

# How Foreigners Experience Japan: Beyond Hofstede's Model

ホフステッドのモデルは外国人の日本体験をどれだけ説明できるか

Akiko ASAI

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#### Key words

Hofstede, Indonesian, nurse, ALT, Japan

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**Abstract:** The Japanese are often described as polite, reserved, and group-oriented in their communication styles. According to Hofstede's (1980 & 2001) model, Japan is evaluated as low in individualism, and high in uncertainty avoidance and long-term relationships. This model has been applied to various business disciplines.

Although this model is useful, it needs to be applied cautiously. Experiences can vary, depending on the profession and contexts in which the migrants are situated. In this paper two transnational migration programs were studied: Indonesian nurses in the Economic Partnership Agreement, and Assistant English Language Teachers (ALT) in Japanese schools. Both are government programs, but one involves South East Asians and the other group consisted of Westerners. Semi-structured interviews were implemented with 140 Indonesians and 46 ALTs.

Most Indonesians were surprised at the strict work discipline, i.e., punctuality, no talking, the system for double-checking to reduce careless mistakes, and the "ho-ren-so" [reporting system], as well as the importance of human relationships after work. The ALTs on the other hand felt that their job descriptions were unclear and that disciplining students was a challenge. Both groups noted differences in disciplining. It was the opposite of what they had expected, i.e., the Japanese are stricter in the workplace than at school. What are the causes of these differences? Different values are in place in different contexts. School types must also be considered. The usefulness and limitations of Hofstede's model are discussed in this context.

## 1. Background

### 1.1 Why is Hofstede's model so influential?

Hofstede's first book, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations* (1980), presented a four-dimensional model for national cultures, which became an extremely popular research paradigm in the field of comparative cross-cultural psychology and management studies. These dimensions were derived from his analysis of an existing IBM employee data base. The original dimensions included *Power Distance*, *Uncertainty-Avoidance*, *Individualism vs. Collectivism*, and *Masculinity vs. Feminism*. Another dimension, *Long-distance vs. Short-distance* was added in the second edition of his book, which was based on his study in Hong Kong in 2003. Another dimension *Indulgence vs. Restraint* was subsequently added in his new book, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* (2010), which was co-authored by Michael Minkov.

*Power distance* is the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions accept and expect power to be distributed unequally. *Uncertainty avoidance* is the extent to which a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. *Individualism vs. collectivism*, is the degree to which individuals are supposed to look after themselves or remain integrated into groups; this usually centers around the family unit. *Masculinity vs. Femininity* refers to the extent to which a society stresses achievement or nurture. This is a fundamental problem in any society, but a range of solutions can be found by categorizing societies into *assertive and tough* masculine characteristics versus *caring and nurturing* feminine societies. *Long-term versus Short-term orientation* refers to the fostering of virtues oriented toward future rewards: perseverance and thrift. *Indulgence vs. Restraint* refers to a tendency to allow or restrain individuals in terms of pursuing free gratification of their material, social, and emotional needs in order to enjoy life.

Geert Hofstede is one of the most prominent theorists of our time, with great influence in the field of intercultural communication. Since Hofstede's *Culture's Consequences* (1980) was published, his book was translated into 17 languages. As a result, there was a dramatic increase in the number of studies on culture in business journals, and a total of 500 journals were published in the 1980s. This increased to 1700 publications in the 1990s, and 2200 publications in the 2000s (Nakata, 2009).

Then, why is Hofstede's model so influential? Nakata noted four reasons for this popularity. Firstly, sufficient data was used to create this model. The data was based on surveys of thousands of respondents from diverse countries. More than 88,000 employees from 72 countries participated in his survey in 2001. In his 2010 survey, there were respondents from 93 countries. All the respondents were IBM employees. One shortcoming of this study is that the sample was limited to a specific group of people who could be categorized as well-educated elite business people, and it could be said that such people are atypical in any country. This shortcoming, however also created uniformity in terms of samples from different nations, for making a valid comparison of the same

demography of people across the borders. Secondly, he defined national cultures based on a set of values with six dimensions. Initially, there were four dimensions and two were added subsequently. Hofstede's framework allows us to make a collective description of all national cultures. This is useful when doing any comparative study of different cultures. Thirdly, Hofstede's studies are grounded in prior established theories from anthropology, sociology, and psychology. The concept of *individualism versus collectivism* is related to *collateraterality versus individualism* by Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961), and *cooperation versus individualism* by Mcad (1937). Also the dimension of *indulgence vs. restraint* is related to happiness (Chekola, 1975, 2007) or subjective well-being (Diener, 1984). Although happiness was considered to be the highest good and the ultimate motivation for human action by philosophers, it was ignored in the field of social sciences and it was only considered to be important and explored thoroughly after the 1970s (Diener, 1984). Finally, Hofstede's model is user-friendly and the framework of these dimensions is efficient for the comparisons of different nations. Its provision of a survey questionnaire and operationalization of culture into standardized scores facilitate its application in quantitative research.

## 1.2 Criticism of Hofstede's Model

What are the issues with Hofstede's model? Criticism of his book centers on how we understand culture. When his studies were published, culture was regarded as more fixed and essential. When *Culture's Consequences* was published in the 1980s, the world was simpler place. People were more confined to their nation of origin and came with the full package of cultural attributes to these. However, society evolved into a more complex heterogeneous entity, with the birth of hybrid cultures as a result of frequent national border crossings via media and international migration.

Hofstede's perspective, which is based on a positivist paradigm, perceives culture as something immovable and permanent in a nation, and is one of the independent factors influencing values and behaviors of individuals from each nation. His framework focuses on national values, and not the agency of individuals, who perceive and interpret their culture. It does not delve into the variation in individual experiences within these contexts. Based on a single survey, he attempted to identify the unique characteristics of each nation.

However, as society evolved into something more complex, and hybridization was driven by globalization, new paradigms became necessary. In the last twenty-five years, scholarly disciplines, such as phenomenology and feminism, have provided models, which value the agency of individuals and their experiences within these contexts. From the phenomenological perspective, the agency of the individual is regarded as important in terms of their perception of objects, interpretation, and evaluation. For the phenomenologist, *shoes* in themselves have no meaning, but it is the person who gives them meaning. The scope of meaning might include *things to put on when you walk* and *things to clean after wearing them* and *things to store inside a shoe box*. However, while others may define them as *things to wear inside your home*, others may think they are *things to*

*take off inside your home* to keep the house clean. It is also the agency of the individual to interpret the meanings of a situation when a person *wears shoes inside a home* as rude or impolite. Although there may be some common meanings and values across some societies, there are also various meanings and values that are distinctive to each culture. The phenomenological approach, assumes that there are no essential characteristics of any culture, but that individuals attach meanings to their culture depending on their experiences within their personal context. Culture is regarded as unstable, changeable, and open to different interpretations by individuals.

This study, respecting the significance of Hofstede's past studies, show to what extent Hofstede's theory in cross-cultural comparisons explain the experiences of people who have migrated from one culture to another.

## **2. Two Studies: What is the Japanese experience of foreigners like?**

This paper analyzes two studies implemented over the past 18 years, from 2001 to 2020. The subjects of both studies were foreign workers in Japan who arrived via a government program: Western Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) and Indonesian nurses and care workers.

### **2.1 Case Study of ALTs**

Japan started to invite young ALTs from 1987 via the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. These teachers are assigned to public junior and high schools, to team-teach English with a Japanese Teacher of English (JTE). A total of 5,761 young people have participated in the JET Programme as either an ALT, CIR (Coordinator for International Relations), or SEA (Sports Exchange Advisor) from 1987 - 2019. Approximately 90 percent of the participants are ALTs.

Semi-structured interviews with 46 ALTs from Western countries, including the US, UK, Canada, and Australia, and 20 ex-ALTs in the UK, were implemented. These interviews were conducted in Japan for approximately two years from 2001 to 2003, and follow-up interviews with 10 ex-ALTs were conducted in the UK in 2019.

### **2.2 Case Study of Indonesian Nurses and Care Workers**

Japan is the number one aging society in the world. In 2020, the number of those aged more than 65 years old hit a milestone of 36.17 million people (Statistics Bureau of Japan, 2020). This was 28.7 percent of the total population of Japan, the highest ever in Japan and in comparison to the rest of the world. The Japanese government decided to invite Asian care workers from Indonesia in 2008, the Philippines in 2010, and Vietnam in 2014, through the bilateral Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). About 6500 Asians arrived in Japan via the EPA from 2008 - 2019. Of these, 2,783 were Indonesians, including 691 nurses and 2,092 care workers. Semi-structured interviews were implemented with 140 Indonesian nurses and care workers (Batch 1 - 4) from 2009 to 2018.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Western ALTs in Japan

ALTs are expected to have an interest in teaching a foreign language in Japanese schools, but they do not necessarily have special language or educational training. The prerequisite for ALTs to be accepted by the JET Programme is to have a bachelor's degree in any major, and to have a good command of spoken and written English. For this reason, motivations to participate in the JET Programme vary. Some want to go overseas for intercultural experiences, and some want to have overseas teaching experiences in order to improve their skills as a foreign language teacher. The participants are allowed to renew their one-year contract up to three years. ALTs are provided with introductory, mid-term, and renewal orientations hosted by the national and municipal governments to learn how to teach in Japan. They are also provided with various levels of Japanese language courses so that will have some basic Japanese necessary for teaching.

##### 3.1.1 ALT experiences in Japanese Schools

The most outstanding experiences of ALTs, while team-teaching with a JTE in Japanese schools are as follows: 1. Their job description was unclear, 2. there was not much student class participation, and 3. the JTEs did not control class room behavior.

(1) The job description is unclear.

The responsibilities of ALTs as described in their handbook provided by the Japanese government are as follows: 1. ALTs must assist Japanese English Teachers in their classes, 2. they must give assistance in team-teaching and in the preparation of this, and 3. they must participate in extra-curricular activities with the students. Most ALTs arrived in Japan with the understanding that their position was an assistant [joshu] to the JTEs in team-teaching a class, which involved preparing classroom materials for this.

There are at least three patterns of team-teaching (Asai, 2006): 1. The JTE takes the sole initiative and the ALT is an assistant, 2. the JTE leaves the ALT to take full initiative and leaves the classroom, and 3. the teaching is a collaborative team effort between the JTE and ALT.

When the JTE takes the sole initiative, the JTE is the decision maker on what materials are used in the classroom and how they are to be taught. Many ALTs felt that they were not being taken advantage of fully, since they were not involved in any decision making. Many ALTs commented saying, "I am not being used wisely" or "I feel like I am just a mobile tape recorder for pronunciation." They felt that they were "not being used wisely" and their job satisfaction was considerably low. One ALT left the program after working for one year, stating that the JET experience was not challenging enough. Experienced ALTs, who had teaching experiences in their home countries, especially felt that they were not being used effectively.

When the JTE asks the ALT take full responsibility in terms of taking the initiative

on how to teach, the JTE expects the ALT to handle everything, since the ALTs is a native speaker and they are good at being performative and making the class fun. One JTE said he would leave the class while the ALTs were teaching class, since the ALT was good at what he was doing. While experienced ALTs felt confident and accepted taking the initiative, the inexperienced new ALTs lacked confidence and felt threatened in this new situation.

When there was a collaborative team-teaching effort between the JTE and the ALT, there would be team discussions on what to teach, as well as, what materials should be used in the class. Both teachers collaborated in planning together and taking turns in teaching their classes. "I would plan the lesson with my JTEs. We always contributed 50/50." However, this kind of collaboration was rare. One ALT summarized the situation as follows: "I was utilized to my full capacity. Those teachers asked me to prepare resources and allowed me to lead lessons when present. However, most of the time, I was used solely to read passages from the textbook for authenticity."

The question is why there is no consistency pertaining to the job responsibility of the ALT. The primary reason is that the ALT and JTE have difficulty communicating with each other. This is mainly due to the workload of the JTE being too high. The JTE is overloaded with their routine work as home room teachers, which includes disciplining misbehaviors of students as well as counselling them with regards to any mental problems they may have. In addition to teaching itself, the JTE also must deal with the bureaucratic work required by the Board of Education. Another reason is the frequency of the ALT's school visits. ALTs need to teach at many schools. Most ALTs are assigned to different schools. For example, an ALT might work for three days a week at their main school, but are also allocated to working as a visiting ALT, one day each at two other schools. Lastly, the role of the ALT is defined by the perception of the JTE of the ALT. If the JTE is confident in terms of English competency and educational skills, he/she will not give the ALT a dominant role.

The school environment, the visiting frequency of the ALT, and the perception of the JTE's own English competency define the role of the ALT. It should be noted that the concept of "job description" in Japan is different from that of Western countries.

## (2) Low student participation

Most ALTs felt that student interactions with their teachers were lacking, and class participation generally was very limited compared to what they were used to in their home countries. Japanese students are rather reluctant to talk in the class and give their opinion. According to one ALT, "Teaching generally is less engaging than it is in the UK. Often, students have no interactive parts in a lesson, and just take notes." Another stated that, "I found the rote learning from textbooks very different from what they do in the UK and the students were not encouraged to have an independent opinion. Group focus was key, instead."

ALTs gradually understood that their "role was to make the class more enjoyable, to expedite English communication skills" and "to make lessons more engaging."

As a result ALTs amass many English activity resources and ALTs acquire new skills through introductory and mid-term orientations hosted by the national and municipal governments.

(3) JTEs do not control classroom behavior.

Many ALTs were surprised to see the lack of discipline among students including chatting, sleeping, and playing with their smartphones, during class. According to one ALT, “They let the class guide itself in terms of the level of noise or level of control.” A recent study by Yoshida (2017) showed that roughly half of the ALTs observed student disciplinary problems in junior high school. An overwhelming 80% of them observed that the students were undisciplined.

### 3.1.2 How is Hofstede’s study helpful? : Explaining ALT Experiences through Hofstede’s Theory

(1) Job description is unclear.

*Individualism* may partly explain why detailed job descriptions are necessary in individualistic societies like the USA and the UK, where personal achievement is valued. In contrast, Japan is regarded as a collectivistic society (See Figure 1). To maximize performance, teamwork is valued, while individual roles at work require a measure of flexibility.

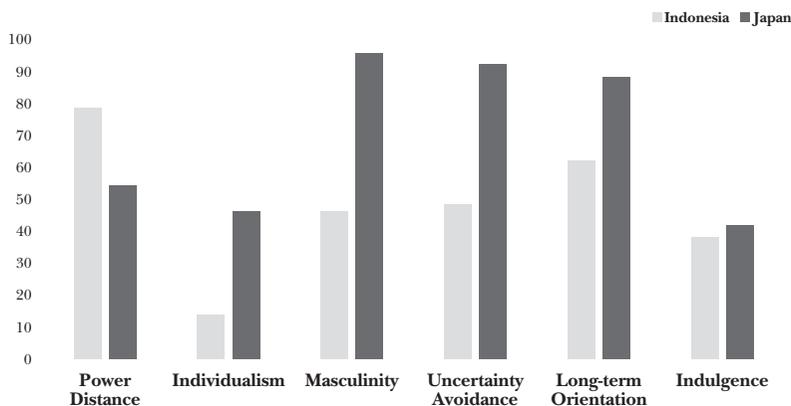


Figure 1. Hofstede’s Six Dimensions’: Indonesia vs. Japan (Source: Hofstede, 2001)

However, environmental factors, the school system, and the ALT’s visiting system are also important factors. ALTs have observed that many of the JTEs are overloaded with work and do not have time to have meetings to prepare for their classes. In addition, some ALTs must visit many schools over the course of a week, and this limits any communication opportunities they might have with the JTEs.

Furthermore, the English competency of the JTE can influence how much they want

ALTs to take any kind of initiative. Some JTEs, who are not confident about their English may leave ALTs to do this.

The *individualism-collectivism* scale can only partially explain the reasons for the issues Westerners encounter regarding job descriptions. Environmental factors including school systems and visiting styles, as well as personal psychological factors such as the perception of the JTE's own competency, are factors that cannot be explained through Hofstede's theory.

#### (2) Low class interaction and participation by students

The *individualism-collectivism* scale can explain the observation of the ALTs that the communication styles of the Japanese students are somewhat reserved, lacking in independent opinion, and more focused on group activities. In collective cultures, people are reluctant to give their opinions since their opinions may be different from others and the feelings of groupness and togetherness can be somewhat reduced if they express a different opinion.

#### (3) JTEs often fail to control/manage classroom behavior

A lack of discipline during classes, was frequently observed by ALTs at non-academic high schools. As non-academic school students often come from lower-middle class families, their cultural norms differ from students from high-middle class families, impacting on classroom behavior. The differences in school environment and behavioral differences of people from different socioeconomic classes cannot be explained well with Hofstede's theory.

*Power distance* may be somewhat related to the control teachers have over classroom behavior, but there is no significant difference between Japan and Western countries (See Figure 1).

The method for disciplining students is influenced by classroom size, school environment, and the relationship the school has with the Board of Education. The Board of Education defines strictly what local Japanese schools can do in terms of discipline. Teachers are not allowed to put the students outside the classroom, which is often implemented in Western nations. Hofstede's cultural dimension *power distance* is not well-adapted to explaining differences in school environments or the relationship between schools and the Board of Education or that of the teachers and students.

### 3.2 Indonesian Nurses and Care Workers in Japan

The prerequisite for Indonesian nurses to be accepted by the EPA program, is to have had a minimum three-years of nurse education, and two years of working as a full-time nurse in Indonesia. After selection processes by Ministry of Health in Indonesia and JICWELS (Japan International Corporation of Welfare Services), they are provided with 6 month Japanese language training in Indonesian and 6 month in Japan.

### 3.2.1 Indonesian nurses' experiences in Japanese hospitals

The most outstanding experiences of Indonesians are as follows: 1. Identity shock working as a nurse assistant, and 2. Change in perceptions of work ethics over time.

#### (1) The Indonesian nurse experience in Japan: Identity shock

Many Indonesian nurses felt emotionally shattered upon working as a nurse candidate in Japan. The first and most shocking experience for them, especially the pioneer group, was that they were relegated to being nurse assistants. Although they were regular nurses back in Indonesia, they became *nurse candidates* in Japan, and they had to work as an assistant to other nurses, until they passed the national exam. Learning the Japanese language also proved to be difficult. They were emotionally shocked in terms of their professional identity. This was caused by their new positioning within the hospital, as well as the position given to them by the EPA scheme. Indonesian nurse candidates were classified as *nurse assistant* or *care worker*. Their demotion was visible due to their name tag and the color and design of the uniform provided to them (Asai, 2018). They felt upset working as a nurse assistant. In this new role, they were not allowed to give any medical treatment to patients like injections or intravenous therapy, and were only allowed to serve food, change diapers, and clean and transport patients, which are generally regarded as the responsibility of the family in Indonesia. This created a sense of urgency that they needed to study hard and pass the national exam. However, if their hospital did not give them enough time and educational support to do this, they became depressed. The main cause of their unhappiness was caused by their new positioning in the hospital, and the EPA scheme in which their qualification as a nurse in their home country could not be transferred to the host country.

#### (2) Change in perceptions of work ethics over time: Before and after passing the exam.

The perception of cultural differences at work changed before and after passing the national exam. Immediately after their arrival in Japan, working as a candidate, they encountered strict work ethics such as *punctuality* and *no talking during work*. One of the Indonesians summed-up the importance of punctuality in Japan as, "Time is money in Japan, while time is rubber [jam karet] in Indonesia." Another Indonesian said he was surprised that Japanese nurses arrived at work fifteen or thirty minutes before 8:00 a.m., because they needed to make preparations so that they were ready to start at 8:00 a.m. They also noticed that there was a marked difference in terms of talking while working. In Japan, private chattering is not allowed during work hours. One Indonesian commented, "I was scolded when I was chatting with my Indonesian friend at work."

After becoming a regular nurse upon passing the national exam, they learned more about Japanese work ethics such as *ho-ren-so* (Houkoku=reporting, Renraku=communicating, and Sodan=consultation with their superior). The Indonesians felt it was a burden to report details of what they did at work to their boss. One Indonesian said that writing an *incident report* was stressful and shameful. "In Indonesia, we don't have to write our mistakes down

in such detail. An oral report is okay. But in Japan, we need to write in details about what happened at work, in which situations and why this happened, what should be done, and what to do in the future.” Some Indonesians felt that they lacked control. “I felt like I didn’t have (any) control of my job. I have to report every detail of my patient to my boss and share information with other team members.” Other Indonesians said they learned the significance of *double-checking* so as not to make mistakes and work very carefully.

Although Indonesians initially felt a significant difference in terms of strictness in work ethics in Japan versus Indonesia, their perceptions changed over time. When they first started working as a nurse assistant they perceived punctuality and seriousness with no talking during work, which are a part of basic Japanese work ethics and efficiency, bothersome. However, as they grew more committed to their work as full-time nurses, they became more involved in their relationships with their colleagues and their boss. They grew more comfortable with the concept of *Inochi-wo-azukaru-shigoto* [work that constitutes being guardians of life]. They also discovered that the Japanese work in a *medical team*, which consists of nurses, doctors, and staff, who are related to the symptoms of one patient. This concept of working as a member of a medical team helped the Indonesian nurses realize that multiple perspectives from different professions were important for providing effective medical care.

### **3.2.2 How is Hofstede’s study helpful? : Explaining Indonesian nurse experiences through Hofstede’s theory**

#### (1) Nurse identity shock

The identity shock felt by Indonesian nurses in Japan when they are positioned as an assistant nurse is difficult to explain with any of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions. Their nurse identity shock is directly caused by the EPA program, which does not guarantee qualification equivalence between the two countries. The macro system of the EPA program as the main causation of an identity crisis among Indonesians nurses cannot be explained directly by any of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions. A foreigner’s experiences are influenced not only by cultural dimensions, but also by the system and policy of the receiving country, which also cannot be explained directly via Hofstede’s theory.

#### (2) Perception of cultural differences and its changes over time

Their perception of cultural differences in work discipline changed, as they became more committed to work. Work discipline is probably related to Hofstede’s dimension of *individualism vs. collectivism*. According to Hofstede, Japan is more individualistic in comparison to Indonesia (Figure 2). This dimension explains why Indonesians felt a sense of well-being if they could talk and enjoy the company of their colleagues at work, as human relationship is more valued over fulfilling responsibility in Indonesia.

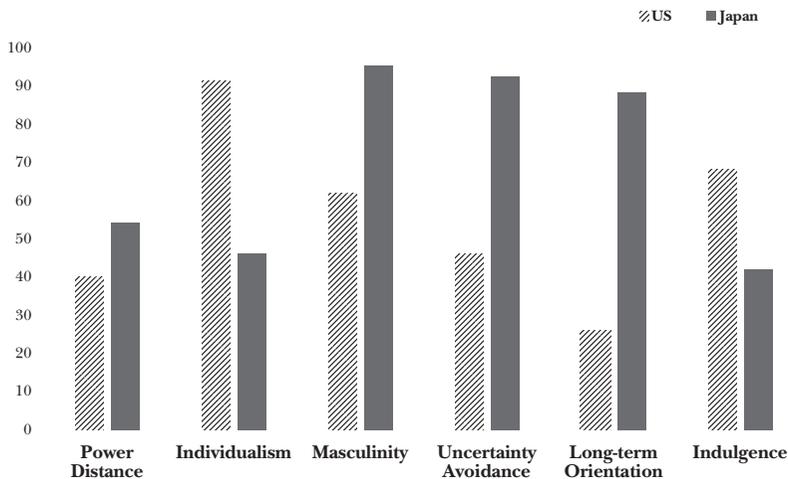


Figure 2. Hofstede's Six Dimensions': US vs. Japan (Source: Hofstede, 2001)

However, the perceptions of the Indonesians changed over time, especially regarding the cultural norms of communication while working, such as *ho-ren-so* in Japan. As their commitment to work increased, they became more forthcoming about sharing communication to work as a medical team with other members.

Such shared communication styles are often observed in the employees of many Japanese hospitals, and it is regarded as a characteristic of collectivism to share information to save a person's life. Hofstede's observation that Japan is higher in individualism scores than Indonesia does not explain the team work practices observed in most Japanese hospitals.

#### 4. Considerations and Implications

Three points can be made based on two different studies of the experience of foreigners in Japan:

Firstly, the scheme of migrants influences their experiences. Both the JET Programme and EPA schemes played a significant role in affecting the experiences of ALTs as assistant teachers and Indonesian nurses having to start out as candidate nurses. These schemes impact largely on their experience of feeling underutilized as an assistant teacher or degraded as a nurse candidate due to the scheme limiting the responsibility of foreigners because of Japanese regulations. The macro context of migrants cannot be explained well through Hofstede's cultural dimensions.

Secondly, perceptions of cultural differences such as discipline depend not only on the country of origin of the worker, but also on the type of organization, generation, and social classes the individual has to interact with on the receiving end. The difference could perhaps be the differences between a school and workplace. In Japan, schools tend

to be more relaxed with discipline, since Japanese people may have to be very disciplined once they start working. Another possible factor is the relationship between schools and the Board of Education. The Board of Education guides teachers to keep students in the classroom even if they misbehave, to protect the rights of the students to learn, and implicitly to avoid complaints from their parents. In contrast, Indonesian nurses felt that Japanese hospitals were very disciplined compared with their workplace in Indonesia. The hospital environment is possibly more strict in discipline compared to other types of organizations, since they are responsible for protecting human lives.

The observation of ALTs that Japanese students were not well-disciplined, is also influenced by their experiences from teaching students from non-academic schools, where students come from lower social classes rather than from academic schools with children from more affluent families.

Hofstede's theory, which is based on IBM employees from many countries, should be applied carefully to organizations other than regular corporations, as well as different generations and social classes.

Thirdly, the perceptions of foreigners regarding culture have changed over time, and they can now change depending on the role of the individual, as well as, their relationship to others.

Hofstede's cultural dimensions can only provide analysis for the experiences of foreigners in Japan in a limited way. Their experiences are largely influenced by the contextual scheme (such as JET or EPA scheme) in which they are received. Hofstede's theory based on nations is useful, but it explains only to some extent, since the foreigners' experiences are influenced, not only by the culture of their country of origin, but they are also generational and organizational. In addition, the differences between social classes cannot be ignored. Cultural differences are not always perceived in the same way by different individuals. They depend on the relationship of the individual with others, as well as time dimensions.

Hofstede in fact recognized the existence of the layers of cultures, in addition to culture on a national level. These include the layers that are regional, ethnical, religious, linguistical, gender based, generational, social, and organizational in departmental and corporate levels. He stated that:

“In research on cultural differences, nationality — the passport one holds — should therefore be used with care. Yet it is often the only feasible criterion for classification. Using nationality as criterion is a matter of expediency, because it is immensely easier to obtain data for nations than for organic homogeneous societies.” (Hofstede, 2012, p.18)

Hofstede's overall cross-cultural research is effective for understanding the national characteristics of cultures in a very general sense. However, we must not forget that it is necessary to make efforts not to cast away the more detailed cultural experiences coming from each individual perspective.

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