CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

A study on Japanese and Indonesian employees showed that cultural differences, like power distance and collectivism, can lead to misunderstandings and require adjustments in the workplace (Febiyana & Turistiati, 2019, pp. 33-44). For example, the Japanese, who usually emphasise hierarchy and structure, face challenges when working with Indonesians, who focus more on group harmony and collective decision-making. These examples show how intercultural communication can be complex in labour-intensive industries, where foreign managers and local workers need to work together to maintain productivity and harmony.

These challenges are also relevant in Turkish-owned companies operating in Indonesia, where diverse teams are common. Foreign-owned companies play a major role in Indonesia's manufacturing sector, especially in labour-intensive industries like furniture production (Lipsey & Sjöholm, 2007, pp. 2-4). Indonesia has experienced a significant increase in FDI (Foreign Direct Investment), particularly in its manufacturing sector. According to data made by Reuters in 2023, Indonesia received 744 trillion rupiah ($47.34 billion) in foreign direct investment, an increase of 13.7% per year. The increase in FDI is often linked to a rise in foreign managers overseeing investments in Indonesian firms. Turkey itself has invested USD 42,758 million in the period 2019 to 2023, placing Turkey in 43rd place among countries investing in

Indonesia. Thus, it cannot be hindered that foreign-owned companies will continue to increase in Indonesia, which in turn leads to a diverse cultural workplace.

While this diversity brings opportunities for creativity and innovation, it also creates challenges in communication (Leung et al., 2008, p. 172). Many prior studies have looked at how Indonesians work with Japanese or Western managers, but there's little research about Turkish managers and Indonesian employees. This shows the need to understand how cultural differences affect workplace communication in this specific context.

This need for research is made even more urgent by recent developments in which the Ministry of Industry in Indonesia is pushing Turkish investors specifically in the industry sector. In a news article from Kompas entitled '*Menperin: Pengusaha Turki Berminat Investasi Manufaktur di Indonesia'*, Agus Gumiwang Kartasasmita said:

> "*During a meeting with industry players in Istanbul, Turkey, on June 4-5, 2024, we carried the mission of increasing investment from that country in Indonesia, particularly in the manufacturing industry sector*"
> (https://www.kompas.id/baca/ekonomi/2024/06/09/sederet-pengusaha-turki-yang-minati-investasi-manufaktur-di-indonesia)

Besides that, the Indonesian government, Prabowo Subianto, also mentioned how right now Indonesia is working with 4 Turkish companies in a CNN news article entitled '*Nama 4 Perusahaan Turki Digaet Prabowo Kembangkan Sistem Pertahanan*'. He stated:

"Furthermore, we already have good cooperation with many Turkish companies, including well-known ones such as Roketsan, Aselsan, Havelsan, and Baykar... And we are committed to seriously participating in the programs currently being implemented together with Turkey"
(https://www.cnnindonesia.com/ekonomi/20250212142823-532-1197452/nama-4-perusahaan-turki-digaet-prabowo-kembangkan-sistem-pertahanan)

This push for deeper cooperation with Turkish companies is not limited to the defense sector. It reflects a broader trend of growing Turkish involvement in various industries in Indonesia, including manufacturing. This trend supports the relevance of studying how intercultural workplace communication unfolds in Turkish-owned companies operating in Indonesia. Thus, with the growth of Turkish investors and companies in Indonesia, it is essential to explore dynamic communication between these two cultures and navigate workplace challenges because miscommunication can result in inefficiencies, dissatisfaction, and conflicts.

To better understand the potential challenges in communication between Turkish managers and Indonesian employees, it is important to examine the cultural characteristics of both countries. One widely used framework for comparing national cultures is Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory. The following graphs from Hofstede Insights illustrate the cultural profiles of Indonesia and Turkey.
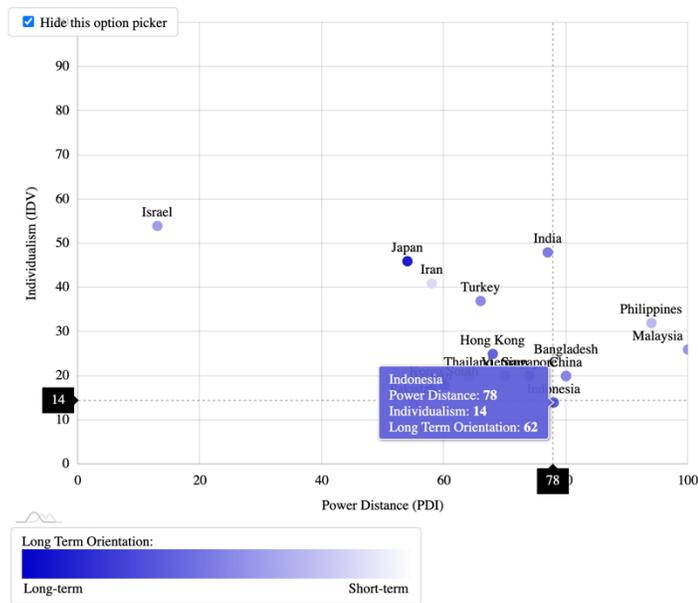
Figure 1.1 A graph from Hofstede Insights showing Indonesia's cultural dimensions
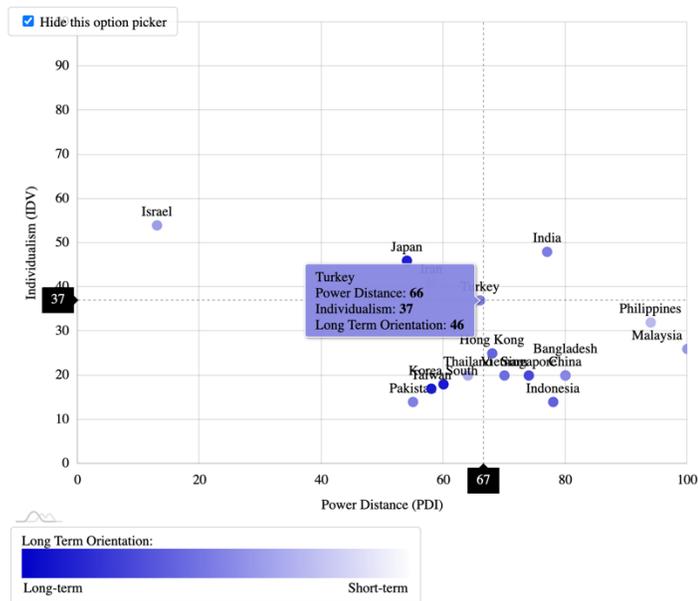

Figure 1.2 A graph from Hofstede Insights showing Turkey's cultural dimensions

The graphs above from Hofstede Insights provide data on the cultural dimensions of various countries, two of which are Turkey and Indonesia. Based on the graph, both countries have high power distances, which suggests that centralised power and hierarchical institutions are accepted in their cultures. High power distance can create different expectations around communication and decision-making (Khatri, 2009, pp. 3-7). For example, Turkish managers may expect employees to show clear respect for authority. Thus, employees may hesitate to openly express concerns about their superiors due to hierarchical structures and cultural norms of respect. For instance, in an informal interview with a quality control employee who was not part of the study sample, it was mentioned that his manager was relaxed and often smiling when addressing miscommunication, but hesitated to offer more detailed feedback, possibly due to the manager's presence during the interview. Although he stated that he wasn't hiding anything, his nervous laughter and how he commented, *"Yes, but he's here,"* suggest an underlying reluctance to directly criticise authority. This subtle tension reflects how some employees may avoid openly speaking up when managers are nearby.

Furthermore, high-context communication is understood as a communication style that focuses on implicit meaning, shared experiences, and nonverbal cues, where most of the information is either in the physical context or internalised in the person (Hall, 1976, as cited in Martin & Nakayama, 2018, p. 231). Both Turkish and Indonesian cultures are often considered high-context due to their reliance on shared understanding and indirect communication styles (Saputri & Saraswati, 2017, pp. 291).

This shared style might make communication easier in some cases, but small differences in how unspoken messages are understood can still cause problems. For instance, Turkish managers might not always say things directly and expect employees to figure out the meaning from hints or the situation, or it is called "reading between the lines". However, Indonesian employees might interpret these hints differently based on their own cultural habits, which can cause misunderstandings. One employee from the company, who works as the secretary mentioned that:

"Dari bahasa [kurang jelas] saat diinstruksikan untuk memesan barang tetapi tidak disebutkan secara detail semisal untuk hari apa. Jadi, tidak saya pesankan karena tidak tahu kalau itu kebutuhannya mendesak. Namun, ternyata itu diperlukan secepatnya."

(From the way he speaks is unclear, he instructs me to order something, but he doesn't mention the details, like for which day. So I didn't order it because I thought it wasn't urgent, but turned out it was needed it quickly.)

Additionally, based on the graph, both countries are collectivist when it comes to individualism versus collectivism. This influences the face negotiation theory as it understands how Indonesian employees resolve workplace misunderstandings. In organisations, people with high power distance tend to interact less, and their subordinates are more likely to remain mute or be reluctant to offer feedback (Dai et al., 2022, p. 2). As a result, in high power-distance workplaces, employees may avoid open disagreement to preserve harmony and avoid challenging authority.

One employee, for example, shared that when the manager gave unclear verbal instructions, she often tried to figure out the meaning on her own. She said, "*Ketika berbicara terkadang kurang jelas, tetapi [saya mencoba mengira-ngira] ohh mungkin maksudnya seperti ini*," (*Sometimes the way he speaks is unclear but I just assume, maybe this is what he means*).

This behaviour reflects the indirect approach often found in collectivist and high power-distance cultures, where employees prefer to guess rather than risk making a superior lose face. It also shows the influence of high-context communication, where the burden of understanding is often placed on the listener, rather than the speaker needing to explain in detail. In one case, a different employee declined to be interviewed at all, despite multiple reassurances of anonymity, which further illustrates the discomfort some workers feel when asked to speak openly about authority figures. These show how face negotiation plays a part in the company.

In addition to verbal instructions and day-to-day interactions, workplace norms are also reinforced through physical reminders such as printed rules in the office space. A posted "T*ata Tertib*" (*Rules*) sheet written by the Turkish manager outlines detailed expectations for product specification, communication, and individual accountability:
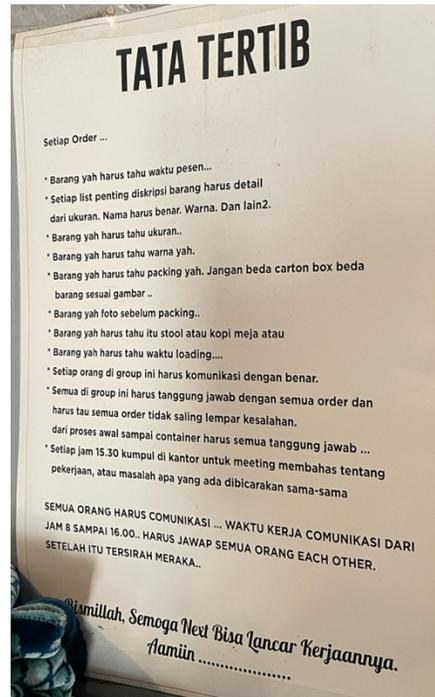
Figure 1.3 Rules written by the Turkish managers that is posted in the office

It could be seen that the message is conveyed with an informal tone and a mix of formal tone, likely due to it being translated with an app. Additionally, there are inconsistent grammar and several spelling errors, such as *"comunikasi"* or *"jangan beda carton box beda barang visual gambar"*, which might appear unclear to outsiders. Despite these language flaws, the intended meaning is understood internally among workers over the time. This illustrates a high-context communication environment, where shared understandings, implicit norms, and relational context help fill the gaps of what is not explicitly said. Moreover, it also shows that employees are expected to meet strict standards and avoid error or miscommunication reflects the top-down approach and emotional self-monitoring discussed throughout this research.

Thus, this study is relevant to research because it provides real-world insights into the communication barriers between Turkish managers and Indonesian employees. If these challenges are not addressed, they could affect productivity, teamwork, and job satisfaction. In other words, if communication issues are not addressed, they can lead to misunderstandings, inefficiencies, and even workplace conflicts. By analysing power distance, high-context communication, and face negotiation strategies, this research aims to identify the key issues. In conclusion, this research will explore how cultural differences shape communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork between Turkish managers and Indonesian employees.

1.2 Problem Formulation

The ideal workplace setting is when intercultural communication promotes mutual understanding, collaboration, and harmony. In a multicultural labour-intensive industry, such as Indonesia's furniture sector, effective communication can help managers and workers overcome cultural barriers, leading to better teamwork, increased productivity, and improved organisational outcomes. Achieving this requires understanding and addressing cultural differences to know the potential of diverse workforces.

However, the reality in many workplaces is different. Misunderstandings, conflicting communication styles, and cultural gaps often affect effective collaboration. These issues are particularly evident in interactions between Turkish managers and Indonesian employees, where differences in cultural dimensions—such as power

distance, uncertainty avoidance, and collectivism—play a significant role. Despite the growing presence of Turkish-owned companies in Indonesia, little research has examined how these intercultural dynamics unfold in labour-intensive settings.

This study aims to bridge that gap by exploring how Turkish managers and Indonesian workers navigate intercultural communication by identifying communication barriers, adaptation techniques, and conflict resolution methods. Thus, the problem that the researcher intends to investigate is how Turkish managers and Indonesian workers understand and handle cross-cultural communication in the context of organisational dynamics, which are influenced by their shared work environment and cultural differences.

1.3 Research Objectives

This research aims to:

    a. Identify key communication barriers faced by Indonesian employees when working with Turkish managers in a labour-intensive industry.

    b. Examine the interaction techniques used by the employees to address and navigate these communication barriers.

1.4 Research Significances

1.4.1 Theoretical Significances

This research adds to the understanding of organisational and multicultural communication by integrating multiple theoretical frameworks. Hofstede's Cultural

Dimensions Theory explains how cultural values influence workplace interactions, Hall's High-Context/Low-Context Theory highlights communication styles in workplace settings, and Face Negotiation Theory explores conflict resolution strategies shaped by cultural norms. Additionally, this study expands the application of descriptive phenomenology, providing insights into qualitative research on intercultural communication.

1.4.2 Practical Significances

This research offers useful insights for managers, workers, and organisations working in culturally diverse situations. This research identifies barriers to communication and interaction techniques on how to overcome problems. Managers can utilise the findings to customise their leadership and communication methods. Furthermore, organisations can use the findings to create training programs that emphasise cultural awareness, conflict resolution, and effective intercultural communication.

1.4.3 Social Significances

This research promotes cultural diversity as a strength rather than a barrier by emphasising the importance of respecting and understanding cultural differences, which can help to reduce stereotypes, improve intercultural relationships, and foster a more inclusive workplace culture. Furthermore, the findings can help governments and organisations create policies that promote diverse workforces, social cooperation, and equality in increasingly globalised businesses.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

1.5.1 Research Paradigm

This research employs the interpretative paradigm. Thomas Kuhn (1970) popularised the term paradigm, which refers to a fundamental approach to theory and research. Paradigm has several definitions; generally, a scientific paradigm is a way of thinking. It contains assumptions, important questions to be solved, research methods to be employed, and examples of what constitutes a high-quality scientific study (Neuman, 2014, p. 96).

The interpretive paradigm emphasizes that reality is subjective and socially constructed through individuals' lived experiences and interactions. It focuses on understanding how people make sense of their experiences within specific social, cultural, and historical contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.72). Thus, the characteristics of the interpretative paradigm could be explained further as below:

    a. Research in the interpretive paradigm aims to understand specific issues or topics, such as inequality, discrimination, or identity. It seeks to uncover how these conditions impact individuals or groups.

    b. Researchers ensure that methods are ethical. This includes collecting and analysing data in ways that do not marginalize participants. The research emphasises hearing diverse perspectives and avoids prejudices.

    c. Researchers acknowledge their own biases and recognize that knowledge is co-created with participants.

    d. Findings can be shared through formats like journal articles, performances, or poetry. Interpretive research often calls for social change, aiming to inspire action or reforms to address societal issues.

These characteristics shape the philosophical assumptions of the interpretative paradigm, which guide the way researchers view reality (ontology), understand knowledge (epistemology), and approach the process of inquiry (methodology). The context of each assumption is as below:

    a. **Ontology**: the study of the nature of reality and existence. It addresses questions about what is real and how we understand the existence of things. The interpretative paradigm assumes that reality is not singular or objective but rather multiple and constructed through social interactions and cultural contexts (Neuman, 2014, p. 94). In this research, the reality is seen through the lens of the participants, reflecting on their lived experiences in a multicultural workplace.

    b. **Epistemology**: the study of knowledge and how we come to know things. It examines the nature, sources, and limits of knowledge. Within the interpretivist paradigm, descriptive phenomenology states that knowledge arises directly from participants' lived experiences (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2009, pp. 249 - 250). While interaction between researcher and participant remains important, the researcher deliberately applies *epoché* or bracketing prior assumptions through the scientific

phenomenological reduction to encounter each phenomenon and avoid imposing external meanings (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2009, pp. 249 - 250).

c. **Methodology**: the systematic approach or set of methods used to conduct research. Creswell and Creswell (2018, p. 352) define methodology as the framework that determines the processes for gathering and analysing data to answer research questions. This study uses a qualitative approach, specifically descriptive phenomenology, to understand the lived experiences of Turkish managers and Indonesian employees in navigating intercultural communication. Through in-depth interviews, the research seeks to uncover the meanings and cultural influences shaping workplace interactions by categorizing them.

Given the focus on intercultural communication between Turkish managers and Indonesian employees, this paradigm allows the researcher to delve into the participants' perspectives, shaped by their cultural, religious, and organisational contexts.

1.5.2 State of the Art

a. **Exploring Internal Crisis Communication in Multicultural Environments: A Study among Danish Managers by Silvia Ravazzani (2016), Corporate Communications: An International Journal**

The first research **i**nvestigates how seven companies in Denmark (both multinational and national companies) face crises while having multicultural differences in the workplace by using qualitative methods through in-depth interviews with the managers. Additionally, the research also uses literature reviews for secondary data. The branch of study that this research uses is crisis communication and multicultural communication. The result of the study shows that most managers have similar definitions of multiculturalism, and when a crisis happens, multiculturalism could help in recognising different approaches to solving the problems. However, barriers such as language exist since sticking to one language is not that effective as it is still influenced by native culture, whether it's non-verbal or verbal. Some companies would address this by employing local communicators and leaders to serve as cultural translators, adjusting messages and communication channels to overcome linguistic and cultural differences. Furthermore, line communication (manager-employee interaction) is critical for conveying crisis messaging, fostering common understanding, regulating rumours, and disseminating results following the crisis.

b. **Intercultural Communication in Multinational Work Environments: A Comparative Analysis of Communication Patterns and Cultural Factors by Gustav Luqman and Fernanda Agathsya (2024), Kampret Journal**

The second research explores communication patterns in multinational companies which have employees from different cultural backgrounds. This research uses the mixed-method approach by incorporating interviews and purposive sampling. To interpret the data, it uses Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory. They find that having multicultural employees could enhance creativity, innovation, and problem-solving capabilities. In the company, there are communication problems in misunderstanding and language barriers due to communication style still varying according to high-context and low-context culture, low power and high power, and collectivism versus individualism. In order to overcome this issue, the company uses active listening and empathy, clarification or confirmation, adaptability and flexibility, language proficiency, and technology-mediated communication tools.

c. **Understanding the Challenges of Multicultural Team Management by Nusret Sogancilar and Husniye Ors (2018), Pressacademia**

This third research tries to find out the top challenges that managers have in a multi-diverse culture employee in Turkey and the solutions to overcome them. This research uses qualitative methods through in-depth interviews with additional secondary sources from previous articles, journals, and magazines. To further understand the findings, it employs Nardon and Steers' culture theory jungle, which has five dimensions: hierarchy-equality, individualism-collectivism, mastery-harmony,

monochronism-polychorism, and universalism-particularism. According to the research's findings, managers encounter difficulties, including poor communication and miscommunications, as a result of their cultural values, the majority of managers choose a collectivist system. Therefore, they frequently use indirect or subtle communication. Another problem is that their expectations and working styles vary, and although some employees are self-autonomous, others require guidance to complete their tasks. Lastly, a lack of knowledge of diversity and intolerance is caused by misunderstandings and poor intercultural training. The author offers a few ways to deal with these issues, like accepting diversity and motivating team members to accept differences by being conscious of cultural differences, listening to and comprehending team members' issues, and offering support and encouragement. Managers need to be more approachable, willing to learn new things, and communicate in a straightforward way.

d. ***Komunikasi Antarbudaya dalam Masyarakat Multikultur (Studi Kasus pada Karyawan Warga Negara Jepang dan Indonesia di PT. Tokyu Land Indonesia)* by Anita Febiyana and Ade Tuti Turistiati (2019), LUGAS Jurnal Komunikasi**

The fourth research analyses conflicts and communication styles between PT. Tokyu Land Indonesia's Indonesian and Japanese staff. Three Japanese and three Indonesian employees participated in in-depth interviews as part of the qualitative research methodology. The researcher

also used secondary sources from relevant earlier articles in addition to observation. The study uses Young Yun Kim and William B. Gudykunst's intercultural communication model. Additionally, it utilizes the use of Edward T. Hall's ideas on intercultural communication, including individuality and collectivism, proxemics (the concept of distance), chronemics (the concept of time), high-context and low context communication, and stereotypes. The results from this research are: Japanese people have a high-context culture, which could lead to misunderstandings with Indonesian workers; there are also monochronic versus polychronic time orientation differences in which Japanese people value their time more than Indonesians; language barriers are also a thing since pronunciation in English varies between countries; lastly, each of them tolerates religion differences.

e. **Multicultural Meritocracy: The Synergistic Benefits of Valuing Diversity and Merit by Seval Gündemira etc. (2017), Journal of Experimental Social Psychology**

This last research investigates if multicultural meritocracy works best for the employees' work motivation in a diverse culture work instead of only focusing on multiculturalism and the value of merit. It employs the quantitative method by conducting five experiments through hypothetical scenarios presented to participants to self-reported White adults online through MTurk. Furthermore, it focuses on the study of diversity ideologies.

The results from this research vary between races. There are 3 in this case. The first one is for the "whites" or majority: multicultural meritocracy lowers stereotypes compared to multiculturalism, whites perceive greater fairness and inclusion compared to multiculturalism or value-in-merit alone, and multicultural meritocracy leads to higher psychological engagement in workplace settings. Meanwhile for minorities, they have increased psychological engagement, and perceptions of fairness and inclusion are significantly higher in multicultural meritocracy settings. Lastly, for both races, the report improved inclusion and perceived fairness in multicultural meritocracy contexts.

Based from the previous journals above, there are several similarities with this research in terms of exploring intercultural communication in multicultural work environments. However, most of the studies above emphasise ways for managing multicultural teams or addressing communication barriers. They lack an in-depth exploration, particularly in the context of specific cultural dimensions from Hofstede. Furthermore, while most of the studies explore intercultural communication in office-based or multinational corporate environments, research focusing on labour-intensive workplaces remains limited. This highlights the need to examine how cultural dimensions manifest in task-oriented, practical communication. Meanwhile, this research will focus on the communication

dynamics between Turkish managers and Indonesian employees in a labour-intensive industry. By using Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, Hall's High/Low Context Theory, and Stella's Face Negotiation Theory, this study aims to uncover how cultural differences influence workplace interactions.

1.5.3 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory provides a framework for comprehending how cultural values influence actions, communication styles, and workplace dynamics. Power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term versus short-term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint are the six dimensions of cultural variability identified by the theory, which was developed through extensive research involving employees from multinational organizations. Each dimension explains a distinct aspect of cultural differences.

However, in this research the relevant cultural dimension will be power distance, which is the degree to which less powerful members of an organisation accept and expect unequal power distribution. High power-distance cultures emphasise hierarchy and centralised authority, while low power-distance cultures value equality and participatory decision-making (Hofstede et al., 2010, p.61).

Hofstede's theory, specifically the power distance, plays a crucial role in investigating how this dimension influences workplace conduct and

communication in labour-intensive industries. The theory enables an investigation of how managers and staff negotiate cultural differences.

1.5.4 Hall's High-Context/Low-Context Communication Theory

Edward T.Hall's High-Context/Low-Context Communication Theory provides a framework for understanding how cultures differ in their communication styles and the reliance on context to interpret messages. Developed by Edward T. Hall (1976), the theory categorizes cultures based on their approach to communication and the degree of explicitness in conveying meaning. It identifies two primary styles:

a. **High-Context Cultures**: Communication in high-context cultures is indirect, implicit, and mainly based on nonverbal clues, shared knowledge, and the context surrounding them (Martin & Nakayama, 2018, p. 231). Relationships and trust are essential for comprehending meaning. High-context cultures, like Turkey and Indonesia, emphasise hierarchy and implicit understanding.

b. **Low-Context Cultures**: Low-context cultures emphasise explicit, direct, and precise communication. Meanings are communicated primarily through spoken or written words rather than shared context or nonverbal cues. Western cultures, such as the United States, are examples of low-context cultures that prefer clarity and straightforwardness (Martin & Nakayama, 2018, pp. 231).

Hall's theory provides an understanding of how Turkish managers and Indonesian employees deal with high-context communication in the workplace, highlighting potential problems and cultural differences.

1.5.5 Face Negotiation Theory

Stella Ting-Toomey (1988) developed Face Negotiation Theory, which describes how people manage their "face" (self-image) and resolve problems in intercultural communication. Face Negotiation Theory, as described in Communication Between Cultures, highlights how individuals manage their social self-image, known as "face", during intercultural communication, especially in conflict situations. It emphasizes that the desire to maintain or negotiate face is universal, but the strategies for doing so differ across cultures (Samovar et al., 2015, pp. 236–237).

Face refers to a person's public self-image, which may be threatened during interpersonal or intercultural conflict. Facework, as described by Samovar et al. (2015, pp. 236–237), includes the verbal and nonverbal strategies people use to protect or restore face. These strategies are often divided into preventive facework, which aims to avoid potential threats, and restorative facework, which seeks to repair damaged face following a conflict. Face Negotiation Theory provides a perspective to analyse how Turkish managers and Indonesian employees navigate workplace conflicts in a labour-intensive setting, where differing cultural norms may influence face-related behaviors.

1.6 Concept Operationalisation

Communication occurs between individuals within various contexts, influenced by their cultural and situational dynamics. In the case of this research, interactions between Turkish managers and Indonesian employees in labour-intensive industries present a unique context for intercultural communication. These interactions are shaped by cultural dimensions and workplace dynamics, which impact communication patterns, decision-making processes, and collaboration.

Based on the theories discussed earlier, this research will focus on the following concepts that is derived from the theories:

1. **Intercultural Communication**

    Intercultural communication investigates how people from various cultural backgrounds interact, clarify meanings, and navigate cultural barriers. This study focuses on the interactions between Turkish managers and Indonesian employees in a multicultural, labour-intensive workplace. The study will centre on:

    a. **Verbal communication**: The study seeks to understand how Turkish managers deliver task instructions and feedback, potentially using implicit messaging, and how Indonesian staff respond, frequently depending on indirect feedback to maintain harmony.

    b. **Nonverbal communication**: Investigating how participants interpret gestures, facial expressions, or physical proximity, which

can lead to misunderstandings if cultural norms differ (for example, Turkish managers emphasize relational intimacy, whereas Indonesian employees value respectful space).

c. **Adaptation techniques**: Participants will share how they change their communication patterns to match cultural norms, resulting in workplace harmony and efficiency.

d. **Conflict resolution**: This research will look into the causes of workplace conflicts and how they are managed, with a particular emphasis on culturally influenced ways of avoiding or addressing conflict.

2. **Cultural Dimensions**

This study uses Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory to analyse how cultural values influence workplace actions in the Turkish-Indonesian environment. Specifically the power distance dimension, Turkish managers, who come from a culture with a high power distance, may expect hierarchical respect and centralized authority, while Indonesian staff may respond by emphasizing being submitted.

3. **High-Context and Low-Context Communication**

Hall's High-Context/Low-Context Communication Theory explains how Turkish supervisors and Indonesian staff communicate in this situation:

a. **High-context communication**: Turkish managers and Indonesian staff come from high-context cultures, relying largely on implicit messaging and nonverbal clues. Miscommunication may occur when expectations differ subtly within this shared communication style.

b. **Low-context communication**: Turkish managers may use clearer communication approaches, which could conflict with Indonesian employees' tendency for contextual interpretation.

c. **Task alignment challenges**: The study will look into circumstances in which shared high-context communication leads to misunderstandings due to different assumptions about task priorities or workplace behaviour.

4. **Face Negotiation Theory**

Face Negotiation Theory provides a framework for understanding how Turkish managers and Indonesian employees resolve workplace misunderstandings, with a focus on cultural norms of face-saving:

a. **Facework approaches**: Turkish managers may focus on self-face issues in order to assert control, whereas Indonesian workers may prefer other-face to maintain harmony.

b. **Conflict management**: The study investigates how hierarchical and collectivist ideals influence the resolution of conflicts, with

Indonesian employees favoring avoidance and Turkish supervisors perhaps taking a more proactive approach.

c. **Resolution approaches**: Participants will share their experiences managing workplace challenges, resolving misunderstandings, and fostering mutual respect.

1.7 Research Method

1.7.1 Research Design

This research utilises the phenomenological research design, which comes from the understanding of philosophy and psychology, and tries to define human lived experience as individuals describe a phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, pp. 61-62). It was introduced by Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), who claimed that directed awareness or consciousness of an object or event is a component of human lived experiences like perception, thinking, memory, imagination, and emotion. His approach, known as descriptive phenomenology, seeks to explore lived experiences without the researcher's bias or assumptions it is a process called epoché or bracketing (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2009, pp. 249–250).

In the context of this research, the descriptive phenomenological approach is suitable for examining the interactions between Turkish managers and Indonesian employees in a company setting. This is because the study focuses on how workers experience and make sense of communication across cultural boundaries, particularly in a hierarchical and task-driven workplace. Descriptive phenomenology allows the

researcher to explore these experiences without imposing external interpretations, instead presenting the phenomenon as seen through the participants' lenses (Wertz, 2010, p. 131).

This study gathers data through interviews, in which Indonesian employees share their experiences navigating intercultural communication. The interview questions are designed to explore how participants interpret each other's communication styles, respond to misunderstandings, and adapt their behaviour to cultural differences in the workplace. By applying Husserl's descriptive phenomenology, the research aims to identify recurring patterns in how these workers describe their everyday interactions, then reduce those descriptions into formulated meanings and broader thematic structures using a systematic method (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2009, pp. 252–253).

In conclusion, descriptive phenomenology is ideal for this study because it provides a way to capture the lived experience of intercultural communication in a labour-intensive context. It allows the researcher to stay close to the participants' narratives, minimise bias through bracketing, and articulate the shared essence of their communication challenges and adaptations.

1.7.2 Research Subject

The research subjects in this study are four Indonesian employees who regularly communicate with Turkish managers in a labour-intensive furniture manufacturing company. These individuals were selected because of their direct and ongoing

interaction with Turkish managers, making their perspectives relevant for examining intercultural communication in the workplace.

1.7.3 Data Types

The qualitative data type used in this study will be based on the results of in-depth interviews with each informant. The informant's words from the interview are then included in a transcript of the voice-recorded interview.

1.7.4 Data Sources

a. Primary Data

In-depth interviews with subjects who fit with this researcher's criteria provide the primary data. In this case, the interviews are about the experiences of working in a company with cultural differences and how they interpret the messages they receive from that experience.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data will be collected to enhance, clarify, or support the findings from the primary data obtained through in-depth interviews. These additional details may be sourced from journal literature reviews, related studies, or similar resources. By integrating secondary data sources, this research can gain more understanding of the phenomenon under research and confirm the interview data.

1.7.5 Data Collection Techniques

This research uses in-depth interviews, the most popular method of gathering data in interpretative phenomenology (Larkin & Thompson, 2011, pp. 99-116; Smith, 2009 in Miller & Barrio Minton, 2016, pp. 3-4). This method is typically used because it enables researchers to have in-depth discussions with participants in real-time while adhering to the ideas of the descriptive phenomenology research design (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014, p. 5).

Interviews are used to understand the subject deeply because if they are only done through observation, we cannot know one's thoughts, feelings, and intentions. Moreover, we cannot see actions that occurred at a different time or in circumstances in which an observer cannot be present (Patton, 2002, pp. 341-345). In-depth interviews are necessary to understand how individuals have structured the world and the meanings they ascribe to events that occur in it. Consequently, the researcher will conduct in-depth interviews with Indonesian workers. The interviews are conducted to learn the participants' perspectives on their experiences working together and how they interpret the messages they have been exposed to.

The researcher has unrestricted access to the company, which ensures flexibility in conducting interviews and gathering data. This access will allow for in-depth and detailed insights, free from feasibility barriers.

Additionally, secondary data will also be integrated into the research. Secondary sources, such as journal articles, related studies, and literature reviews, will provide additional context and support for the findings. For example, previous studies

on high-context communication, cultural dimensions, face negotiations, and other related themes will help clarify or validate the themes identified in the interviews. Combining primary and secondary data allows this research to triangulate findings, ensuring more accurate and comprehensive interpretations of the phenomenon under study.

1.7.6 Data Analysis and Descriptions

This study uses the descriptive phenomenological method of analysis developed by Colaizzi (1978) to explore the lived experiences of Indonesian employees in navigating intercultural communication with Turkish managers. Colaizzi's method, grounded in Husserlian phenomenology, emphasizes the importance of describing participants' experiences as they are lived, without imposing theoretical assumptions or researcher bias (Colaizzi, 1978, pp. 58 - 61).

To guide the analysis, this research follows the first six steps of Colaizzi's original seven-step procedure, as outlined in his seminal chapter and further summarised by Morrow, Rodriguez, and King (2015, pp. 643 - 644):

a. Familiarisation: Each interview transcript was read several times to gain an overall sense of the participants' experiences. This immersion helps the researcher to understand the mental or psychological view of the informants, staying close to their language and expressions.

b. Extracting Significant Statements: From each transcript, phrases and sentences directly related to the experience of intercultural communication

in the workplace were identified. These include statements about hierarchy, misunderstandings, emotional reactions, and adaptation strategies.

c. Formulating Meanings: Each significant statement was interpreted to extract its meaning. This process involved rephrasing the original language into concise descriptions while preserving the participants' intent and tone.

d. Organising into Theme Clusters: The formulated meanings were then grouped into clusters of themes that reflect common patterns or shared meanings across participants. For example, themes such as "communication challenges" or "coping through peer support" emerged from the data.

e. Developing an Exhaustive Description: All the theme clusters were combined to write a full, rich narrative that captures the essential features of how Indonesian employees experience and describe workplace interactions with Turkish managers.

f. Identifying the Fundamental Structure: The experience shared across participants captures the most significant and recurring elements of how intercultural communication is understood, felt, and navigated by the participants. The findings were then examined in light of relevant intercultural communication theories in this research.

Although Colaizzi's method traditionally includes a seventh step, returning the findings to participants for validation (member checking), this step was not carried out due to time constraints. Nevertheless, the researcher remained attentive to participants' original meanings throughout the process to ensure fidelity to their lived experience.

By using Colaizzi's descriptive method, the analysis preserves the integrity of the participants' voices while revealing the shared psychological structures of their intercultural communication experiences in a labour-intensive workplace.

Meanwhile, the secondary data, such as prior studies, journal articles, and relevant theoretical frameworks, will be systematically reviewed and integrated to understand the primary findings, for example:

    a. Literature on cultural communication in similar settings will be used to validate participants' descriptions of hierarchy and harmony.

    b. Comparisons with studies on intercultural conflict in high-context cultures will contextualize themes emerging from the data.

This triangulation ensures the validity of interpretations by offering comparative and corroborative perspectives, enriching the analysis with cultural and theoretical depth.

1.7.7 Data Quality (Goodness Criteria)

The quality of data in qualitative research is important to make sure of the validity and reliability of findings. This research uses Lincoln and Guba's trustworthiness criteria—credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability—to ensure accuracy in capturing and interpreting participants' experiences:

    1. **Credibility**: through the researcher's interpretation of participants' narratives, supported by triangulation of data sources, such as interviews and secondary sources (Shenton, 2004, pp. 64-67).

2. **Transferability**: providing descriptions of the research context, enabling others to assess the applicability of the findings to similar multicultural workplaces (Shenton, 2004, pp. 69-71).

3. **Dependability**: keeping the research process detailed and organized, including decisions, interview questions, and how the data was analysed, to make sure the study is consistent and can be followed by others (Shenton, 2004, pp. 71-72).

4. **Confirmability**: being self-aware as a researcher by reflecting on personal biases and ensuring the findings are based on the participants' experiences while recognising the researcher's role in interpreting the data (Shenton, 2004, pp. 72-73).

1.7.8 Research Limitations

This study has a few limitations. First, because it uses qualitative methods, the findings will focus on detailed insights that cannot be applied to all companies or industries or couldn't be generalized. Future studies could explore larger sample sizes and broader industry contexts to enhance generalizability. Second, the research method involves interpreting participants' stories, which might be influenced by the researcher's own views, even though steps will be taken to reduce this bias. Lastly, the small number of participants for the in-depth interview means that not every possible experience or perspective will be included.