



**INTERCULTURAL WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE BETWEEN ANXIETY AND
UNCERTAINTY MANAGEMENT ON INTERCULTURAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN MALAYSIA**

By

SUN HUIWEN

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University Putra
Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy**

January 2024

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of University Putra Malaysia in
fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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The digital information era has reduced barriers among countries, leading to increased educational migration and cross-cultural communication in higher educational institutions. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of international students in Malaysian universities has significantly increased in recent years, resulting in a rich diversity of nationalities on campus. This presents a challenge for both international students and the educational system and highlights the need to explore intercultural adjustment from an intergroup/interpersonal communication perspective. In this study, the theoretical arguments of the Theory of Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) were tested on 388 international students at the University Putra Malaysia and the University Malaya through a

survey using stratified random sampling. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and other statistical methods were employed to analyze the data and test ten hypotheses. The study aimed to understand how international students adjust to new cultures and environments, particularly concerning anxiety and uncertainty management. The results revealed that understanding intercultural adjustment may reduce uncertainty and anxiety toward different cultures and environments, as well as improve intergroup/interpersonal interaction on campus. Seven superficial causes were found to be positively correlated with anxiety and uncertainty reduction, thereby justifying the AUM theory's assumptions. Additionally, this study introduced the mediator 'intercultural willingness to communicate' in the theoretical framework. Results showed that intercultural willingness to communicate partially mediated the relationship between uncertainty/anxiety management and intercultural adjustment. The two superficial causes failed to correlate with anxiety management/ uncertainty management prospectively. Except for the mediator of intercultural willingness to communicate, other factors play a different role in this relationship. Additionally, this research result reflects on the emotion and personal experience to influence the relationship between reaction to hosts and uncertainty management, motivation to react with hosts, and anxiety management respectively. This theoretical framework can imply intercultural training and courses. This study contributed to higher education institutions, enhancing the awareness of culture and communication on campus, aside from academic activities, and considering culturalized communication interaction as a potential strategy to enhance intergroup/interpersonal communication and solve intercultural adjustment.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KESEDIAAN ANTARA BUDAYA UNTUK BERKOMUNIKASI ANTARA KEBIMBANGAN
DAN PENGURUSAN KETIDAKPASTIAN MENGENAI PELARASAN ANTARA
BUDAYA DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR ANTARABANGSA DI UNIVERSITI AWAM
DI MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Era teknologi maklumat ini telah mengurangkan jurang antara pelbagai negara dan menyebabkan peningkatan migrasi pendidikan serta komunikasi silang budaya di institusi-institusi pengajian tinggi. Walaupun berhadapan dengan cabaran pandemik Covid-19, bilangan pelajar antarabangsa yang menuntut ilmu di menara gading Malaysia telah meningkat secara ketara dan secara langsung meningkatkan kepelbagaian bangsa dan kewarganegaraan di kampus. Hal ini menambah cabaran kepada dua belah pihak iaitu pelajar antarabangsa dan sistem pendidikan tempatan. Keadaan ini menonjolkan keperluan untuk meneroka penyesuaian antara budaya daripada perspektif komunikasi antara kumpulan atau sesama sendiri. Dalam kajian ini, 388 pelajar antarabangsa di Universiti Putra Malaysia dan Universiti Malaya telah

dipilih secara pensampelan rawak berstrata untuk menyertai tinjauan yang mengkaji hujah-hujah berkaitan Teori Kebimbangan/Pengurusan Ketidakpastian (Theory of Anxiety/Uncertainty Management, AUM). Pemodelan Persamaan Berstruktur (Structural Equation Modelling, SEM) dan kaedah statistik lain telah digunakan untuk menganalisis data dan menguji sepuluh hipotesis. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana pelajar antarabangsa menyesuaikan diri dalam budaya dan persekitaran yang baharu, terutamanya berkaitan dengan pengurusan kebimbangan dan ketidakpastian. Hasil kajian ini mendedahkan bahawa pemahaman tentang penyesuaian antara budaya dapat mengurangkan ketidakpastian dan kebimbangan terhadap persekitaran dan budaya yang berbeza, selain daripada menambahbaikkan interaksi antara kumpulan/sesama sendiri di kampus. Tujuh punca dangkal didapati berkolerasi secara positif dengan pengurangan kebimbangan dan ketidakpastian, justeru mewajarkan andaian-andaian teori AUM. Tambahan pula, kajian ini memperkenalkan pengantara 'kesanggupan antara budaya untuk berkomunikasi' ke dalam kerangka teori. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa kesanggupan antara budaya untuk berkomunikasi menjadi pengantara separa bagi hubungan antara pengurusan ketidakpastian/kebimbangan dan penyesuaian antara budaya. Selain itu, dua punca dangkal gagal untuk berkolerasi dengan pengurusan ketidakpastian/kebimbangan secara prospektif. Kecuali untuk perantara kesediaan antara budaya untuk berkomunikasi, faktor-faktor lain memainkan peranan yang berbeza dalam hubungan ini. Tambahan pula, hasil kajian ini mencerminkan emosi dan pengalaman peribadi yang mempengaruhi hubungan antara tindak balas kepada tuan rumah dan pengurusan

ketidakpastian, motivasi untuk bertindak balas dengan tuan rumah, dan pengurusan kebimbangan. Kerangka teori ini boleh membayangkan latihan dan kursus antara budaya. Kajian ini menyumbangkan kepada institusi pengajian tinggi dalam usaha meningkatkan kesedaran tentang budaya dan komunikasi di kampus, selain daripada aktiviti akademik dan mempertimbangkan untuk membudayakan interaksi komunikasi sebagai suatu strategi yang berpotensi untuk mempertingkatkan komunikasi antara kumpulan/sesama sendiri dan membantu menyelesaikan penyesuaian antara budaya.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctoral of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
UM	University Malaya
AUM	Theory of Anxiety/Uncertainty Management
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
URT	Uncertainty Reduction Theory
CBE	Cross-Border Education
IWTC	Intercultural Willingness To Communicate
MLE	Maximum Likelihood Estimation
AM	Anxiety Management
UM	Uncertainty Management
IA	Intercultural Adjustment
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CR	Composite Reliability
CA	Cronbach's alpha
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SRMR	Standardized Root Means Square Residual
TLI	Tucker–Lewis fit index
IV	Independent Variable
DV	Dependent Variable

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the intercultural context that shapes the intercultural adjustment experienced by international students. Examining the research gaps pertaining to Malaysia's multicultural context. Outlines the research objectives, which enumerates the research questions. Also illustrates the limitations of the study. Then discuss the significance of the study. Finally defines the key terms used in this research.

1.2 Background of Study

Over the past decades, the theories of human communication have been known for study in Western academics, which inflect on the individualistic assumption and subject from mainstream U.S culture (Kim, 2001). Intercultural communication is considered a process of exchanging symbols and interpreting them in a specific context, where individuals from diverse cultures interact with each other to create a mutual understanding. It involves a dynamic transaction between people who belong to distinct cultural backgrounds to generate shared meanings (Soboleva & Lomakina, 2019) in our dynamic society, schools must incorporate a global perspective into their educational programs to keep up with the changing times.

In the year 2020, over 5.6 million students globally opted to experience the substantial advantages of pursuing their education in foreign countries. However, if current growth rates continue, the number is projected to reach nearly 8 million by 2025 (Project Atlas, 2020). The United States, United Kingdom, and Canada are among the most popular countries for international students. Internationalization of higher education has become a prevalent phenomenon, with students crossing borders to pursue higher education in foreign countries (Sutton 2019), especially in developing nations where the availability of tertiary education is scarce, and universities face resource constraints, the situation is more pronounced (Tamrat & Teferra, 2018).

Malaysia is gaining recognition as a global education hub due to its affordable economic tuition fees, diverse cultural environment, and the incorporation of the Commonwealth international education system (Bierwiazzonek & Waldzus, 2016). Currently, international students in Malaysia reached around 50,000 in 2019, even though there were 10,000 doctoral applications until October 2021 in Malaysia (New Straits Times, 2021). The growth of internationalization has been one of the major driving forces behind this increase, as evidenced by the recent surge in cross-border education programs.

Furthermore, Malaysia is recognized for its distinctive Southeast Asian identity as a society that embraces multiculturalism and multilingualism (Tsang, 2016). This cultural diversity is evident in the higher education domain, where Malaysian universities have experienced a continual increase in the enrollment of international students since 1996 (Gunaseelan et al., 2022). The influence of

cross-border tertiary education extends not only to international students but also to local students who pursued studies abroad in the early 1950s. The projection for this number was anticipated to exceed seven million by the year 2020 (Yu, 2021).

Intercultural Adaptation in Global Education

International educational projects are often implemented within the context of international cooperation, as institutions seek to foster cross-cultural exchanges and expand their global reach (Ma & Montgomery, 2021). The process of adapting to a different culture by international students is a crucial issue of global significance due to its impact on their academic performance and individual conduct (Yassin et al., 2020)

Internationalization of higher education has become a prevalent phenomenon, with students crossing borders to pursue higher education in foreign countries (Teichler, 2017), especially in developing countries, the scarcity of higher education degrees and insufficient resources in universities are more pronounced (Tamrat & Teferra, 2018).

The process of cultural adaptation is intricate and multifaceted, requiring consideration and involvement from various parties (Rui & Wang, 2015). By advancing our understanding of this process, we can better equip individuals and communities to navigate intercultural interactions and foster positive outcomes. As previous research indicated travel experience, a high level of education, and a

strong command of languages are students' adjustment factors that are related to their intercultural adaptation process (Pragash et al., 2020).

Theoretical Critical in Intercultural Communication

Theoretical critique is crucial in the field of intercultural communication (Cugueró-Escofet & Rosanas, 2019), by engaging in critical analysis, scholars can contribute to a deeper understanding of intercultural communication processes and foster more inclusive and equitable interactions across cultures (Burmester & Tille, 2020).

Intercultural communication is a field that is known for its inherent complexity (Baires & May, 2021). Initially, intercultural communication was described as the exchange of ideas between people belonging to various national cultures. However, with the advent of technology and changing societal norms, this field of inquiry has progressed significantly (Chen et al., 2018). The early intercultural communication theories developed by Hall, Trager, and others have served as the foundation for the discipline as it exists today (Chan et al., 2021). Besides, the seminal works of Baires and May (2021) have elucidated the paths of acculturation available to individuals navigating a new cultural environment. Both models highlight the multidimensional nature of the acculturation process, which involves contact with different cultures and entails cultural learning and change (Croucher et al., 2015). To formulate a more comprehensive communication theory, it is essential to scrutinize cultures worldwide. This involves modifying existing measurement tools and scales to accommodate the diverse nature of these cultures (Curtis et al., 2019). The majority of such tools used in this field are

created by American researchers and are primarily based on American cultural norms (Gudykunst, 2002).

Numerous Asian cultural traditions are rooted in human-centered perspectives (Choi & Hogg, 2020). While these Asiacentric viewpoints may not always align with actual communication practices among Asians, they can serve as theoretical frameworks for understanding communication from an Asian standpoint (Cano-hila, 2022). A recent phenomenological investigation conducted in Malaysia revealed that intercultural competence is perceived as an interactive process that emerges through interpersonal relationships involving individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds (Ecker et al., 2022). The AUM theory provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding the complex dynamics of intercultural interactions, highlighting the roles of anxiety, uncertainty, and interaction in shaping intergroup and interpersonal relations (Sun et al., 2022).

The subject of cultural adaptation is a crucial aspect of research, policy-making, communal, national, and individual considerations. The extensive research conducted by scholars on the dynamics of this process has illuminated the positive and negative impacts that accompany it, while also providing various critiques and alternative models to existing paradigms of adaptation (Croucher et al., 2015). The issue of intercultural adjustment represents a significant concern for international students studying in Malaysian universities (Hendrix & Moore, 2017). Given the substantial cultural differences that international students encounter upon arriving in Malaysia, successful intercultural adjustment is critical to their academic and personal well-being (Jamal & Wok, 2020)

The Malaysian context has witnessed numerous noteworthy research endeavors on intercultural communication across diverse academic disciplines. Nevertheless, the majority of these studies have predominantly originated from social scientific and interpretive methodological perspectives (Passini & Morselli, 2017). As an illustration, they embraced a unified conceptual framework that incorporated Intercultural Communication, Language and Intercultural Communication, and Social Identity Theory. This framework was employed to investigate a study conducted at a private university in Malaysia, delving into the influence of social categories on interactions within intercultural group work. Additionally, some researchers examined the intercultural adjustment of international students in Malaysian public universities, utilizing the U-curve model of intercultural adjustment (Nadeem et al. 2021), the model characterizes adaptation as a progression that transitions from an initial period of excitement to a subsequent stage of cultural shock, ultimately leading to recuperation and proficiency in a new culture. This process is marked by various stages, such as adjustment and mastery (Hachem et al., 2022). Alternative researchers employ Allport's Contact Theory (1954) to elucidate the intercultural communication, language, and intercultural sensitivity of international students (Shadi, 2015). Another group of researchers directs their attention to Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) theory (Rajan et al., 2021), which offers predictions regarding intercultural communication within Malaysian universities.

Besides, Lim (2016) have elucidated the paths of acculturation available to individuals navigating a new cultural environment. Both models highlight the multidimensional nature of the acculturation process, which involves contact with

different cultures and entails cultural learning and change (Croucher et al., 2015).

Formulating a more comprehensive communication theory necessitates an exploration of diverse cultures worldwide. This involves adjusting existing measurement tools and scales to accommodate the varied nature of these cultures (Curtis et al., 2019). The majority of such tools used in this field are created by American researchers and are primarily based on American cultural norms (Gudykunst, 2002).

In prior studies conducted at Malaysian public universities, some researchers investigated the intercultural adjustment of international students using the U-curve model of intercultural adjustment (Nadeem et al. 2021), the model characterizes adaptation as a progression that transitions from an initial period of excitement to a subsequent stage of cultural shock, ultimately leading to recuperation and proficiency in a new culture. This process is marked by various stages, such as adjustment and mastery (Hassan & Saodah, 2020). Alternative researchers employ Allport's Contact Theory (1954) to elucidate the intercultural communication, language, and intercultural sensitivity of international students (Shadi, 2015). Another group of researchers directs their attention to Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) theory (Rajan et al., 2021), which offers predictions regarding intercultural communication within Malaysian universities.

1.3 Problem Statement

Regarding research on intercultural communication, there is a scarcity of literature specifically conducted in Malaysia. In the broader Asian region, studies on

intercultural communication tend to concentrate predominantly on Japanese and Chinese cultures, with limited attention given to other cultures, including those in countries like Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia (Graham & Mazer, 2019).

International students pursuing higher education in Malaysia face several challenges such as racial discrimination, climatic and dietary variations, language barriers, accommodation, homesickness, limited social interactions, role and status transitions, and differences in the education system (Hullett & Witte, 2001). These challenges can result in additional problems such as anxiety, depression, and other forms of illness (Lund, 2020).

When people engage in cross-cultural interactions, they may feel threatened as their preconceived notions about interacting with individuals from their own culture may not be applicable. This realization can lead to anxiety and a sense of being disoriented. Furthermore, communicating with people from unfamiliar cultures can be intimidating, and the lack of familiarity can cause uncertainty (Neuliep, 2015), making it challenging to anticipate or explain events related to social communication (Whitt, 2015).

This study aims to explore student sojourners' intercultural adjustment through AUM theory. The AUM theory is a communication theory that seeks to improve effective communication by minimizing uncertainty and anxiety levels (Keles, 2013). AUM Theory initially targeted the international students who encountered the American low-context culture. As anthropologist Edward Hall, Malaysia serves as a notable illustration of a high-context culture. This means that a significant

portion of information is conveyed through the physical context or the individual, rather than through explicit, transmitted messages.

Nadeem and Koschmann (2021) pointed out that the AUM theory has predominantly been examined in Western cultural settings, leading to a gap in the existing literature. The United States is situated at the lower end of the context continuum, while European, Australian, and Canadian cultures are even lower. On the flip side, the majority of Asian cultures, including China, Spain, Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Japan, are positioned toward the high-context end of the spectrum. This suggests that proficiency in verbal communication holds greater importance and is more valued in low-context cultures than in high-context cultures (Krishnasamy et al., 2014). Furthermore, in low-context cultures, oral or written information requires less contextual knowledge for accurate interpretation (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1986). In high-context cultures, effective communication necessitates a communicator with a heightened understanding of others' non-verbal cues, particularly when individuals may not explicitly express their ideas and feelings.

According to AUM theory, mindfulness can play a role in how anxiety and uncertainty affect intercultural adjustment. However, Kim (2001) criticized the theory for focusing too much on conscious thought and not taking into account the emotional contradictions that can arise at both the personal and cultural levels. In particular, Western cultures typically employ high-arousal emotions to exert influence on others, whereas Eastern cultures typically utilize low-arousal emotions to conform and adapt to social norms (Logan & Hunt, 2016).

Rajan et al. (2021) suggest that the polarization and racial division in Malaysia could be one of the reasons for students being unwilling to communicate with those from different cultural backgrounds. This may elucidate the reported dissatisfaction with intercultural communication among university students in Malaysia, as noted by Locke and Heller (2017).

The amount of communication in which people engage plays a crucial role in developing strong interpersonal relationships across cultures. However, individuals differ significantly in their willingness to talk, regardless of cultural background (Maghfirah, 2018). Intercultural willingness to communicate functions as both an intermediary, as indicated by Rajan et al. (2021), and an outcome, as suggested by Park (2012), in the realm of intercultural communication among international students. There is a call for additional empirical research to explore the role of intercultural willingness to communicate as a mediator between anxiety and uncertainty management and intercultural adjustment among international students in a multicultural setting (Sun et al., 2022).

Gudykunst (2005) proposed 47 axioms associated with the observable or external factors influencing communication. An axiom is a statement accepted as true without requiring proof, commonly used in mathematics and logic to derive consequences (Neuliep, 2017). These external factors impacting effective communication relate to our ability to navigate anxiety and uncertainty (Vongsila & Reinders, 2016). Gudykunst (2005) identified various additional elements that impede the management of anxiety and uncertainty, leading to ineffective communication. Although he terms them surface causes, he does not suggest they

are unimportant or trivial.

The empirical evidence does not provide sufficient testing of the axioms and theorems of AUM, particularly in the context of intercultural adjustment. There are arguments made by scholars that suggest the AUM Theory suffers from certain limitations, such as: (1) Limited attention given to effective communication, (2) Excessive dependence on consciousness, and (3) Western-centric assumptions underlying the axiomatic constructs. For example, Yoshitake (2002) argued that the AUM theory does not account for the ways in which cultural and societal factors influence the management of anxiety and uncertainty.

1.4 Research Questions

The investigation of the Malaysian public response towards intercultural adjustment within the context of AUM theory to answer these questions:

1. What are the attending patterns of intercultural communication on campus among international students.
2. What is the correlation between uncertainty management and anxiety management?
3. What is the relationship between uncertainty management (a) / anxiety management (b) and intercultural adjustment respectively?
4. What is the mediating role of intercultural willingness to communicate between uncertainty management (a) / anxiety management (b) and intercultural adjustment respectively?

5. What are the relationships between superficial causes and uncertainty management (a) / anxiety management (b) respectively?

1.5 Research Objectives

1.5.1 General Objective

This research aims to comprehend the adaptation of international students to life in Malaysia by anchoring it in the AUM theory. The overarching goal of the study was to explore interpersonal/intergroup behavior concerning intercultural adjustment and examine the significance of intercultural willingness to communicate in communication.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

1. To investigate the attending patterns of intercultural communication on campus among international students.
2. To examine the correlation between uncertainty management and anxiety management.
3. To identify the relationship between uncertainty management (a) / anxiety management (b) and intercultural adjustment respectively.
4. To determine the mediation of intercultural willingness to communicate in the relationship between uncertainty management (a) / anxiety management (b) and intercultural adjustment respectively.

5. To identify the relationship between superficial causes and uncertainty management (a) / anxiety management (b) respectively.

1.6 Significance of Research

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, the study would employ Anxiety-uncertainty Management Theory to examine the relationship between superficial causes and basic causes, basic causes and international students' intercultural adjustment through the mediating role. In this research theoretical framework concludes the mediator which takes the place of moderator in the original theoretical framework, and the variable of ethical interactions in the previous theoretical framework. Combining all the variables proposed by Gudykunst's two theoretical frameworks and testing the role of the mediator in this comprehensive theoretical framework. Moreover, this would strengthen AUM theory and provide how AUM theory can be executed in future studies.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

From a pragmatic standpoint, the findings of this research would provide opportunities and insights regarding major factors influencing international students' intercultural adjustment to Malaysian culture. Additionally, how they could effectively communicate with hosts and people who come from different cultures.

International students require intercultural adjustment to achieve their goals in academic and life. This can be an effective communication strategies. The study would also highlight basic factors that influence the feeling of uncertainty and anxiety towards the new environment and culture. Especially through intergroup and interpersonal relationships on campus.

1.6.3 General Significance

In general, this research would add to the existing knowledge base by employing a quantitative research approach for the study. Using the relative approach helped to highlight the perceptions of international students about intercultural adjustment. Besides, proposing and further examining the mediation of intercultural willingness to communicate will highlight additional factors as communicating effectively in intergroup and interpersonal relationships.

Notably, the purpose of the international students' intercultural adjustment is to change the campus atmosphere and student management, and also improve the experience of international students studying abroad.

1.7 Scope of Study

The scope of this study is but is not limited to, international students having a consistent exposure to intercultural communication. This study examined superficial causes influencing the international student's basic causes (uncertainty and anxiety) to outcome (intercultural adjustment), and the mediating role of

intercultural willingness to communicate was testified as well. As most scholars researched intercultural communication, the qualitative method is chosen due to the exploration and explanation of how and why. This research adopted a quantitative approach to illustrate the correlation by figures among variables that cause the outcome. Due to the enrolment, management system, and population are differences between Malaysian public universities and private universities. The two public universities were chosen as the sampling due to their large population of international students, richest nationalities on campus, various exchange programs of students and researchers, and their policy investment in global education, gradually developing a campus culture that reflects on intercultural communication. These two public universities are located in Kuala Lumpur and Sri Kembangan, the capital of Malaysia and the biggest area of campus respectively. Additionally, to study international students' intercultural adjustment may choose another theory, while in this research, highlight intergroup and interpersonal communication when international students interact with hosts, and this may calculate the international students' cultivate communication strategies to effectively communicate. Thus Aum's theory was the first choice as the theoretical framework.

1.8 Concept of Keywords

This section provides definitions of relevant terms employed throughout the present study to establish a foundation and agreement of relevant concepts, constructs, and terminology.

Uncertainty. Uncertainty is a mental process that impacts the way people perceive communication. It refers to the difficulty in anticipating the beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors of unfamiliar individuals. Berger and Calabrese (1974) define uncertainty as the inability to predict these aspects of communication with strangers.

Anxiety. Anxiety and uncertainty are interrelated constructs in communication, where anxiety is the emotional response to uncertainty. Anxiety arises when one feels apprehensive or uneasy about interacting with someone due to the uncertainty of the situation. Uncertainty, on the other hand, refers to a lack of predictability in a given situation or interaction, where one may not know what to expect from the other person in terms of attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors. Both anxiety and uncertainty can impact effective communication and intercultural adjustment (Neuliep, 2012).

Intercultural adaptation. Intercultural adaptation refers to the process of modifying one's communication behavior to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation when interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Awang & Ibrahim, 2013). This involves making changes to one's communication style, such as using simpler language, paying more attention to nonverbal cues, and being more sensitive to cultural differences, to improve the effectiveness of communication across cultural boundaries.

Intercultural Willingness to Communicate. Intercultural Willingness to Communicate (IWTC) refers to an individual's inclination or readiness to initiate and engage in communication with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

It encompasses a person's motivation and eagerness to communicate with others from diverse cultures, despite the potential challenges and uncertainties involved in such interactions (Amira, 2015).



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