



The Emergence of Multicultural Characteristics in Virtual Team

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Abstract

The advancement of information and communication technology grant access for businesses to reach global workforce. In a condition where companies hire their employee from cross-border market, the exposure of multicultural differences will be more in contact. Some of the problem faced by virtual multicultural team are cultural discrepancy, communication problem, long distance conflict, and lack of synergy. The objective of this study is to explore the multicultural characteristics emerged from virtual team activity to minimize the problem. This research adopts a case study to examine the comprehensive understanding of virtual multicultural team activity and get new insight from dwelling activity into the context directly. This study has two results: a virtual team and multicultural team characteristics in digital company and Hybrid company. This study can help practitioners identify what multicultural level of focus is well-suited to their current business model and give researcher an overview of future research on the alternatives in managing virtual multicultural team by building virtual multicultural team framework.

Keywords — Multicultural; Virtual Team, Hybrid Company, Digital Company

Abstrak

Kemajuan teknologi informasi dan komunikasi memberikan akses bagi dunia usaha untuk menjangkau tenaga kerja global. Dalam kondisi di mana perusahaan mempekerjakan karyawan mereka dari pasar lintas batas, eksposur perbedaan multikultural akan lebih bersentuhan. Beberapa masalah yang dihadapi oleh tim multikultural virtual adalah perbedaan budaya, masalah komunikasi, konflik jarak jauh, dan kurangnya sinergi. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi karakteristik multikultural yang muncul dari aktivitas tim virtual untuk meminimalkan masalah. Penelitian ini mengadopsi studi kasus untuk mengkaji pemahaman yang komprehensif tentang aktivitas tim multikultural virtual dan mendapatkan wawasan baru dari aktivitas langsung ke dalam konteks penelitian. Penelitian ini memiliki dua hasil yaitu karakteristik tim virtual dan tim multikultural pada perusahaan digital dan perusahaan Hybrid. Studi ini dapat membantu praktisi mengidentifikasi tingkat fokus multikultural apa yang sesuai dengan model bisnis mereka saat ini dan memberi peneliti gambaran tentang penelitian masa depan tentang alternatif dalam mengelola tim multikultural virtual dengan membangun kerangka kerja tim multikultural virtual.

Kata kunci — Multicultural; Virtual Team, Hybrid Company, Digital Company

I. INTRODUCTION

The digital economy has profoundly affected how companies do their business. Jordan and Ellen (2009) initially brought to a mind that digital economy has two side of the same coin in business intelligence era,

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disrupting and enhancing company development. It has shifted to new firms and enterprises, changed business models, and, as a critical factor supporting global value chains (GVCs), reshaped the global economic system (Gestrin & Staudt, 2018).

The advancement of communication technology allows businesses to benefit from the global workforce's diversity (Stanko and Gibson, 2009). It brings up many forms of the global workforce, and one of them is Global Virtual Team (Connaughton and Shuffler, 2007). Virtual team is a group of people who work together in a separate location using communicational and informational technology (Townsend et al., 1998). By adopting virtual team to perform projects, companies can acquire the best talents worldwide without worrying about the geographical distance (Jimenez et al., 2017). It has the opportunity to become multinational players without the need for office and assets in another country (Zekos, 2003). In a condition where companies perform their business in a cross-border market, the exposure of multicultural differences will be more in contact (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004; Ang et al., 2006). A digital business with customers and suppliers from another country will encounter people with different cultures. Their employees either go abroad or engage through media due to globally increasing workforce mobility (Crowne, 2008).

On the other hand, digital companies that have global talents should manage their business with multicultural issues. Their talents need to be managed to perform tasks productively, even in diverse situations. This condition will challenge all companies to maintain their performance management in a cross-border context (Maley, 2014). In a cross-cultural working environment, individual performance relies not only on work performance (work quantity, quality, skills, planning, and organizing) but also contextual (cooperating with others, helping others, and interpersonal relations) and adaptive performance (flexible, cultural understanding, working adjustment, and open-minded) by proactively measuring and controlling job demand (Amalia & Gustomo, 2017) to decrease counterproductive work behavior (Koopmans et al., 2011).

In terms of virtual team and multiculturalism, some pieces of literature discuss multicultural communication (Duran, 2014), leadership (Kalra et al. 2018), conflict (Harush et al. 2016, Irfan et al., 2019, Brett, 2016, Liu et al., 2019), diversity (Iskhakova, 2019, Kadam, et al., 2019, Vigier, 2016, Yadav, et al., 2019, Bhatti, et al., 2018), and identity (Li et al., 2019, Shaik, et al., 2019, Madsen, et al., 2018), but none of them specifically study the multicultural characteristics emerged from the virtual team. The Objective of this study is to explore multicultural characteristics in virtual team. This study will contribute to small and medium enterprises, especially after COVID-19, to manage their workers in a virtual setting. The preliminary research of several small businesses in Bandung, Indonesia, found two different types of digital business to define virtual team characteristics: digitally assisted companies (DAC) and companies that sell digital products or services (DC). By contrasting these two cases, we will explore the multicultural characteristics differences that can virtually help entrepreneurs and managers manage multicultural teams. This study will also fill the gap in the body of knowledge for future studies in the virtual multicultural team's field.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Cross-cultural studies have become an essential issue since 1990's globalization that pushed companies in a faster pace of change (French, 2010). In this case of running the business virtually, managers might face structural implications within their organization. This situation becomes one reason for Managers to gain the knowledge of cultural aspects that will affect their decisions and manage people to adapt accordingly (Deresky, 2010).

2.1 Digital Economy and the Rise of Virtual Team

First coined by Don Tapscott in 1995, the digital economy that was generally defined as the economic activities enhanced by information technology (Abhyankar & Ganapathy, 2014), has its definition evolved progressively throughout the years (Williams, 2021). Daoud (2000) elaborate the emergence of digital economy from the perspective of its component, such as infrastructure, process, and value through computer-aided network. In 2005, Ai H. expands the scope of digital economy to study the government capacity, organizational ecosystem, and cultural and social environment. Murdoch & Fichter (2017) than propose a more philosophical view to shift from doing digital to being digital, under the scope of digitizing the process. Followed by the current trend of digital

economy studies including the role (Chouhan, Rathore, & I, 2018), categorization (Salem, 2018; and Szeto, 2018), regulation (BBez & Brauner, 2018); and the future of employment (Patterson, 2018) in digital economy. In order to build a nomological map behind the literatures, digital economy and the rise of virtual team framework can be seen in figure 1.

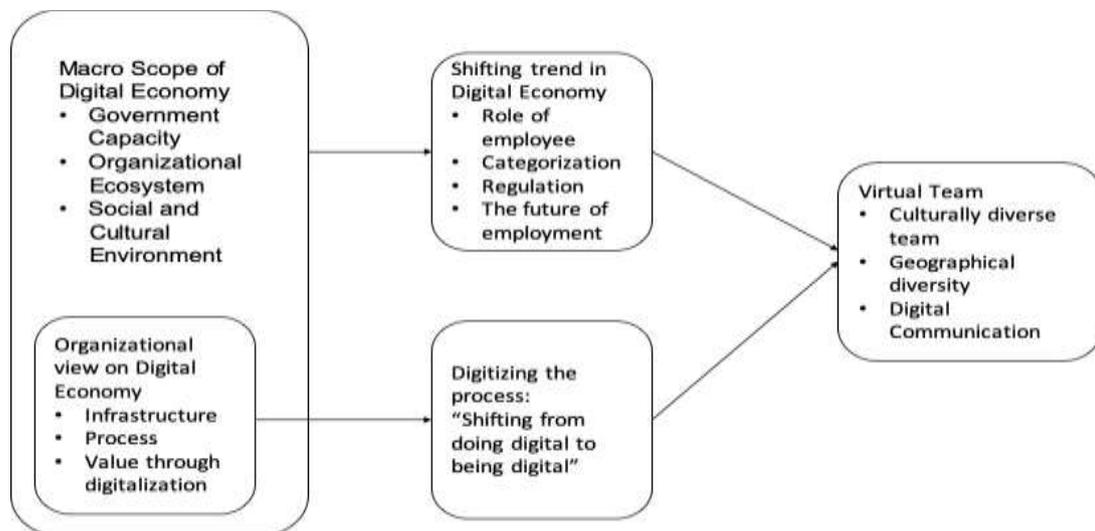


Figure 1 Digital Economy and the Rise of Virtual Team Literature Framework

From Figure 1, digital economy can be seen from macro scope and organizational view. The macro scope of digital economy provides environmental factors to the development of digitalization, such as government capacity to build digital infrastructure, organizational ecosystem that accommodate digital integration and social and cultural environment response towards the trend shift. While the organizational view focuses on the reliance of digital infrastructure, process of digitalization, and value through digitalization to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Trend shift affected by digital economy supported by the advancement of information technology enables teleconferencing and teleworking to eradicate geographical barriers across time and space (Cascio & Shurygailo, 2003). This kind of teleworking that rely on ICT then named as virtual team (Lipnack & Stamps, 1997; Townsend, De Marie, & Hendrickson, 1998). Simply put, virtual team consist of culturally diverse, geographically dispersed, and digital assisted communication working team (Gassmann & von Zedtwitz 2003; Romero & Molina, 2003).

2.2 Virtual Team and the emergence of Multicultural characteristics

A multicultural team is a group of people with cultural diversity (Thompson, 2014). In a multicultural team, people have to work intensively and effectively with different geography, demography, and culture. Regarding to Thompson, one of the right sides of a multicultural team is the higher performance of individuals within the team (Bhatti et al., 2018; Szymanski et al. 2020; Presbitero, 2020; Kadam, 2019). A team with diverse members can perform higher than the same culture members, for a 10% higher in gender or cultural diversity within a team can rise to 5.6% income (Gallardo, 2015). Bhatti et al. (2018) emphasize the role of psychological diversity climate due to multicultural management as a performance factor. Culture itself is considered as a personality in a team. It shaped the way everyone's behavior. It includes assumptions, values, beliefs, and the structure of social and political interactions (Brett, 2014).

In digital business, the interaction between employee to employee and customer can occur in a cloud-based platform (Rimon, 2017). Digital transformation changed the workplace, and the employee is no longer working face to face daily. The workplace transformation is also known as the digital workplace (Koffer 2015, Robertson, 2015). A working team can be done virtually, cross the border, and in less intensive interactions. This transformation is imminent, and the flexibility of the workforce opens up cross-cultural teamwork. Freelancers, gig workers, virtual assistance, and independent professionals are familiar with digital business, building a virtual multicultural team. In another way, a digital business is using information technology as a tool to radically change

their way of doing business into virtual space and cross border market (Zekos, 2003). The perspective of virtual team and multicultural team, their differences and similarities from literatures, can be seen in figure 2.2.

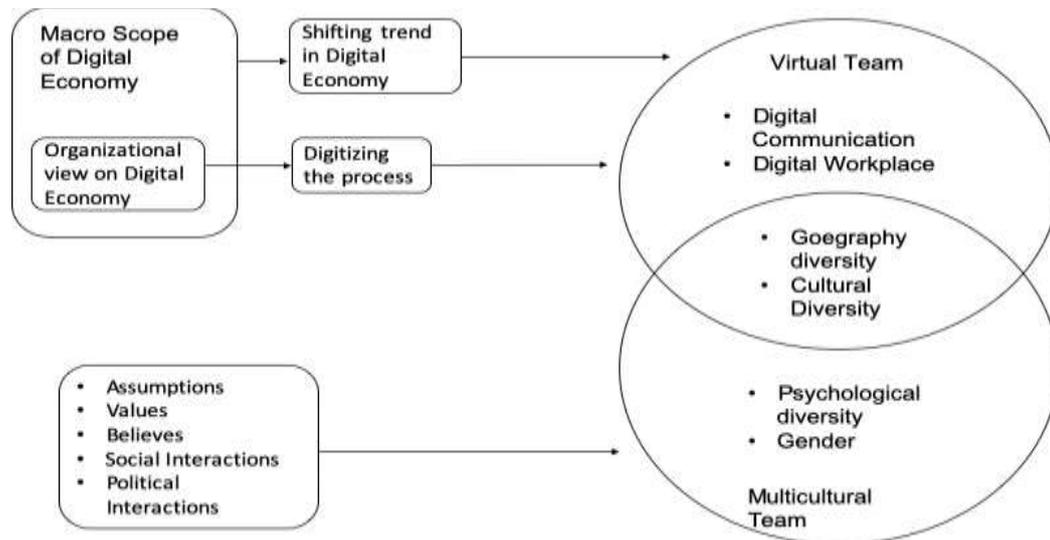


Figure 2. Digital Economy and the Rise of Virtual Team Literature Framework

From Figure 2 we can see that virtual team and multicultural team has two different foundation, but there are intersection of virtual team and multicultural team characteristics, like geography and cultural diversity. To the best of our knowledge there are still insufficient observation of how virtual team activities open up the emergence of multicultural characteristics due to cross border interaction within organization, especially from the comparison of digital and hybrid companies. In order to fulfill the gap, this study is trying to explore the emergence of multicultural characteristics in virtual team.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The philosophy of this research is interpretivism using qualitative approach. The researchers tried to explore multicultural characteristics derived from virtual team activity. This research adopts a case study to examine the comprehensive understanding of virtual multicultural team activity and get new insight from dwelling activity into the context directly. This research has been conducted in digital startups in Bandung as a case comparison. Digital startups in Bandung provide contextual and empirical data on how digital SMEs or startups form and manage their team. Therefore, this comparison is needed to see the raw data of virtual multicultural teams ranging from Digital company to Digital Architecture, Engineering, and Construction.

The participant are leaders and employees from 3 companies with 3 in-depth interviews and 6 months of online and onsite observation. Online observation conducted through virtual workplace such as Trello, Slack, and Zoom Meeting. Onsite observation conducted in two different places, office and construction site. Participant cultural background are diverse, ranging from Indonesian cultural background such as Sundanese, Javanese, Batak, Minangkabau, Indo-Chinese, and Indo-Arabian, to international origin such as Malaysia, India, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan.

This research adopts qualitative case study to facilitates exploration of a multicultural characteristics that emerged from virtual team activity within the context of digital and hybrid company using variety of data sources. Multiple sources of data ensures that this phenomenon explored through various perspectives to be understood. There are two major ways of doing case study methodology, firstly introduced by Robert Stake (1995) and followed by Robert Yin (2003). The main difference between the two are the methods in gathering and analysing the data.

For this study, teams were purposively selected based on a preliminary interview with the board of directors. The researcher observed the team communication and how they perform their tasks in virtual settings. In addition, the researcher conducted an interview with the board of directors and the head of the human capital department and be involved physically to observe participants in their daily routine, especially in the digital startups in Bandung. Data sources come from multiple sources to enhance credibility (Yin, 2003). In this research data sources include in-depth interviews, direct observations, and document Analysis. Each data contributes to the development of the whole phenomenon and then converged in the result and discussion analysis. The collected data were coded with open coding, axial coding, and selective coding as an approach by analyzing paragraph-by-paragraph, phrase-by-phrase, line-by-line, and micro coding (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

IV. RESULT / FINDING

As globalization is transforming the way every organization runs their operation, business is disrupted by significant changes. Though the variety of business and industry is still not and may not be generalized, it may still be categorized into two groups of digitally assisted and digital products or service companies. In this study, we conclude that the term of digital company and hybrid company are able to accommodate the findings.

The first company is a digitally assisted company, focused on architecture, engineering, and construction service. It has been running the business for more than seven years since 2013 until the pandemic of Covid-19 forces them to transform the part of the operation into virtual settings. Managing both field operation traditionally and administrative tasks virtually put them in an interesting position of how a Hybrid company runs their virtual team activities to support their traditional core process.

The second company is an IT service provider with a wide range of digital products and services. The previous case's differences are that the IT service company provides fully digital operation, from the core team to the support team. In this case, a virtual team means the whole company's workers that collaborate using a virtual working space platform.

The third company is ICT company focusing on international permit and internet cable installer. The last company is observed to give more perspective on how digital company manage their team due to virtual observation limitation.

Based on the comparison between two Digital and one Digitally-assisted companies, virtual teams' characteristics are quite similar, and the differences are only affected by their industry's type and business model. Both are concerned about virtual monitoring to ensure their performance based on the digitally assisted working platform. However, especially at the digital company, they put more effort into building a dedicated internal platform to conduct their business process.

4.1 Virtual team characteristics

The digital company (DC) and Hybrid company (HC) run their operation differently by nature. DC focuses on digital product or service development; thus, all activities happen virtually. On the other hand, HC focuses on developing a digital communication platform to bridge coordination between management, staff, and client, but still performs hybrid operation due to the high encountered service. There are 5 themes derived from the interview and observation, namely communication, working type, work performance monitoring, team orientation, and type of workers.

From the interview and observation to the hybrid company, the director of resources and administration (F) claim that working in hybrid company is balancing between online and offline to maintain flexibility but still result oriented. F Said "So, basically we provide office but the employee has their own freedom to work with office facility, but they still have the liberty to work from home or a coffee shop". From this statement the researchers find that in hybrid company, both office, onsite, and online places can be used by the employee, especially the one that work behind the desk. The statement indicates the hybrid nature of hybrid company, ranging from communication, working type, and performance monitoring.

On the other hand, digital company focuses on the virtual communication and monitoring. The marketing executive in digital company said that "all employee work within the dedicated information system build by the company... it is a platform similar to social media that employee can change information to each other... used by

the company to record all log performed by the employee”. This indicate that all information stream happens in virtual channel using social based working management platform.

The virtual team characteristics comparison is illustrated in table 1

Table 1. virtual team comparison

Variables	Virtual team characteristics of Hybrid company	Virtual team characteristics of Digital Company
Communication	Hybrid communication	Virtual Communication
	Hybrid Working	Project management
	Flexible Time	Social-Based Work Management Platform
Work performance monitoring	Hybrid Monitoring	Virtual Monitoring
Team orientation	Goal-Oriented	Goal-Oriented
	Self-sufficient employee	Remote worker
	Outsource	Outsource
	Gig worker	Gig worker
	Executive Group	Freelancer

From table 1, we can see that most of the characteristics of both companies are similar. The Digital company emphasizes a structured way of doing virtual work using a dedicated work management platform. On the other hand, the Hybrid company emphasizes how they conduct the process regardless of the platform. Working digital space platforms such as slack, Microsoft team, and Trello help them manage their collaboration process in exchange for physical meeting interaction in a traditional office. The platform helps employees communicate and coordinate their tasks in real-time with their co-workers, subordinates, and supervisors through a communication channel set for different occasions. There is a formal and general channel for everyone to share their matters publicly, informal or subchannel for a more specific one, such as marketing division, body stuff, and employee lounge.

Information system enables and mediates all business functions and communication processes in both digital and digitally-assisted companies. There are four primary business functions that they performed: sales and marketing, production or operation, finance and accounting, and human resources. The information system for sales and marketing is based on how the company maintains its relationship with customers. It manages customer's contacts into clusters and categories to help make better marketing strategies and create personalization to improve relationships. It also stores customer's data for sales forecasting and opportunity management by reviewing their demographic and psychographic aspects to enhance sales and marketing performance. The second function is operation or production that is mainly responsible for producing and delivering products or services. The production information system provides demand information to improves materials and resources procurement. It also provides data and information on other business functions for quality assurance and scheduling tasks. Inventory activities, procurements, product developments, and delivery processes are recorded and integrated at both companies.

The third function is finance and accounting, performing assets management and maintaining financial records. The information system helps the finance and accounting division evaluate data for budgeting and planning, managing expenses, exercising financial control, and supporting financial decisions. The first three functions share similar processes for both companies, only in production function differs from their type of products or services. The most differences of all functions are in the human resources information system because the Hybrid company has a wide variety of employees.

In general, the human resources information system is still the way of managing people within a company with the help of information and communication technology. It is also about managing people before becoming part of the organization, developing while managing compensation and benefit, and resolving the separation. The differences lie in the scoop of people managed, such as entirely virtual workers and half virtual - half offline workers. The digital companies that have digital products or services are most likely to have integrated and fully digital workflow and control. However, in the Hybrid company, they still have to split their system to accommodate both management and on-site workers. In terms of educational level, people in the digital company tend to have a higher level of knowledge and digital literacy to accommodate digital interactions.

Meanwhile, in a Hybrid company, not all employees can be guaranteed to use information and communication technology. The HR planning and analysis, labor relations, staffing management, and compensation and benefits have different philosophies and needs, so the system must work in both directions in parallel manners. Regardless of the employee concerning differences, they still share a common ground of workers level due to their digital nature.

Their workers consisting of a similar set of worker types, is divided into three primary levels: top management, knowledge workers, and operational management. The main differences in the Hybrid company are the executive group that plays a significant role as a project manager due to their industry's characteristics. Their operations are based on a project that requires handling various stakeholders ranging from professionals to production workers. On the other hand, the digital company has their knowledge worker managing project and an online setting with information and communication systems. Digitally assisted companies still require them to operate their business with a high encounter with their customers. The knowledge workers still need to develop social skill sets and direct interaction competencies to handle workers and customers. A virtual team's process on both companies share the same emergent multiculturalism properties derived from borderless interaction with stakeholders from different cities, provinces, countries, and ethnicities.

4.2 Multicultural characteristics emerged from virtual activities

In a Digital company, multicultural characteristics derived from virtual team activity are somehow embedded in their employees, such as personality, ethnicity, and diversity. Based on researcher observation, personality and diversity play a significant role in team performance. Since they communicate through virtual work management platforms prone to bias, personality and diversity management become more critical to reducing conflict. Knowing who they are and their preferences, we try to emancipate others' preferences by focusing only on team goals. As a result, multicultural aspects in this team seem uncultured due to the focus on achieving goals rather than bothering or intervening with others.

Table 2 Multicultural characteristics emerged from virtual team activities

Multicultural Characteristics emerged from Virtual team Activity on DAC	Multicultural Characteristics emerged from Virtual team Activity on DC
Honesty (working attitude)	Personality
Responsibility	Ethnicity
Entrepreneurial Spirit	Diversity
Knowledge Management	-
Cultural Intelligence	-

From table 2, we can see that in contrast to a digital company, the Hybrid company focuses more on the behavior reflected from their inner self (personality and character). They tend not to focus on what is in them but on putting their inner self into action. Honesty to their supervisor, peers, and customers are considered more important in interacting with diversity. They also need to show more effort in interpersonal activities due to the Architecture, Engineering, and Construction industry that requires to engage more with diverse stakeholders, from highly educated professionals to low educated field workers. In facing this diversity, workers need to adapt to maintain their performance by increasing their cultural intelligence. Workers in a Hybrid company also have more turnover than in a digital company. Thus, they encourage them to develop their entrepreneurial spirit and knowledge management to keep the process alive even though the team compositions change periodically.

Lastly, the researcher observed directly to their working site and observing the virtual team process using online meeting applications. Two multicultural characteristics, gender and power distance, emerged from virtual team activity. The behavior of members also drastically changed once the superior member logged in to the meeting. When there were only peers, almost everyone put their video and microphone on to converse informally. Once the superior member or someone who conducted the formal meeting came in, the Female members tended to put their video feature off while listening to the discussion and only responded using a microphone when asked directly or question after the presenter finished talking. On the other hand, four out of five male members used video features the whole time and tended to make micro response during the meeting.

From this case comparison, the researcher concludes that although virtual team activities can generate an emergent property of multiculturalism due to borderless and limitless interaction among workers, the

characteristics' level is different regarding their industry's characteristics, business process, and team personal attributes.

V. DISCUSSION

Patterson (2018) discusses about the future of employment in digital economy, such as gig worker, freelancer, and virtual working. This study found the role shift in hybrid company that also has executive group in which managing their tasks as a project manager instead of a specialist worker. There are trends that arise in today generation of employment that requires a more general and managerial competency rather than working a specific task. From past literature review, the researchers found the virtual team issues from communication (Gassmann & von Zedtwitz 2003), teleconferencing (Lipnack & Stamps, 1997), and distance (Cascio & Shurygailo, 2003). In this study, we explore the daily interaction of virtual team and found some critical theme to advance the study of virtual multicultural team. In order to understand virtual team comprehensively, we can break it down into three pillars: people, system and process. The framework of virtual team activity can be seen in figure 3.

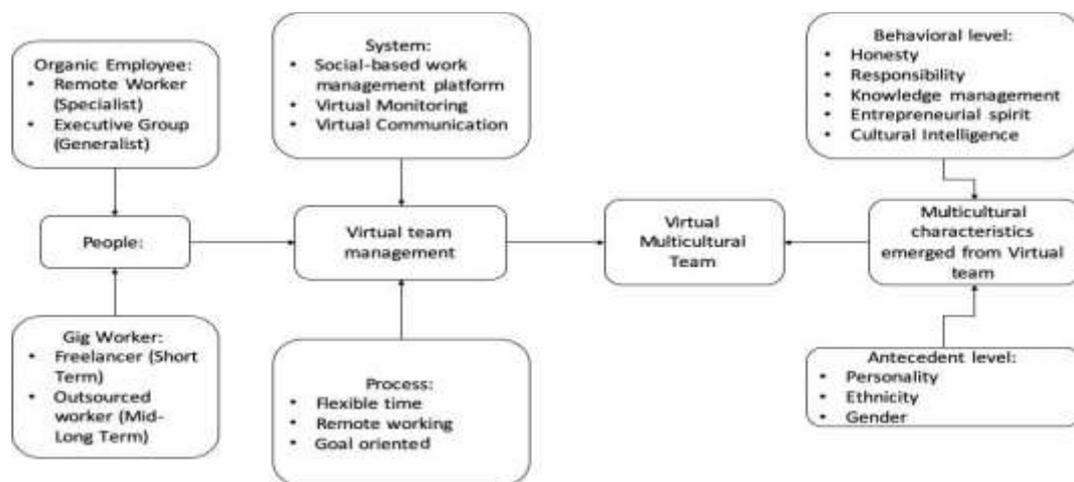


Figure 3. Virtual Multicultural Team Framework

From figure 3, the researchers emphasize two view of virtual team and multicultural characteristics emerged from virtual team activity, then synthesize the link to define virtual multicultural team. While working in a virtual team can lead to a more efficient way of performing tasks due to communication technology advancement, the emergence of multicultural properties can be somehow challenging for many companies (Maley, 2014). When members from different cultures and backgrounds interact within the same project, an adaptation process will happen even in a virtual work management platform (Thompson, 2014). In tackling this complexity, team members with high cultural intelligence and knowledge about others' cultures and preferences are better at performing under diverse situations (Ang et al., 2007).

Past literature on the multicultural team has positive views of how diversity increases team performance (Gallardo, 2015) by stimulating creative ideas. However, this research found that multicultural characteristics derived from two different virtual organizations were different but still significantly impact virtual team performance. These findings lead to a more complex understanding of diversity in virtual multicultural teams and generate a more general concept applied to a broader context. Expanding the definition of multicultural from Thompson (2014) that focuses on the cultural diversity, this study is trying to explain multicultural characteristics emerged from virtual team activities from the antecedent and behavioral level.

Our findings show that a company, by nature, does not require full interaction between stakeholders. It can be done through a virtual process of delivering the product or services. On the other hand, a company still needs to engage more intensively with their stakeholders due to their product or service characteristics that cannot be transferred or performed entirely on a digital platform, even though they are virtually assisted. These differences give us insight into how they perceive multicultural characteristics within their virtual team. Companies selling digital products or services will be more concerned with the antecedent level (Personality, Ethnicity, and Gender)

to reduce the risk of social conflict. A company that sells non-digital products or services focuses on the behavioral level (Honesty in interacting with each other, knowledge management, entrepreneurial spirit, and cultural intelligence) to overcome the necessity of a more complex human interaction.

From Schein (1985) cultural dimension perspective, the researchers analyzed that digital and hybrid companies show difference focuses on the multicultural priorities. Digital business tends to rely on basic cultural diversity that can be observed from the distance interaction, like personality, gender and ethnicity. On the other hand, hybrid business that is still interact in real world focuses more on the observable behavior of their virtual team. Regardless of the differences, there are still similar concern about the accommodation of multiculturalism in the organization that move towards artefacts (Behavior, physical attribute, and attitude) rather than underlying assumptions due to distance interactions.

The theoretical contribution of this study to virtual and multicultural team studies are threefold: first, this study reveals different multicultural characteristics level of focus derived from a company that sells digital products or services and non-digital products or services; second, identify the behavioral level of multicultural team perspective and how it affects virtual multicultural team performance; third, it reveals the new model of a virtual multicultural team that is influenced by the multicultural characteristics on virtual team process, people, and system.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study has two results: a virtual team and multicultural team characteristics in a digital company and a Hybrid company. The virtual team characteristics in both companies are similar, especially in virtual performance monitoring, team orientation, and worker type. In addition, due to the nature of the digital system in both companies, teams are working under a systemic way of doing that focuses on fulfilling company objectives.

The main differences are the way of communication and the type of work influenced by industries differences. A digital company runs their business inside out using virtual technology, ranging from managing its operation, human resources and managing its customers. Their operation depends on using an integrated platform, using a social-based working management system platform to accommodate different kinds of tasks.

On the other hand, a Hybrid company uses digital technology to bridge coordination and collaboration while still maintaining direct communication and work in the field. From this study, the researcher also concludes that a Hybrid company can be considered as a hybrid company that accommodate both digital system and in-field operations.

The second result is multicultural characteristics that emerged from virtual team activity in both companies. However, there are considerable differences in how they perceive multicultural aspects in a team. The digital company focuses on individual characteristics, such as personality, ethnicity, gender, and other personal diversity aspects. It derived from their nature of virtual activities that heavily rely on the digital platform to accommodate individual differences to reduce internal conflict from virtual communication. One thing that made the digital company different from the hybrid company is that they tend to have a streamlined vision of their tasks, which is high in digital dependency followed by digital literacy needs. With a similar vision and aspiration, they tend to focus on the personal dynamics of their team.

On the contrary, digitally assisted companies with their hybrid nature are trying to accommodate differences using diversity management structure and policies. The broad type of workers from their educational background, competencies, and specialities forces management to focus on developing company culture and design that shape employee behavior towards the same objectives. Regardless of their personal differences, the company demands employees develop a good working attitude, responsibility, entrepreneurial spirit, knowledge management, and cultural intelligence.

This study can help practitioners identify what multicultural level of focus is well-suited to their current business model. Managers should increase their awareness of diversity within virtual companies depending on their industry characteristics. This study also helps managers consciously balance between virtual team working system supported by information technology and the emergence of multicultural traits that can positively impact and significant challenges to team performance.

Like any other studies, this current model has strength and limitations. It can give a deeper understanding of how virtual organisations manage their multicultural aspect within their virtual team. However, it is also derived from respondent's perspectives in the specific context that are context-bounded and may need some more generalization to be applied to another context.

Future studies should also explore the actual behaviour of the employee, not only by an interview process. In addition, it should also examine the process for virtual multicultural team management to measure team performance.

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