



Computer mediated communication, social support, cultural distance, and socio-cultural adjustment in international undergraduate students

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ABSTRACT

The authors examined computer-mediated-communication technologies, perceived social support, perceived cultural distance, and socio-cultural adjustment in 80 international undergraduate students. Findings revealed that computer-mediated-communication technologies not related to socio-cultural adjustment. Perceived social support and perceived cultural distance were positively related to socio-cultural adjustment in international students.

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Introduction

In recent years, internationalization becomes hot issue among universities around the world, where, universities starts to compete to grab international students' to further their studies in universities. In light to this, many types of programs are provided to drive the international students' interest to continue their studies in overseas. The same situation was practiced in developing countries e.g. Malaysian institutions especially for the universities or colleges that focus to move towards internationalization of higher education. Even though, universities in Malaysia are using the quota system for non-local student to apply to the university, but there are high chances for international student to study in Malaysia.

Currently, the development of international education is not something new to universities. During the time of Greeks, scholars and researchers have traveled to the intellectual dominant countries in search for knowledge (Pruitt, 1978). Many universities throughout the world provide potential programs for international students according to the current demand in the market.

It gives option to the students to choose the country and university that offers their desired education line. Besides that, international students also hope that they can learn and explore more knowledge and skills from the particular university that they enroll in.

Malaysia is a convenient place to study. With many developing technologies and infrastructures of education, Malaysia has many advantages to attract international students. Based on the statistics in year 2007, there are 47, 928 international students are studying in Malaysia.

This figure were growing from time to time as the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia targets to achieve 150, 000 international students by year 2015 to pursue their studies in Malaysia.

Background of the Study

Due to the acceptance of internationalization among the universities around the world, there are several issues rise up for international students. Particularly, adjustment process among international students is one of the most important issues that needs close attention. The consequences of this process are vary, where, it could be successful or failure to adapt to the local culture and maladjustment that could influence towards the physical and psychological of the student (Ward, 1996). According to Wang (2009) study about international students' adjustment process, there are many international students who failed to adapt to the paradigm environment and experiences various socio-cultural problems such as cultural shock, language problems, isolation, alienation, loneliness, nostalgia, helplessness, inferiority, anxiety, and depression.

The effect of cross-cultural adjustment will influence the socio-cultural well-being of those international students (Ward and Kennedy, 2001). In line to this matter, university supports their international students to fit them into the host country's culture by providing them good services such as airport reception, orientation program, and information centre at international office, consultation service, sport centre, library facilities, free internet service, making cultural events and gathering as well as others. The support from university by serving sufficient facilities would ease the international students to understand and accept the process of cross-cultural adjustment as a good experience. However, university supports would not fulfill the student's adjustment entirely into the new culture. Though, international students have high social support from the university that they are attached and experience low level of loneliness but yet the students will experience high socio-cultural difficulties (O'Reilly et al., 2010).

Based on that issue, there are some problems faced among international students in the host country. The first problem is

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many international students are facing difficulties in the adjustment process. There are many factors which cause this problem. For example, cultural distance and cultural differences either from socio-cultural aspect is a significant factor that obstructing the students from adapting into new environment. The situation seems to be the same, even though, universities give them social supports to enhance their capabilities to cope with the new culture. Meanwhile, the second problem is international student find difficulties to fit and survive into the new place, culture and norm even with the universities social support.

Apart from the issues above, development of modern communication technology is another issue provoked among the international students. In recent years, modern communication technologies have developed rapidly, where; it indirectly influences people lifestyles in adjusting them into new environment.

Communication technology that usually being used is Computer-Mediated-Communication (CMC) which is a type of communication tools that uses computer software such as e-mail, instant messaging and web camera. Cemalcilar (2003) found that international students frequently use computers as tools for sustaining contact with family and friends at home as well as the native social and culture life. Communication is also an important factor which motivates the international student to adjust faster and easily with the local culture. By using communication tools in order to connect with family and friends at their hometown have a positively relationship to the successful adaptation process (Keshishian, 2000). Furthermore, most of the Iranian students that feel not comfortable with the US culture tried to communicate with their family members at the home country by using several communication medias. The communication media has created "a family tie" between the student and their family and this factor supports the student to adjust with the local culture effectively and efficiently.

The Purpose of this Study

Based on the background of the study, the main purpose of this study is to analyze the effect of the CMC, perceived of social support and perceived of cultural distance towards socio-cultural adjustment in order to apprehend the adjustment process better. In general, the significance of this study is to provide broad knowledge and information about the factors that influence the cross-cultural adjustment process among international student.

Research Questions

The following specific questions were addressed in this study:

1. Are there any significant relations between CMC, perceived of social support, cultural distance towards socio-cultural adjustment?

Literature Review

Theory of Acculturation

Redfield et al. (1936) defined acculturation as the cultural changes that results from continuous, first hand contact between two distinct cultural groups. It means that changes in an acculturating individual's overt behavior and covert traits (Cemalcilar; 2003).

Besides that, based on the definition of acculturation from Social Science Research Council, (Berry, 1997; 2003) found that there are a few extra acculturation feature added such as acculturation is not necessarily associated with culture rather it comes from another factors such as ecology and demographic.

However, the effect of acculturation is essentially examined in two level; cultural level and individual psychological level (Wang, 2009; Berry, 1997). According to the framework of acculturation research by Berry (1997), both dimensions are linked together and connected with several features that exist either at the beginning of acculturation or during process acculturation.

Basically, previous research about international students' cross-cultural adjustment process is usually uses Berry's (1997) theoretical framework. Cemalcilar (2003), for example, has used this framework as a theory reference in order to examine the type of cross-cultural adjustment which experienced by international students. In his study, he emphasized in examining the relationship between CMC as a communication tools and cross-cultural adjustment of international students.

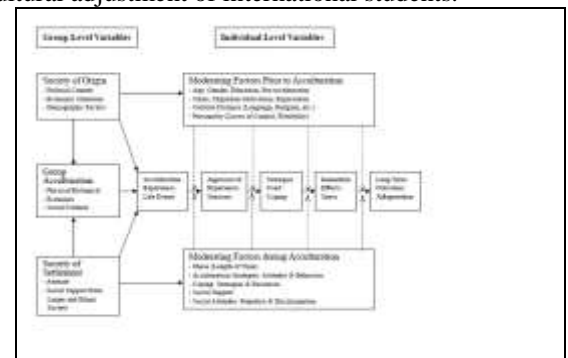


Figure 1. The Framework of Acculturation Research (Berry, 1997, p.15)

The presented framework is outlining about the relation between cultural-level and individual level of acculturation. The framework is divided into 2 parts where the left side is represent about the group or cultural level and the right side is show about the individual or psychological level phenomena. The upper level is represents the factors that influence the acculturation process that exist in the beginning part and the bottom level is reflect the factors that exist during the acculturation process. The middle part of the framework is shown about the process of interchanging from group level to individual level (Wang, 2009).

Referring to this framework, there are several factors that influence the adaptation process. This includes the variable from group and individual level of acculturation. There are also several moderators which could strengthen or weaken the process. Thus, the general overview of the acculturation is also applied to the cross-cultural adjustment process where it also involves the two dimension of adjustment process. Based on Ward and her colleagues' model of cross-cultural adjustment, they conceptualizes the cross-cultural adjustment as multifaceted construct where it can best examine in 2 related dimensions which are psychological and socio-cultural adjustment (Ward and Kennedy; 1999). The study will refer to this theory where it can examine the socio-cultural dimension of adjustment process.

Socio-cultural Adjustment

Currently, socio-cultural adjustments have been the interesting topic to be investigated by many researchers. Socio-cultural adjustment is the dimension of cross-cultural adjustment that could improve the conceptualization of the sojourners adjustment. In conjunction to this, Ward and Kennedy (1999) defined socio-cultural adaptation as the behavioral competence which is strongly influenced by factors underpinning culture learning and social skill acquisition. It also includes length of residence factor in the new culture, cultural knowledge, cultural

distance and language fluency as well as acculturation. The definition supported by Wang (2009) in his research that most of various socio-cultural problems faced by sojourners are related to cultural shock, cultural distance, language problems and differences in communication styles.

Li and Gasser (2005) examined the relationship between sociocultural adjustment (Ward and Kennedy, 1999), ethnic identity, contact with host nationals, and cross-cultural self-efficacy (Fan and Mak, 1998) of 117 Asian international undergraduate and graduate students from two state universities in the mid western region. The study found that contact with host nationals partially mediated the effects of cross-cultural self-efficacy on sociocultural adjustment. Kashima and Loh (2006) collected and analyzed data from 100 Asian international students in universities in Melbourne. They discovered that sociocultural adjustment (Ward and Searle, 1991) was explained by none of the three social ties. English-speaking background and time in Australia contributed positively and significantly to sociocultural adjustment. Need for cognitive closure contributed negatively to sociocultural adjustment. Interactions between need for cognitive closure and social ties had no impact on sociocultural adjustment.

Yang et al. (2006) adapted Ward and Kennedy's (1999) Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) to measure sociocultural difficulty in their study on the relationship between self-construals, English language confidence, and adjustment among 81 international undergraduate and graduate students and 135 Canadian undergraduate students at a western Canadian university. Hierarchical regression showed that more independent international students experiences higher self-esteem and fewer sociocultural difficulties, but the discrepancy between the student's self-construals and the mean score of the Canadian sample did not. They also found that language self-confidence played a pivotal role, mediating the relations between psychological adjustment and sociocultural difficulty. Similarly, using Ward and Kennedy (1999) Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) for working instrument, Brisset et al. (2010) found that that sociocultural adaptation is predicted both by attachment intimacy (for French and Vietnamese students) and ethnic identification (for Vietnamese students) among 112 Vietnamese international students in France and 101 French students.

Computer-Mediated-Communication (CMC)

CMC is defined as the communication that occurs between two or more people, with the aid of computer software and via a computer interface (Goldman, 1999). It includes text, audio, and video exchanges that people can control using computers. Possible communications on-line include private chat rooms, private e-mail exchange, news-groups and the World Wide Web, which acts as a broadcast medium (Goldman; 1999). Based on several surveys in America, it is approved that CMC is very useful as a medium to connect with others. As referred to the American Internet User Survey in year 1997, 87% of the respondents said that internet can give information that they need. In the following year of 2008, D'amico found that 98% of the respondents are using internet to stay connected with family and friend.

Based on some issues, CMC could be concluded as a variable that can influence international students' personal life. It also can be identified as a factor that influences cross-cultural adjustment process. This shows that CMC become as media that will help people to learn and understand other culture at ease.

This is similar with an opinion from other researcher which have stated that media becomes more important as culture element because they operate as a medium in the mentioned acquisition of culture elements for individuals to become part of their correspondent culture.

Perceived Social Support

According to Adelman's opinion, social support is defined as our ability to cope with daily stressors, critical life transitions, and environmental or cultural change, where, it is inextricably tied to the social ecology in which we are embedded. Compare to another previous study, it stated that social support refers to individuals' belief that one is cared for and loved, esteemed and valued, and belongs to a network of communication and mutual obligations (Ward, 1996). With this statement in mind, it can be concluded that social support become as a media to give people with information that they loved, they valued and they belongs to in one of group network. Based on the empirical evidence in Adelman research, social support diminishes psychological distress in cross-cultural adjustment.

There are many researchers and scholars are keen to study this topic, even though, social support has proven to be an important role in development of acculturation process. Ward and Rana-Dueba, explained that there are many contradictory result regarding social support and positive acculturation outcomes in their research. As we have mentioned earlier, high social support is not guaranteed for relieving the socio-cultural difficulties in cross-cultural adjustment process. It shows that there must be supporting factors that can affect the acculturation process.

Perceived of Cultural Distance

Upon the suggestion from the previous studies, culture distances seem to be another important factor that can influence the international students to face the challenges in adjustment process. Cultural distances are defined as the gap between two different cultures, where, it also believed to one of the potential factor that can affect to the international students' exposure in the host country (Furnham and Bochner, 1982; Ward and Kennedy, 1993).

A study performed by Nesdale and Mak (2003) highlighted about cross-cultural adjustment in Australia. They took a large sample of immigrants from Bosnia, Sri Lanka, New Zealand and several Asian countries and they found that cultural distance is one of the main predictors of ethnic identification and host culture identification. The result shows that New Zealanders had experienced higher levels of acceptance by Australians compared with the groups that considered themselves who have dissimilar culture with host Australians.

The latest research conducted by Galchenko and Vijver (2007) also mentioned that cultural distance is the main factors that influence international student in adjusting with the local condition. They studied a large sample in Russia of exchange student from East Asia, Africa and Soviet Union. Furthermore, they found that the larger perceived cultural distance between the original places will result the lower socio-cultural adaptation.

The Relationship between CMC and Socio-cultural Adjustment

As explained in the literature section, the communication media plays the role as the most important factors in adjustment process. The evolution of modern communication media such as email and chatting have motivated people to get connected more easily with others. Similarly, the growth of technology in supporting human communication creates an increasing

effective loop of interaction and collaboration (Gackenbach, 1998). This shows that the process of socio-cultural adjustment adapted smoothly. Based on that literature, the proposed hypothesis is:

H1: CMC will be positively related with socio-cultural adjustment.

The Relationship between Perceived of Social Support and Socio-cultural Adjustment

Ward and Rana-Dueba (1999, 2000) have verified in their research that sojourners with strong host national identification experienced less socio-cultural adjustment difficulties. It means that the people who have served a strong social support from the host country contribute some effort to prevent international student from experiencing the long-term culture shock. This also proves that social support has positive impact to enhance socio-cultural adjustment adapted smoothly. Based on that assumption, the proposed hypothesis is:

H2: Perceived Social Support will be positively related with socio-cultural adjustment.

The Relationship between Perceived of Cultural Distance and Socio-cultural Adjustment

In line to the explanation about cultural distance in the previous section, the cultural distance has extensively related to the socio-cultural adjustment. As mentioned earlier, there are studies that researched about the cross-cultural adjustment among immigrants in Australia and results cultural distance has significant relationship with socio-cultural adjustment. It is because cultural distance is perceived as important variable of ethnic identification. Those who have high cultural distance most likely have high difficulties in adjusting with the social environment. According to that research, the proposed hypothesis is:

H3: Perceived of cultural distance will positively related to the socio-cultural adjustment.

Research Model

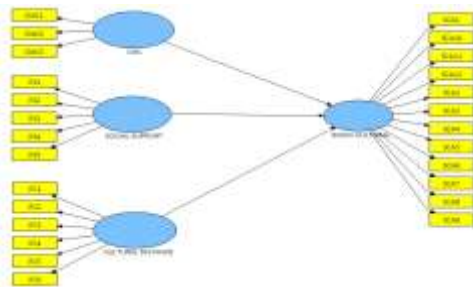


Figure 2. Research Model

Based on several theories and overview from literature part, the research model for our study is presented above. This framework show about the relationship between CMC, perceived social support and perceived cultural distance towards socio-cultural adjustment. The central research question that examined by this framework to identify whether CMC technologies are used by many international student, social support helps them accelerate the identification of new culture in process of cross-cultural adjustment and also analyze whether the suggested variable such as perceived cultural distance have affect the international student to adapt with local culture within cross-cultural adjustment process.

Methodology

In this section, there will be explanation regarding the method that using in this research. In our study, we use quantitative research which includes collected samples from one of the public university in Malaysia. This research measures one

dependent variable and three independent variables. Firstly, this research is conducted by distributing questionnaires, followed by data collection, interpretation and analysis of the result.

Research Design

This study used inter-related research design in order “to conclude whether, and to what extent, a correlation exists between two or more variables” (Gay, 1996). Inter-relational design was used in this study to review the correlation between the CMC, perceived social support and perceived cultural distance towards socio-cultural adjustment of international students.

Sample and Procedure

The sample of this study consist of international undergraduate students that studies in one of the public university in Northern region of Malaysia. The objective of this study is to limit the sample to undergraduate only because of significant differences between postgraduate and undergraduate student in terms of their way to adjust with new culture. The participants of international students were selected randomly. The participants are included of the student who permanently stay in Malaysia within 3 to 4 years or student that stay for a short-time period within 6 months to 1 year. Besides that, these participants are also from many different courses such as for management, industrial engineering, art and language.

In terms of procedure, this study used quantitative methods where it can explore the problem or describe the setting, process, social group as well as pattern of interaction to test its validity (Guba, 1985). Thus, the data was gathered by distributed survey questionnaires to the participants. Survey questionnaire method was chosen because the method can be easily conducted and affordable. Furthermore, it can facilitate multiple variable of analysis.

Measuring Instruments

In these research questionnaires, the questions divided into 5 sections. Section 1- demographic profile comprises of 15 questions; Section 2- CMC use scale comprises of 3 questions; Section 3- Socio-cultural adjustment scale comprises of 12 questions; Section 4- Perceived Cultural Distance Scale comprises of 6 questions; Section 5- Perceived social support comprises 5 questions. The measurement in some of the independent variables and dependent variable are using the Likert scale, which has 5 alternatives, ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree. There is one of independent variable that using multiple choice and essay questions scale.

There is only one dependent variable that are being examine in this study which are socio-cultural adjustment and uses Likert scale as its measurement scale. 12-item socio-cultural adjustment scale (SCAS) developed by (Ward and Kennedy, 1999) was used in the present study. The scale measures the degree to of international students’ perceived difficulties in adapting the local values and cultures, interacting with the hosts, meeting the demands of daily life, and behaving in a culturally appropriate manner. Ward and Kennedy (1999) suggested that measurement of socio-cultural is divided into 2 dimensions which are cultural empathy and relatedness and impersonal endeavor and perils. Sample items include “Using the transport system” and “Taking a local perspective on the culture”. 5-point likert scale ranging from no difficulty (1) to extreme difficulty (5) were used to measure international students’.

Measurement of independent variables in this study consists of 4 items which are demographic section, CMC, perceived of

social support and perceived of social support. The format of measurement is adjusted to each of variables but all of them are measured on the relationship to cross-cultural adjustment. Firstly, demographic is developed in order to collect data related about the participants' background information. In this part, there are several general questions that such as gender, age, education level, marital status the length of time and academic achievement that represented by CGPA and English proficiency. Next, CMC was assessed by using CMC use to Contact Home (Cemalcilar, 2003). Three items measuring frequency of using CMC tools to communicate with the home country culture were combined to create a CMC use score. CMC use was measured as the degree to which the individual use Internet technology (WWW, email, chat-rooms and alike) to communicate with their co-nationals who are not locally present, including parents and friends back at home, as well as the ethnic media and other informational and entertainment resources which are available online. Basically, CMC is rated on a 5-point rating scale (from none of the time to all of the time).

The following variable is Perceived social support which was assessed by using Perceived Social Support from Home in Cemalcilar et al. (2005) research. Perceived social support measured based on 5-item self-rating instrument to capture the social support from people at home via CMC. Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) strongly agree to (5) strongly disagree. Sample items include CMC which are useful for keeping up with my family and the Internet has helped me maintain my social network. Lastly, Perceived Cultural Distance developed by (Babiker, 1980) was modified for the present study. International students participants are asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = no difference, 5 = extreme difference) about how their own original backgrounds which are differ from their experiences in the new culture (in this case, Malaysia) in 16 areas (e.g., climate, physical environment, food). Higher scores reflect greater perceived cultural distance. = .84).

Results

International Student's Profile

Participants were 80 international undergraduate students enrolled in a large public research university in the Northern region of Malaysia. In all, 36 were male (45.0%) and 44 were female (55.0%). Majority of the respondents were from China (42.6%), followed by Indonesia (30.0%), Arabic countries (5.6%) and the rest were from other countries such as Thailand, France, Korea, Finland, and Sudan. The average age was 21.2 years (SD = 1.53) and their average length of stay in Malaysia was 16 months (SD = 12.64). All faculties were represented, with more than half of the students enrolled in the School of Management (56.4%).

Goodness of Measures

The 2 main criteria used for testing goodness of measures are validity and reliability. Reliability is a test of how consistently a measuring instrument measures whatever concept it is measuring whereas validity is a test of how well an instrument that is developed measures the particular concept it is intended to measure (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010).

Construct validity

Construct validity testifies to how well the results obtained from the use of the measure fit the theories around which the test is designed (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). The question here is does the instrument tap the concept as theorized? This can be assessed through convergent and discriminant validity.

Convergent validity

Next we tested the convergent validity which is the degree to which multiple items to measure the same concept are in agreement. As suggested by Hair et al. (2010) we used the factor loadings, composite reliability and average variance extracted to assess convergence validity. The loadings for all items exceeded the recommended value of 0.5 (Hair et al. 2010). Composite reliability values (see Table 1), which depict the degree to which the construct indicators indicate the latent, construct ranged from 0.827 to 0.950 which exceeded the recommended value of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2010). The average variance extracted (AVE) measures the variance captured by the indicators relative to measurement error, and it should be greater than 0.50 to justify using a construct (Barclay et al., 1995). The average variance extracted, were in the range of 0.613 and 0.773.

Discriminant validity

Next we proceeded to test the discriminant validity. The discriminant validity of the measures (the degree to which items differentiate among constructs or measure distinct concepts) was assessed by examining the correlations between the measures of potentially overlapping constructs. Items should load more strongly on their own constructs in the model, and the average variance shared between each construct and its measures should be greater than the variance shared between the construct and other constructs (Compeau et al., 1999). As shown in Table 2, the correlations for each construct is less than the square root of the average variance extracted by the indicators measuring that construct indicating adequate discriminant validity. In total, the measurement model demonstrated adequate convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Test of Hypotheses

The structural model was used to test the hypotheses generated in PLS and the results are shown in Figure 2.

The structural model indicates the causal relationships among constructs in the model (Sang et al., 2010) which includes the estimates of the path coefficients, and the R² value, which determine the prediction power of the model Together, the R² and the path coefficients (loadings and significance) indicate how well the data support and hypothesized model (Chin, 1998; Sang et al., 2010). Table 3 and Figure 2, shows the results of the structural model from the PLS output. cultural distance ($\beta = 0.479$, $p < 0.05$) and social support ($\beta = 0.268$, $p < 0.01$) were both positively related to socio cultural adjustment but computer mediated communication ($\beta = 0.441$, $p < 0.01$) was not significant explaining 40.7% of the variance in socio cultural adjustment. The results thus support H2 and H3 whereas H1 is not supported.

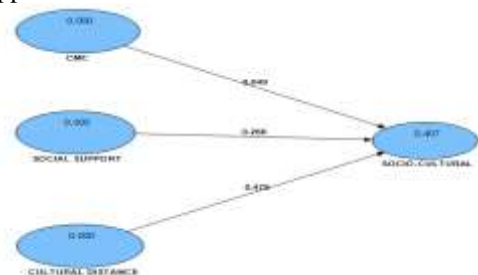


Figure 3. Results of the Structural Model

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study examined the role of CMC, social support, and cultural distance in international undergraduate students' socio-cultural adjustment. The findings of the study found that there are only two variables that positively related

with socio cultural adjustment which are perceived social support and cultural distance. This result is contradicting with the previous result which is stated that CMC is has significant relationship with the home and host national identification (Cemalcilar; 2004). The previous result stated that CMC has helped the sojourners to understand the local culture easier because CMC can support as a media to bridging the international student intention either to find some information about local culture or to communicate with their friends and family in the host country. At the same time, they can also use the CMC to communicate with the peers in home country in order to maintain the relationship.

The current study model further suggests that perceived social support significantly predicts socio cultural adjustment. Research on social support indicates that support networks provide feelings of affiliation, belonging, affirmation of self-worth and psychological security (e.g., Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Adelman, 1988; Fontaine, 1986). Social interactions reduce stress and provide referent groups through which the new environment can be interpreted (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002). Prior research has demonstrated that presence of a solid network, one that grounds and individual in parts of his/her home culture while facilitating the acquisition of new culture, sharply reduces the negative effects of acculturation (Palinkas, 1982).

The third research hypothesis was concerning the association between perceived cultural distance and socio cultural adjustment. Consistent with the hypothesis, the study found that there was a positive significant relationship between perceived cultural distance and socio cultural adjustment. This result suggests that cultural differences between the host and home country significantly predict socio-cultural adjustment.

Limitations

Although this study makes contributions to the subject of individual differences as they relate to socio-cultural adjustment, certain limitations should be taken into consideration as is the case with any study. The first limitation is related to the sample of the study. The results of this research cannot be generalized due to the fact that the entire sample was taken from individuals from one location: the Northern region of Malaysia. A second limitation of the study is that, the results cannot be generalized because all of the international students in the sample are adjusting to one particular culture: Malaysia. The last limitation of the study is that although relationship was found between independent and dependent variables, a cross-sectional study is not able to assign cause-and-effect relationships between the variables.

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Table 1 Result of measurement model

| Construct | Item | Internal reliability Cronbach alpha | Convergent validity | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|--|---------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| | | | Factor loading | Composite reliability ^a | Average variance extracted ^b |
| Computer Mediated Communication | CMC1 | 0.689 | 0.658 | 0.827 | 0.619 |
| | CMC2 | | 0.794 | | |
| | CMC3 | | 0.891 | | |
| Cultural Distance | CD1 | 0.892 | 0.825 | 0.917 | 0.651 |
| | CD2 | | 0.710 | | |
| | CD3 | | 0.720 | | |
| | CD4 | | 0.847 | | |
| | CD5 | | 0.868 | | |
| | CD6 | | 0.855 | | |
| Social Support | SS1 | 0.926 | 0.915 | 0.944 | 0.773 |
| | SS2 | | 0.915 | | |
| | SS3 | | 0.875 | | |
| | SS4 | | 0.806 | | |
| | SS5 | | 0.879 | | |
| Socio-cultural Adjustment | SCA1 | 0.942 | 0.732 | 0.950 | 0.613 |
| | SCA2 | | 0.865 | | |
| | SCA3 | | 0.812 | | |
| | SCA4 | | 0.848 | | |
| | SCA5 | | 0.729 | | |
| | SCA6 | | 0.761 | | |
| | SCA7 | | 0.736 | | |
| | SCA8 | | 0.753 | | |
| | SCA9 | | 0.724 | | |
| | SCA10 | | 0.772 | | |
| | SCA11 | | 0.881 | | |
| | SCA12 | | 0.764 | | |

Note:

^a Composite reliability = (square of the summation of the factor loadings)/{(square of the summation of the factor loadings) + (square of the summation of the error variances)}

^b Composite reliability = (summation of the square of the factor loadings)/{(summation of the square of the factor loadings) + (summation of the error variances)}

Table 2 Discriminant validity of constructs

| Construct | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|-------------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| (1) Computer Mediated Communication | 0.787 | | | |
| (2) Cultural Distance | -0.488 | 0.807 | | |
| (3) Social Support | -0.315 | 0.525 | 0.879 | |
| (4) Socio-cultural Adjustment | -0.269 | 0.596 | 0.504 | 0.783 |

Note: Diagonals represent the average variance extracted while the other entries represent the squared correlations

Table 3 Path coefficients and hypothesis testing

| | Relationship | Coefficient | p-value | Supported |
|----|--------------|-------------|---------|-----------|
| H1 | CMC → SCA | 0.049 | 0.400 | NO |
| H2 | SS → SCA | 0.268 | 2.652 | YES |
| H3 | CD → SCA | 0.479 | 5.068 | YES |