constant score of 3 on the social presence level for face-to-face discussions, Indonesia and Japan's

scoring are seen clearly quite different when placed next to each other, based on their context culture and grade. Beginning from video call, Japan's side has an overall high score in spite of the differences in context culture, with only some instances of lower scores by the low context cultured Japanese. Surprisingly, the opposite can be seen from Indonesia's side, as most high context cultured Indonesian scores it lower than low context cultured Indonesian. This is most likely due to the differences in the nature of Japan and Indonesia's overall context culture as how they are impacted by the combination of their respective language and history. Moving on to voice call, Indonesia's side seems to have a trend for higher grade students who has experienced FTF longer to give higher scores than lower grade students. Factors involved would most likely be the amount of time they knew each other and the amount of FTF interactions experienced beforehand. Meanwhile Japan's side seems to have a more stable scoring, and has a higher average score than Indonesia's side, with some lower grade students scoring it higher than the higher grade students. Finally, chat discussions, though it has the lowest overall score, Japanese students seem to be able to score chat discussions higher still, while Indonesians agree fully that discussions shouldn't be held through chat as it will cause a lot of misunderstandings.

Regardless of individual differences in context culture in Japan's case, the homogeneity of the Japanese as a whole that makes Japan a high context cultured nation when compared with other nations might be the reason why Japan's scores on all media tools discussions are overall higher. While Indonesia's side on the other hand, being a country of many ethnicities, depends a lot more on how integrated the community is, whether or not the individuals within the group have managed to do the necessary 3 stages in pursuit of harmony; (1) culture exchange, (2) cultural familiarization, and (3) acceptance or adaptation of new culture. That is why, Indonesians rely heavily on getting to know others' personality in due time more than the Japanese.

5.4 Proposed improvements

In light of this study's results, the main suggestion to improve communication quality within university student organization meetings would be to choose a method of discussion with higher media richness level whenever possible, especially for discussing non-routine matters.

If FTF discussion is improbable, video call is highly recommended, as it has the highest media richness out of other media tools. Try to have the opportunity to become more intimate with other participants through video calls, this could be done more naturally through possible one on one conversations outside of formal meetings. That way, if a situation arises where a video call discussion is not possible, you can still communicate more easily and with less misunderstanding by voice call or chat. Take into account slight differences that might occur between high and low context culture. High context cultured people, should try to concentrate more on using words in communicating. Because, non-verbal information that

can be conveyed through video is limited, and there will be lagging of video's feed. For low context cultured people, be sure to pay attention to high context cultured people's facial expressions and gestures. Their body language gives out more information than what they say verbally.

It is recommended to only use voice call when video call discussion is somehow not possible. Take notes on how you deliver information; intonation, accent and / or stresses, and voice volume. Be conscious of body language and facial expressions, remember that your interlocutor cannot see them. Instead, focus more on using words that are clear. Try to find a middle ground between the two different context culture tendencies. It's good to keep focus on meeting's goals, but be sure to add small breaks with casual conversations to reduce tense.

Chat is fine to be used for discussions that are routine and/or simple in nature. There are however a few points need to be addressed when using chat; be efficient and use clear wording, reread message before sending, make sure that it cannot be interpreted in other ways aside from what is intended to be conveyed, and do take into account to whom are you sending. If the person is high context culture and whilst you are low context culture, soften your wording. If appropriate, use emoji when needed. If the person is low context culture and you are high context culture, be as concise as possible and straight to the point.

5.5 Limitation

Though this study's aim is to help SDGS's goal to enhance the learning's environment for all, not everyone has access to competent digital devices and a good stable internet connection, on top of a capable education institution in providing quality online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study may prove to be viable only for students that have such privileges in Japan and Indonesia. Outcome may differ if a similar study is implemented in other countries. As a whole this study only managed to scratch the surface of the matter, as the length of study and understanding of communication, including social presence level being discussed here are still relatively shallow, in addition, definitive data on Indonesia's and Japan's high-low context culture division are scarce, hence this study's limitation may help direct future researches to deepen, in search for a more comprehensive result.

6 Conclusion

The change from FTF to CMC has indeed impacted communication, particularly in this case, amongst activists of university student organizations. As is according to its media richness, FTF discussions cannot be topped by any other form in terms of quality of communication, proven through the constant 3 in the social presence level and in building rapport. This is true in spite of differences in context culture or country of origin. Because of this, a change to CMC, no matter what form, will undoubtedly be a step down. Being harder in creating bonds means getting to know the other's personality, their way of thinking and how they

convey their thoughts are equally difficult. In this case, differences in context culture will bring forth many misunderstandings. Still, Japan's homogeneous nature gives way to an almost solid ground of sound context to build upon in spite of not knowing each other well at the beginning of the CMC interaction, on top of having an opposing context culture. As long as the participants of the discussion try their best to be as clear as possible in conveying their intent, misunderstandings can be avoided. Unfortunately the possibility in reaching the same level of success in using the same solution is significantly slimmer in Indonesia, as a consequence of being a very ethnically diverse country, each having their own sociocultural perspective built through their respective long history. Therefore, the solution to this conundrum would be to utilize a method of discussion with higher media richness level whenever possible, from the top that is; FTF, video call, voice call, and chat respectively. This is true especially for discussing non-routine matters, since the non-verbal language of physical reactions are integral in decoding the intent of messages correctly. Nevertheless, the fact that limitations presented in CMC gives it a rather professional disposition when compared to FTF's engaging and natural makeup, works sufficiently well in proportion with the nature of communication needed within university student organization.

To summarize, the media richness level of the tool used may not always directly proportional with the social presence occurred within the conversation for each person, as different context culture found within participants would also be a major influence. Differences in individual's context culture discussed here, is strictly limited to its country of origin. As founded within this research, the level of a country's diversity in culture will affect their way of communication, on top of the nature of used language and length of the community's history that determines a country's context culture. However, tools with higher media richness level do result in a bigger chance of achieving an overall higher social presence level, in spite of the differences.

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