

CURRY CULTURE: THE THAI WAY

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ABSTRACT

"Curry Culture: The Thai Way" explores the intricate tapestry of Thai culinary traditions, focusing on the central role of curry in Thai cuisine. This paper delves into the cultural, historical, and gastronomical significance of Thai curry, highlighting its evolution and regional variations. Thai curry is not merely a dish but a cultural artifact that embodies the country's rich heritage, agricultural abundance, and diverse influences. The paper investigates the primary components of Thai curry: aromatic herbs, fresh spices, and coconut milk, which together create a harmonious balance of flavours. The study examines the regional distinctions between different types of Thai curry, such as the fiery red curry from central Thailand, the milder green curry, and the southern Massaman curry, which reflects Indian and Malay influences.

Central to this exploration is the role of curry in Thai social and ceremonial contexts. The preparation and consumption of curry are deeply embedded in Thai communal life, reflecting the importance of shared meals and hospitality. Furthermore, the study discusses the globalization of Thai curry, tracing its journey from local kitchens to international tables, and how it has adapted to foreign tastes while retaining its authentic essence. By understanding the cultural narratives and historical pathways that have shaped Thai curry, this article provides a comprehensive insight into its enduring appeal and significance. "Curry Culture: The Thai Way" celebrates the culinary artistry and cultural depth of Thai curry, emphasizing its role as a symbol of Thai identity and a culinary bridge connecting the past to the present.

Keywords: Curry Culture, Thai Way, Culinary Arts

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INTRODUCTION

Thai people consume both rice and sticky rice as their main dish. Thai people eat curry with rice to help reducing the saltiness and spiciness of the food and make the stomach feel full. The Royal Institute Dictionary (1999: 149) defines curry as “water-based dishes that have various names according to the cooking method and seasonings.” There are many types of Thai curry in the country both with curry and no curry paste. Some type of curry uses stock, coconut milk, or milk as an ingredient. In order to group the curry, all curries are boiled foods. Foods that are liquid may be slurped or mixed and eat with rice. To compare Thai food with Western food, curry is included in the group of main dishes. The boiled part of the curry is in the soup group. Moreover, the type of curry also depends on the culture of each region. “Thai curry was influenced by Indian civilization about 1,000 years ago” (Jiraporn Charoendet, 2002: 6) and has been continuously developed by combining, adapting, and inventing seasoning techniques to suit Thai people’s taste. This has resulted in many new food recipes, which is becoming widely popular today.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

The History of Thai Curry

During the pre-Sukhothai period, curry paste was developed in Thailand. However, it is difficult to find documents, and very little reliable information has appeared. The evidence of the curry culture during the Sukhothai period can be found from stone inscriptions. Figure 1 shown the history of Thai curry during the Sukhothai to Rattanakosin periods that can be retrieved from various archives, records, and literature, which divided into sections for easy understanding.

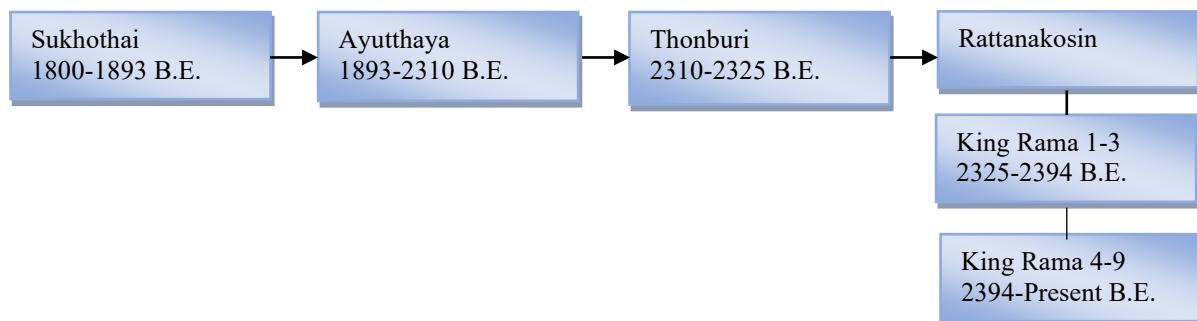


Figure 1 The history of Thai curry during Sukhothai to Rattanakosin periods

Relationship between Corporate Language and Communication Performance

Corporate language has been used as the corporate tool in internal communication among international HRM activities, including staff selection, training and development, and international assignments, in order to operate business activities around the globe (Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999). Also referred to as corporate language, corporate language is a tool that businesses use to manage internal communication between organizational units (Sørensen, 2005). Furthermore, Lionbridge (2019) defined corporate language as a tool for communicating both within and outside of an organization through the use of words and images to convey organizational information and news through online content, press releases, annual reports, and advertising slogans, among other things. Basically, corporate language improves efficiency by resolving misperceptions, cutting costs, avoiding time-consuming translations, and fostering a sense of belonging and togetherness in the workplace (Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999; Sørensen, 2005; Lionbridge, 2019). The study carried out by Peltokorpi and Yamao (2017) also supported the idea that corporate language can help frequently share vision and communication among employees. However, the study conducted by Lauring and Klitmøller (2015) revealed that five contextual factors, including level of formality, media slant, group size, power

disparity, and relationship strength, can influence avoidance behavior in corporate's second language encounters.

According to Lønsmann (2017), employees' local context and viewpoint must be taken into account in the implementation of corporate language policy by management. Weinzierl (2021) also found that cultural diversity can be a barrier to internal communication, so if the corporate language is properly implemented and information is shared with subsidiaries, this can help alleviate the problem of cultural diversity and improve team collaboration by reducing language barriers. Based on the study by Peltokorpi and Zhang (2022), the results from interviews with 79 assigned expatriates in two host countries—China and Japan—revealed that the language identification-based typology of diversified cultural expatriates is significant for employees' workplace manifestations. Based on the significance of corporate language on communication performance, following hypotheses is developed:

H3: Corporate language influenced communication performance.

Relationship among Relationship-oriented Cultural Difference Acceptance, Corporate Language, and Communication Performance

Acceptance and adaptation to cultural differences significant to communication performance as mentioned by various studies including (Hwa Hsu & Lee, 2012; Jiang et al., 2019; Breevaart & de Vries, 2021). However, relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance is not sufficient to improve internal communication among employees and stakeholders. It needs more other factors such as corporate language policy that can help create employees' understanding and viewpoint in order to improve organizational performance (Lønsmann, 2017). Moreover, Weinzierl (2021) revealed that corporate language to share information, vision, and news with subsidiaries can help alleviate the problem of cultural diversity and improve team collaboration. When the organization has corporate language that is appropriate for their employees, it can lead to have communication performance. Aligning with the literature review, it was found that there was a relationship among relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance, corporate language, and communication performance. Accordingly, the following three hypotheses derived for this study:

H4: Relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance influenced communication performance through corporate language.

From the literature review, the conceptual framework can be drawn as shown in Figure 2.

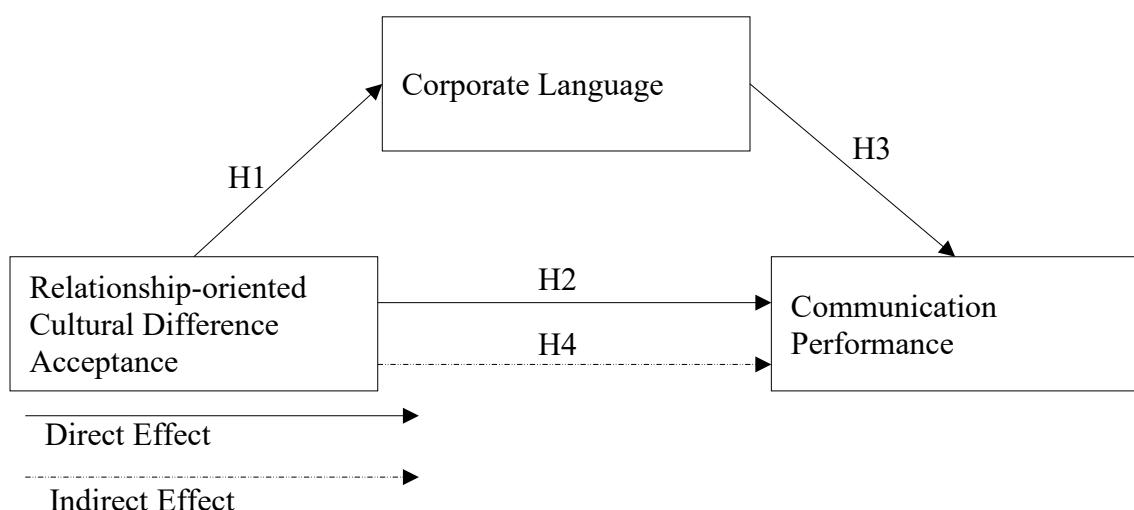


Figure 2 Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In response to examining the effect of relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance on communication performance through corporate language in Thai electronic industry, the study was then designed to adopt a quantitative research approach. The population in this study consisted of 371,340 employees from 618 companies. Due to the studied sample size calculation by Cochran (1977), 400 employees working in multinational electronic industry in Thailand were selected at a confidence level of 95%. A sampling method focused on using purposive and convenience sampling techniques. A questionnaire has four parts. For the first part of the questionnaires, it includes the demography such gender, age, education, marital status, and salary. Then, the second to the fourth parts are on a Likert scale with 1-5 rating-scales from 1 meaning "extremely disagreeable" to 5 meaning "extremely agreeable" to study relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance (RbCA), corporate language (CL), and communication performance (CP) with 5, 7, and 6 observed variables, respectively.

Before the instrument was applied for data collection, the item-objective congruence (IOC) and reliability test of the questionnaire through Cronbach's alpha were systematically conducted. From the investigation, the result revealed that the IOC was equal to 0.88 and Cronbach's alpha was obtained at 0.874, illustrating the sufficient quality of the research tool (Polit & Beck, 2006; Hair et al., 2012). To get the data, this study sent questionnaires to employees at different companies that make and sell electronic products and services.

Regarding data analysis, the descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis, were employed. Besides, structural equation modeling as well as confirmatory factor analysis with contemplating good-fit indices, and convergent and discriminant validity implied by factor loading (FL), composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), correlation matrix, and square root of AVE were administered. The studied model was expected to produce satisfied good-fit indices (Tabachnick et al., 2007). However, the model allowed to be adjusted based on modification indices when the model was judged not fit (Knekta et al., 2019). To address the achievement of a focused objective, the results are reported in a descriptive and tabulated pattern. All the details are portrayed in the following section.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Respondents' Profiles and Studied Variables

Most of the respondents were female (232 people, or 58.0%) if compare with male (168 people, or 42.0%). Considering the respondents' age, the result indicated that the majority of the employees aged 21-30 years old (162 persons, or 40.5%), followed by the ages between 31-40 years old (158 persons, or 39.5%) and 41-50 years old (60 persons, or 15.0%). However, the least number of respondents was about employees aged between 20 and 50 years old (equally, 10 people, or 2.5%). In terms of educational level, the highest level was that employees had graduated with a bachelor's degree (345 people, or 86.3%). In the meantime, employees obtained master's degrees and below bachelor's degrees (39 people, or 9.8% and 12 people, or 3.0%, respectively).

The result, additionally, revealed that 4 employees (1.0%) are having a higher master's degrees. Considering employees' marital status, almost two thirds are married (276 people, or 69.0%) and the others were single and divorced (95 people, or 23.8% and 29 people, or 7.3%, respectively). This research also showed that most of the respondents received 25,001-35,000 baht per month (160 people, or 40.0%). The second order represented the numbers of the respondents gaining 15,001-25,000 baht per month (142 people or 35.5%). The third place was that about 56 people (14.0%) earned a monthly income of less than 15,000 baht. The last one was of 42 employees (10.5%) who got over 35,001 baht per month. Concerning the respondents' working positions, there were about 338 employees (84.5%) in operational staff

positions. This was followed by the staff working as the head of division or department (56 people, or 14.0%) and as the executive/manager (6 people, or 1.5%).

Relationship-oriented Cultural Difference Acceptance, Corporate Language, and Communication Performance

Table 1 displays the mean, standard deviation, and interpretation of related variables. Class interval for data interpretation uses the reference from Best & Kahn (2006). The findings addressed those respondents who highly agreed on relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance, and that it was vital to acknowledge the relationship-oriented cultural diversification in the organization. Meanwhile, employees were encouraged to extremely agree on corporate language and communication performance, implying that employees attempted to improve corporate communication skills as well as understand symbols and images. In addition, skewness and kurtosis, which were considered for assessing normal data distribution, were acceptable since their values ranged between ± 3.00 (Curran et al., 1996; Kline, 2005).

Table 1 Mean, Standard Deviation and Interpretation of Related Variables

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Agreeable Level
Relationship-oriented Cultural Difference Acceptance					
RbCA1	4.155	0.779	-0.788	0.595	Agreeable
RbCA2	4.238	0.814	-0.937	0.539	Extremely Agreeable
RbCA3	4.283	0.874	-1.080	0.460	Extremely Agreeable
RbCA4	4.250	0.903	-1.028	0.239	Extremely Agreeable
RbCA5	4.035	0.909	-0.975	0.903	Agreeable
Overall	4.169	0.727	-1.277	1.622	Agreeable
Corporate Language					
CL1	4.347	0.646	-0.593	-0.097	Extremely Agreeable
CL2	4.540	0.655	-1.222	0.746	Extremely Agreeable
CL3	4.558	0.642	-1.270	0.943	Extremely Agreeable
CL4	4.670	0.580	-1.655	2.081	Extremely Agreeable
CL5	4.588	0.577	-1.053	0.118	Extremely Agreeable
CL6	4.718	0.498	-1.507	1.325	Extremely Agreeable
CL7	4.623	0.553	-1.212	0.999	Extremely Agreeable
Overall	4.578	0.453	-1.524	2.228	Extremely Agreeable
Communication Performance					
CP1	4.455	0.582	-0.514	-0.671	Extremely Agreeable
CP2	4.315	0.676	-0.528	-0.547	Extremely Agreeable
CP3	4.240	0.647	-0.444	0.069	Extremely Agreeable
CP4	4.133	0.686	-0.410	-0.008	Agreeable
CP5	4.225	0.675	-0.453	-0.184	Extremely Agreeable
CP6	4.500	0.641	-1.147	1.571	Extremely Agreeable
Overall	4.311	0.476	-0.748	0.256	Extremely Agreeable

Note: RbCA1-5 refers to the items for Relationship-oriented Cultural Difference Acceptance, CL1-7 refers to the items for Corporate Language, CP1-6 refers to Communication Performance

Model Development, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity

The crucial point for evaluating model, confirmatory factor analysis with good-fit indices was firstly performed and analyzed. The results revealed that good-fit indices (Cmin/df of 1.523, P-value of 0.001, GFI of 0.960, AGFI of 0.930, RMR of 0.022, RMSEA of 0.036, TLI of 0.981, CFI of 0.988, and NFI of 0.966) were acceptable. After that, factor loadings, composite

reliability, average variance extracted, correlation matrix, and square root of AVE were depicted in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2 Factor Loadings and Normal Distribution

Variables	Relationship-oriented Cultural Difference Acceptance	Corporate Language	Communication Performance
RbCA1	0.553		
RbCA2	0.704		
RbCA3	0.825		
RbCA4	0.966		
RbCA5	0.812		
CL1		0.749	
CL2		0.777	
CL3		0.708	
CL4		0.688	
CL5		0.647	
CL6		0.648	
CL7		0.564	
CP1			0.660
CP2			0.588
CP3			0.596
CP4			0.571
CP5			0.600
CP6			0.719

Note: RbCA1-5 refers to the items for Relationship-oriented Cultural Difference Acceptance, CL1-7 refers to the items for Corporate Language, CP1-6 refers to Communication Performance

Table 3 Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted, and Square Root of AVE

Variables	CR	AVE	RbCA	CL	CP
RbCA	0.886	0.615	0.784		
CL	0.861	0.471	0.156	0.686	
CP	0.749	0.390	0.112	0.688	0.624

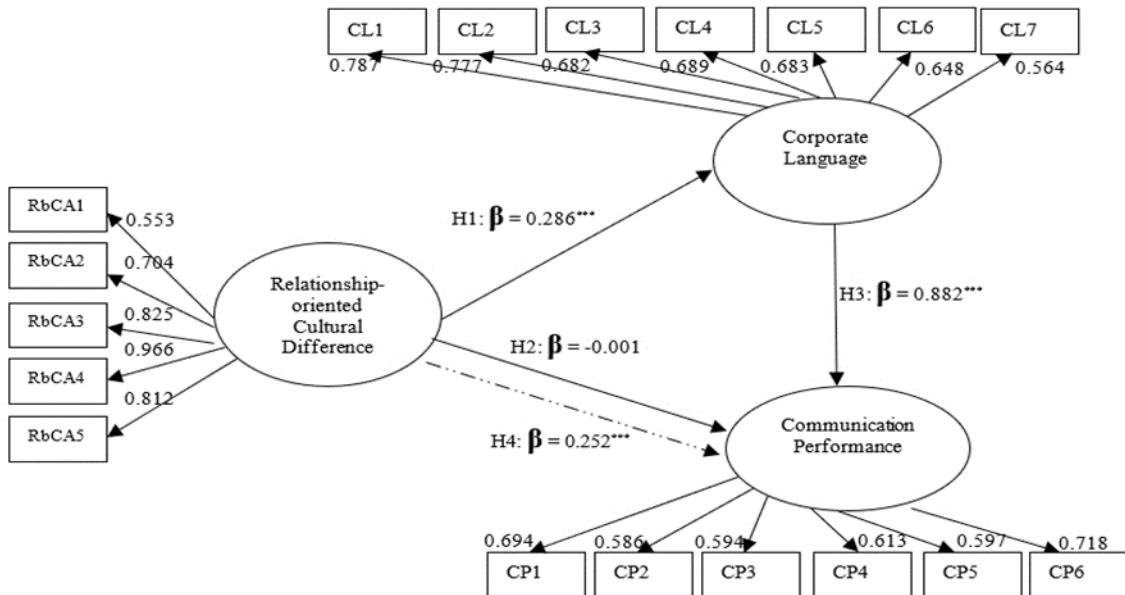
Note: CR: Composite Reliability, AVE: Average Variance Extracted, RbCA: Relationship-oriented Cultural Difference Acceptance, CL: Corporate Language, CP: Communication Performance, Bold values in diagonal line display the square root of AVE

From Table 2, the analysis of factor loadings revealed that the variance was extracted sufficiently since its values (0.553-0.966) were within the acceptable cut-off point of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2012). In the meantime, Table 3, analyzing composite reliability, average variance extracted, and square root of AVE, addressed the assessment of convergent and discrimination validity. The result posited the good constructs even though the AVE square root value of CL (0.686) and CP (0.624) was less than the correlation matrix value of the mentioned pair (0.688), indicating failure to discriminant validity; they are significant to the study and this research allows them to be highly correlated (Henseler et al., 2015).

Finalized Model and Hypothesis Analysis

After the model investigation using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted, the finalized model through the employment of structural equation modelling was derived (shown in Figure 3). The determining indicators, including t-value, z-value, and p-value, were judged for hypothesis analysis, and essential indices, including standardized estimate, unstandardized

estimate, and standard error, were considered for describing the influential power of effect prediction on variables (shown in Table 4).



$C_{min}/df = 1.517$, $P\text{-value} = 0.001$, $GFI = 0.960$, $AGFI = 0.931$, $RMR = 0.022$, $RRMSEA = 0.036$, $TLI = 0.981$, $CFI = 0.988$, $NFI = 0.966$

Figure 3 Finalized Model

Note: RbCA1-5 refers to the items for Relationship-oriented Cultural Difference Acceptance, CL1-7 refers to the items for Corporate Language, CP1-6 refers to Communication Performance

Table 4 Standardized Estimate, Unstandardized Estimate, Standard Error, t-value, z-value, and p-value

Variables	β	b	S.E.	t-value	P-value
H1: RbCA \rightarrow CL	0.286	0.132	0.027	4.841	***
H2: RbCA \rightarrow CP	-0.001	0.000	0.022	-0.012	.991
H3: CL \rightarrow CP	0.882	0.851	0.089	9.534	***
		Standardized Indirect Effect		Sobel Test, Z-value	
H4: RbCA \rightarrow CL \rightarrow CP	0.252			4.334	***

Note: β refers to standardized estimate, b refers to unstandardized estimate, S.E. refers to standard error, RbCA: Relationship-oriented Cultural Difference Acceptance, CL: Corporate Language, CP: Communication Performance, *** = significant level as of .001

Table 4 demonstrated the analysis of hypothesis examination and the influential power of effect prediction on variables. In terms of investigating proposed hypotheses, the results concluded that H1: relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance influenced corporate language and H3: corporate language influenced communication performance were supported at a statistically significant level as of .001. Moreover, to consider the hypothesized study on mediating effects, H4: relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance influenced communication performance through corporate language was also disclosed to be supported with full mediation ($p\text{-value} = .001$). Nevertheless, the hypothesized statement (H2) stating that relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance influenced communication performance was not supported since its $p\text{-value}$ was .991, which is higher than .05.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

After addressing the study objective aimed at investigating the influence of relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance on communication performance through corporate language in the electronic industry, the findings summarized that relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance influenced corporate language and the corporate language had a positive effect on employee communication performance at a statistically significant level of .001. However, the relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance did not have direct influence on communication performance, it had indirect influence on communication performance. In other words, the corporate language plays a vital role in fully mediating the positive effect of relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance on communication performance at a statistically significant level as of .001. According to the study result, it can be discussed that when employees who can understand the significance of having a good relationship with other employees in the workplace can result in similarly perceiving the same corporate language such as symbols, jargon, images, or abbreviations which can then influence employee's communication performance.

Nevertheless, it can be observed from the study that acceptance towards relationship-oriented cultural differences cannot be relied upon to improve communication performance in the studied industry. It requires corporate language to act as the linkage among employees' communication performance. Consequently, it is relatively obvious that relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance can increase employees' communication performance, resulting in better employee understanding of organizational policies and work assignments as well as improved personal relationships in the electronic industry via promoting corporate language, such as encouraging employees to learn and practice using organizational symbols, jargon, images, or abbreviations.

The discussion portrayed in this study was also consistent with the study done by Weinzierl (2021), who revealed that corporate language can help alleviate the problem of cultural diversity and improve team collaboration. In addition, there were similar results from the study conducted by Peltokorpi and Zhang (2022), who interviewed 79 assigned expatriates in two host countries—China and Japan—and found that the language identification-based typology of diversified cultural expatriates is significant for employees' workplace manifestations. This is also consistent with the study by Peelen and Beltman (2013), who claimed that working in a relationship-oriented culture may assist employees in being open to communicating with others.

The study found in this article can provide two main contributions: managerial and theoretical issues. For managerial contribution, managers in international companies can acknowledge and confirm that the corporate language can reveal the relationship between relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance and communication performance. Therefore, they could emphasize building effective internal language, including words and visuals, to convey organizational information and news through online content, press releases, annual reports, and advertising slogans, among internal employees. The positive results of internal employee communication can be linked to resolving misperceptions, cutting costs, avoiding time-consuming translations, and fostering a sense of belonging and togetherness in the workplace (Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999; Sørensen, 2005; Lionbridge, 2019). In addition, employees working in cultural diversity can have better internal communication and team collaboration when there is implementation of corporate language (Weinzierl, 2021). For theoretical contribution, the study can confirm that acceptance and adjustment of cultural differences cannot alone influence internal communication among employees and stakeholders, since the result revealed that corporate language has full mediation on the relationship between relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance and communication performance. In addition, this study can add to a few literatures on studying the relationship between

relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance and communication performance via corporate language.

However, this study has some limitations that must be considered that can potentially lead to an improved future. Begin with the limitations related to the research approach were taken into account since this study had emphasis on adopting a quantitative approach. Consequently, future research may utilize other research approaches, for example, qualitative concepts. Through the use of in-depth interviews, focus groups, and other qualitative data collection techniques, it may be possible to gain a deeper insight into how corporate language can strengthen the relationship between relationship-oriented cultural difference acceptance and communication performance. Another consideration of likely limitation may focus on a single industry being selected, which may create the impossibility of generalizing the research result to another industry. As a result, based on the discussion, future research may extend the study towards other industries and employ comparison analysis across them. The incoming result may probably establish the enhancement of communication effectiveness. Lastly, the possible limitations may involve the profound variables employed in this study. The other determining factors such as organizational behaviors, working atmosphere, agile culture, and others seem to have a possible trend in establishing successful communication.

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